

The French social theorist Pierre Bourdieu is now recognized as a leading intellectual of the late twentieth century, and one whose ideas are very much relevant for the twenty-first.

This comprehensive account of Bourdieu's life and work locates them both in their social and political contexts, thereby tracing the origins of his ideas and theories. It explains and explores just what Bourdieu argued for and why. It also illustrates the social, political and philosophical strands that run through his work. Michael Grenfell's broad scope takes in Bourdieu's response to the Algerian Crisis, his ideas for the reform of state education and his views on aesthetics and the mass media. Detailed attention is also paid to Bourdieu's overtly political stance, including his critique of capitalism and his opposition to recent Western military action in Iraq, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan.

This book offers a reading of Bourdieu's work as a coherent and valuable response to those key social and political issues, events and trends that combined to shape contemporary society. The implications and consequences of his work are laid out and assessed, along with suggestions for where his ideas might be taken from here. This is the clearest and most thorough account of Bourdieu's work available; as such, it will be invaluable to students, researchers and teachers of contemporary social theory.

Michael Grenfell is Reader in the Faculty of Social Science at the University of Southampton. He is a recognized authority on Bourdieu. He knew Bourdieu from the early 1980s onwards, and has published two books on Bourdieu and education.

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Pierre Bourdieu

Michael Grenfell

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AGENT PROVOCATEUR

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Pierre Bourdieu

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For my mother and in memory of my father, Audrey and Bert

CONTINUUM

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Surely, Sociology would not be worth an hour's trouble . . . if it did not give itself the job of restoring to people the meaning of their action.

Pierre Bourdieu, 1962

Introduction

PIERRE BOURDIEU – AGENT PROVOCATEUR

In January 2002, the French social theorist, Pierre Bourdieu died, thus bringing to an end an extraordinary life trajectory. Born in Denguin, a small town in the Béarn area of the Département des Basses-Pyrénées, the son of a local civil servant, Bourdieu eventually became the leading French intellectual of the 1990s. His name is now cited, along with Sartre and de Beauvoir, as among the major thinkers of the twentieth century. However, if Sartre and de Beauvoir were essentially rooted in the first half of the twentieth century, and responded to events and issues of the day from a philosophical perspective, Bourdieu very much addressed the second half of the century and built his theoretical critique on a sociological view of the world.

Bourdieu leaves behind a vast body of work: several hundred books, papers, reviews, articles, commentaries and interviews. The number runs in thousands if we count the multiple translations that have been made into a large proportion of the world's principal languages. This output began in the late 1950s with his analysis of the Algerian crisis and continues to this day with posthumous publications. He built on these early works to develop a sociology which was highly flavoured with Continental philosophy and social anthropology. During the 1960s, he applied his unique perspective to education, art and culture. By the 1970s, he was ready to present his *theory of practice*: an approach that he developed and which he applied for the rest of his life. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the outcome was major studies of French taste, the academic world and the State training schools. These works amount to an anthropology of French society and the State. They are highly empirical and contain a multitude of detail. However, they are also highly theoretical, and provided Bourdieu with the medium to demonstrate the value of what he called his *thinking tools*; namely, the conceptual terms which framed his approach to these topics and guided his analyses of them.

Until that time, Bourdieu was really only known in academic circles. Here, his critique of approaches resulted in a view of him as a theoretical (and, by

implication, political) conservative. He maintained a stance which placed him outside of the political mainstream. Indeed, he argued that it was not the place for sociologists to become involved in political debate and was highly critical of the manner in which intellectuals had done so in the past. He saw such intervention as promoting the importance of the individuals concerned. This ambition was bought at the price of compromise and patronage. However, by the 1990s, Bourdieu himself had become much more of a public figure, intervening in events and in the media to comment on society, politics, economics and culture. This book shows how such interventions occurred a lot earlier and how his concerns in fact always embraced socio-political issues. During the last decade of the twentieth century, he acquired, in France at least, the status of 'public intellectual', rivalling Sartre's profile of the 1960s. Increasingly committed to social causes, he published a series of commentaries on the trends and events of the day, as *acts of resistance*.

Bourdieu's standing outside France followed a similar pattern and timeframe. Until the 1980s, he was known as a sociologist, and then only through a handful of translated texts. During this period, the existentialism of Sartre was superseded by so-called postmodernism as the major French philosophical influence in the English-speaking world. However, by the mid-1980s, his major books appeared in English rapidly after their French publication, and his ideas began to be known across the full spectrum of the social sciences. His 'sociological' title was replaced by the term 'cultural theorist'.

A number of commentaries have been published on Bourdieu's work. Many of these set out a chronology of his main works and explain his major ideas. The common approach is to investigate his principal concepts and elucidate them, before offering a critique of their value and worth. The present book takes a different route, and is focused on his socio-political engagement. Bourdieu always considered any sociological analysis as an intervention in the real world. This understanding implies that what is found out about the world has the potential to change it. In this sense, his sociology provides tools for affecting social policy. Moreover, it is an approach which centres on the individual; first, the particular researcher, but also, by implication, anyone who adopts such methods. For both, his theory of practice is offered as a source of liberation from the social forces which determine our lives. As such, Bourdieu's perspective places him in a tradition which goes back at least as far as the French Revolution, the Age of Enlightenment and beyond. Key to this tradition is the tension between the individual, society and the State. This book takes this tension as its central defining principle.

The book is also an 'intellectual biography' of Bourdieu, in that it places his work in the events of the day and addresses, in theory and practice, the ways he responded to them. Issues are more than conceptual and demand a practical

understanding of the actuality of the day. This need to engage in real events is characteristic of the French intellectual tradition; perhaps best exemplified by Emile Zola (in his response – *J'accuse* – to the Dreyfus Affair), the Catholic intellectuals in the 1930s, resistance writers in the Second World War and, indeed, the existential current of post-war years. The book places Bourdieu within this tradition. He first developed his theory in reaction to a political catastrophe – namely, the Algerian war of the 1950s – and then, in response to the education expansion which led to the crisis of 1968. The modern State is characterized by the growth of bureaucracies. Bourdieu analysed their structure and operations in the way they exert control over society. In particular, he saw the growth of neo-liberal economics and the devastating effects they could have on the lives of ordinary citizens. In studying these social institutions, Bourdieu drew attention to the apparent arbitrariness of their operation, to the beneficiaries of their systems and what the alternatives might be. He also tackled the workings of mass media and the culture industry. Here, he saw pernicious processes of exclusion and control in the very way the world was presented. Underpinning all these studies was a desire to demonstrate what he called '*misrecognition*'; where what is occurring benefits certain individuals at the expense of others without appearing to do so. This is the sense behind the title of this book *Pierre Bourdieu – Agent Provocateur*. The term seems best to sum up Bourdieu as iconoclast, as someone who was ready to challenge established orthodoxies and incite action against the violence (both symbolic and real) of the world.

If Bourdieu initially acted as an *enfant terrible* in the theories he developed, and later, in the fields he studied, his interventions in the 1980s and 1990s were more directly political. Here, he engaged with policies and the politicians who produced them. His radical and critical voice was brought to bear on the particularities of the national and international arena.

The book aims to present Bourdieu's work as a practical example of intervention, and its consequences, in the social world. It shows what it means to be an *intellectuel engagé*: to develop a theory of practice and method which links academic thought to the world of Everyman. It sets out what shaped Bourdieu's thinking and the resultant analyses in terms of the particular issues addressed. It also considers the continuing relevance of his world-view and the issues it involves.

The book is divided into seven chapters and three principal parts. It begins (Part I) with a brief biographical synopsis of Bourdieu's life. The intention here is less to offer a biography (which he always refused – see Bourdieu 2004), or the particularities of a life, than to show the social forces which shaped it (Chapter 1). The book considers socio-political events and their relevance to Bourdieu's thinking rather than setting out a detailed account of his main theoretical concepts and terms – *habitus*, *field*, *capital*, etc. To this extent, the discussion is not

theoretically driven. However, a certain number of terms are needed in the discussion. A brief introductory description to his main theoretical tools is therefore given as a postscript to Chapter 1. (Bourdieu's theoretical terms are underpinned by an explicit and detailed philosophy of knowledge. Language is used which does also carry an everyday, common meaning. In order to distinguish this usage from the philosophy implied when Bourdieu employs these terms, I shall use them in *italics* in order to remind the reader that they should be understood in their technical, theoretical sense.)

Part II covers three major areas of his work. These are presented as a series of themed chapters: Algeria (Chapter 2), Education and Training (Chapter 3) and Media and Culture (Chapter 4). This part seeks to offer a picture of the world which surrounded Bourdieu, especially in his early writing, the historical background to his work, and how events shaped his thinking. Each of these chapters show his developing political awareness, albeit filtered through a sociological view of the world.

Part III addresses his response to the last decades of the twentieth century. In particular, it discusses his sociological analyses of modern economics and neo-liberal philosophy (Chapter 5). There is also a chapter on the forms of resistance that could be mounted to this world-view; both by him and other intellectuals and professionals (Chapter 6). The final chapter then looks in detail at Bourdieu's own philosophy, as a 'sociological philosophy', and the way it could be applied to shape and articulate an alternative vision of the world which was available to everyone, not just the professional academic (Chapter 7).

I have listed the very many individuals who helped in the construction of this book in the Acknowledgements. Mostly, perhaps, I need to thank Bourdieu in his absence for the time, attention and generosity he extended to me over a number of years and on numerous occasions. He always found time to meet me during short visits and often at short notice. He also engaged wholeheartedly with the work I presented to him. I knew Pierre Bourdieu before he became *Bourdieu*. I have always found inspiration in his work. To this extent, this book is a kind of homage to him. On the whole, it takes a positive line in presenting his work. This is not because I am myself uncritical of all of his ideas. But there are many other accounts which attempt to show up Bourdieu's misunderstandings and to demonstrate what he did not do. The focus of my book is to consider the various dimensions of Bourdieu as *Agent Provocateur*, as a step to assessing the value of his radical stance as a guiding rationale.

PART I

CHAPTER I

Bourdieu – Personally Speaking

This chapter gives a brief account of Bourdieu's biography. It covers the salient characters and events of his personal and professional life. It locates Bourdieu in his social background and academic trajectory. It also places him within a French intellectual tradition and discusses the degree to which he shared features of it. The discussion raises issues about the role of the intellectual in society and the intellectual's field of operations.

A Postscript to the chapter sets out his main conceptual terms.

This chapter considers Bourdieu firstly in the most naive sense; what we know about the facts of his life crudely stated. In it, Bourdieu speaks personally. He was understandably reluctant to divulge personal details of his life and background; instead, offering a sociological 'autobiography', which placed himself and his world at the centre of his analyses (Bourdieu 2004). However, he mostly avoided naming names or speaking in the first person. Nevertheless, from fragments, it is possible to piece together details of his life and upbringing as a way to bring something of his personality to be present in the book. It is also possible to consider his life in the context of the events and trends which surrounded him. The chapter places Bourdieu's biography within the intellectual climate of his times, as well as within the ongoing tradition of French writers and intellectuals. The chapter links the most personal, the intellectual and the social as a prelude to exploring in the chapters which follow how these dimensions impacted on both the individual and public spheres of life – the social, the political and the private.

PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Pierre Bourdieu was born on 1 August 1930 in Denguin, a tiny village in the Béarn region of the French Pyrénées-Atlantiques, the south-west region of rural France. His father was a 'petit fonctionnaire' in the PTT, the French Post Office;

although his background would seem to be that of an itinerant sharecropper turned postman. The family background was poor, and Pierre grew up speaking Gascon, a now moribund regional language, before starting elementary school. It seems his father had never completed his own schooling, and it was this which made him determined that his son would achieve more academically. His mother continued schooling to the age of sixteen, since she was able to lodge with an aunt in Pau. She therefore understood the need to leave rural isolation behind in order 'to get on'. After primary schooling, Bourdieu was duly sent to a *lycée* in Pau as a boarder. He then completed his secondary education at the lycée Louis Le Grand in Paris, before gaining a place in 1951 at the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) in Paris, and graduating as an *agrégé* in philosophy in 1955.

He taught in the lycée de Moulins for one year before going to Algeria in order to undertake his military service. Subsequently, 1958–60, he taught in the *faculté de lettres* in Algiers. Returning to France in 1960, Bourdieu was employed as an assistant to Raymond Aron in Paris. He then took up a teaching post at Lille University (1961–4), where he worked while residing in Paris. On 2 November 1962, he married Marie-Claire Brizard with whom he subsequently had three sons (Jérôme, Emmanuel and Laurent). In 1964, with the support of leading French intellectuals – Aron, Lévi-Strauss and Braudel – Bourdieu was nominated as Director of Studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (known, from 1977, as the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales EHESS); he also took over as director of the Centre de Sociologie Européenne.

In 1964, he also became editor of the 'Le Sens Commun' series published by Les Éditions de Minuit and began a series of seminars at the École Normale Supérieure. In 1975, he founded the review, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*. In 1981, he was named as Chair in Sociology at the Collège de France. In 1993, he was awarded the gold medal from the CNRS in France, the highest accolade to be awarded to an intellectual. He died of cancer on 23 January 2002.

Bourdieu's professional output was voluminous. It includes books, academic papers, conference presentations, interviews, films and photography, newspaper articles, reviews, petitions and talks. Together, they amount to several hundred pieces of work, not to mention the numerous translations into a wide range of languages. It is impossible to give an inclusive account of such a wide spectrum of output. However, no biographical discussion can be complete without some indication of the bibliographic detail of his work. I shall divide his major publications into four overlapping phases. The first of these include his earliest work on Algeria – *Sociologie de l'Algérie* (1958), *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* (1963), *Le Déracinement, la crise de l'agriculture traditionnelle en Algérie* (1964) – and his home village in the Béarn – 'Célibat et condition paysanne' (1962b).

A second phase includes his early projects at the Centre de Sociologie Européenne: on education – *Les Héritiers* (1964), *La Reproduction* (1970); and

art and culture – *Un Art moyen* (1965), *L'Amour de l'art* (1966). This phase culminated in the publication of two major methodological statements – *Le Métier de sociologue* (1968), *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* (1972).

A third phase saw the appearance of his main anthropological studies of France: cultural life – *La Distinction* (1979); academia and state training schools – *Homo academicus* (1984), *La Noblesse d'état* (1989); as well as further methodological and philosophical statements – *Le sens pratique* (1980) (itself a reworking of his Algerian studies), *Questions de sociologie* (1980), *Leçon sur une leçon* (1982a) (his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France), *Choses dites* (1987), *L'ontologie de politique de Martin Heidegger* (1988). He also published his only major work on language during this phase – *Ce que parler veut dire* (1982b).

The final phase represents the last decade of his life. At this stage, Bourdieu took on an increasing public profile. Part of this role involved attacks on modern economics and its consequences – *La Misère du monde* (1993), *Les Structures sociales de l'économie* (2000c). These were also backed up by shorter collections of polemical statements aimed at a wider public – *Contre-feux* (1998a) and *Contre-feux 2* (2001b). The focus on society and the individual included *La Domination masculine* (1998).

Further methodological and philosophical works also appeared, often with explicit social and political discussion included as part of the implications of the theory of knowledge he had now developed to a sophisticated level – *Réponses* (1992a), *Raisons pratiques* (1994), *Méditations pascaliennes* (1997), *Science de la science et réflexivité* (2001c). His main empirical work again took up the artistic field, but this time focused on the production of writers and artists – *Les Règles de l'art* (1992). A further major study of the 'pre-impressionist' painter Manet also formed part of his ten-week *leçon* at the Collège de France in 2000.

These are the bare bones of Bourdieu's professional output. However, before addressing the academic tradition of which Bourdieu formed a part, I want to consider his personal experiences of schooling and education.

In one of his interviews with Loïc Wacquant (1992a: 205), Bourdieu referred to life as a school boarder (*internat*) in the lycée in Pau between the ages of 11 and 16. He quotes Flaubert who writes that 'anyone who has not known boarding school by the age of ten knows nothing about society'. In a text published after his death in *Le Nouvel Observateur* (31 January 2002), Bourdieu gives a more detailed account of his experience (2002a). It is described as a world centred around a gigantic seventeenth-century building: long corridors, white walls and cold dormitories. In winter, the 'interns' would put all their clothes on the bed to keep warm. Fights were frequent and Bourdieu himself got into trouble. He claims to have received numerous detentions. It is a life of separate existences: between school life and home life; between boarding life and life in the classroom; between boarders and those coming in from outside. Bourdieu

describes weekends at home, where his parents seemed unable to understand the problems he experienced. In fact, he became so used to institutional life, that he preferred quiet weekends alone in the deserted lycée. The summer holidays similarly simply removed him from a school life to which he had become accustomed, with its 'us-and-them' conflicts between teachers and boarders. He writes that he spent his time as a boarder in a state of 'silent fury': Anger at the way teachers treated the pupils, and at the way fellow boarders informed on each other when faced with threats and punishments. He relates these experiences to the moral subjugation he felt when sent to Algeria to 'pacify' resistance. The fact that he rebelled against such threats to conformity is clear. But, there is ambivalence. While the real world of the boarder was 'terrible' . . . 'violent' . . . 'where everything was already present, through the necessities of life's struggles, opportunism, servility, informing, betrayal', classroom life offered quite opposite values – 'a universe of intellectual discoveries and human relations which one might describe as enchanted'. This life enveloped the existence of boarders, with its 'monotonous regularities' . . . and the daily struggles and all the calculations, and all the ruses which were necessary to deploy at each instant in order to get one's due, keep one's place, and defend one's lot . . . arrive on time, gain respect and survive'.

Le Nouvel Observateur describes these reminiscences as a veritable 'Rosebud' to Bourdieu's biography, referring to the mysterious last words of *Citizen Kane* in the celebrated film of the same name by Orson Welles. The suggestion is that if 'Rosebud' acted as a defining experience for Kane, these experiences as a boarder did the same for Bourdieu. Certainly, it is possible to recognize in much of his writing a personal defiance against authority and a social solidarity with those who are dominated. Bourdieu once told me personally that even when at the Collège de France, he still felt himself back at school whenever someone demanded a report from him and he was obliged to sit down and write it. Nevertheless, Bourdieu writes that solidarity is present in his ambivalence towards academia: of an enchanted world that might 'save' him and the immediate world of physical sensation, experienced in fights and sporting matches, where solid comradeship was forged.

School included day pupils as well as boarders. This division between 'insider' and 'outsider' was overlaid by differences of class. These differences were expressed in every aspect of an individual's personality: attitude to work, accent, clothes, confidence. Bourdieu writes that his 'realist' view of social relations as combative contrasted with the moralistic, neutral vision encouraged by a middle-class upbringing. For the most part, the boarders came from the countryside or the small towns, while the local day scholars were from the town and therefore more urban. While the former were a bit rough and ready, the latter arrived with cultural accoutrements lauded by the school system. They dressed

correctly in shorts or 'golf trousers', which contrasted strongly with the grey smocks of the boarders. Their preoccupations also were not those of the boarders. Bourdieu describes a veritable 'class racism' in the violence of the pupil interactions, based on little more than physical appearance or name:

Such became my principal rival in my final year, the son of a housemaid from the outskirts of Pau, but very close, through scout groups, to the sons of teachers or doctors, from whom he had borrowed their manners and correct accent; he often insulted me by pronouncing my name in the style of a country peasant, and making fun of my name as a symbol of my peasant background. (ibid.)

He goes on to explain how he was struck by the way physical appearances and dress as much as the supposed intellectual and moral indicators played a crucial role in the way pupils and teachers treated each other; not only at exam time but in everyday life. Physicality, the social, the individual, the group and the relations between these, seems to have marked Bourdieu at an early age.

In France, the summit of academic achievement is represented by the grandes écoles and, for the would-be intellectual of the time, none was probably of higher prestige than the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) in Paris. Entrance into it was (and continues to be) by competitive examination, which, although open to all, requires intense preparation in order to gain any realistic chance of success. Such preparation is provided by key 'prep-schools', such as the lycée Louis-le-Grand or the lycée Henri-IV in Paris. The preparation phase is known as '*khâgne*', and those undertaking it as '*khâgneux*'. Bourdieu undertook his preparation at the lycée Louis-le-Grand before entering ENS in 1951. In referring to his time in *khâgne*, he writes: 'I found the same barrier between the boarders, bearded provincials in grey smocks belted with string, and the Parisian day students, who would impress such and such a French teacher of humble provincial origins, keen on intellectual recognition by being impressed by the middle-class elegance of their appearance, as much as by the literary pretensions of their academic production, from that moment accepted as authors' creations' (ibid.). This image is confirmed by Dominique Fernandez (2002: 36) who was at the lycée Louis-le-Grand with Bourdieu from 1949 to 1950. He writes of the 'provincials' who all seemed to look a little neglected in their ink-spotted grey smocks and the Parisian day students, who were 'free in their movements, cared more for their appearance' (ibid.: 36). Echoing the Bourdieusian concept of '*hypocorrection*', he writes that the 'Parisians' did not work less but gave the appearance of working less. Between the camps, it was not 'war but a frank enmity'. He writes of Bourdieu that his provincial background stood out, that he seemed to advertise it, and he was already 'full of resentment for the *bourgeois*'. Fernandez finds these

sentiments in Bourdieu's later publications on education; those of a 'prisoner forced to take the ENS preparation while the Parisians seemed to develop easily'.

There seems little doubt that Bourdieu was caught in social tensions. Besides the conflicting worlds of the personal and the social, the provincial and the Parisian, the peasant and the middle class, we might add the changing form and content of French education. Until the 1930s, secondary education was not free. Although after that time, fees were removed, the culture and ethos of the lycée was often still exclusive and disciplinary. Robbins (1998: 38), quoting Talbot, describes it as 'military and monastic', with its daily regime of six-to-nine cramming. It is perhaps unsurprising that this should be a high-pressure world, since the prize of gaining entrance to the *Grandes écoles* is enormous, and the reputation of the cramming schools fiercely guarded. Some of France's leading post-war intellectuals are consequently among the former students of the lycée Louis-le-Grand: Jean-François Lyotard, René Rémond and Alain Touraine. Hamon and Rotman (1981: 217), using lycée archives, quote Bourdieu as 'a model of seriousness and method if somewhat lacking in alacrity'.

That Bourdieu was a brilliant student cannot be denied. What is clear is that gaining entry to the École Normale Supérieure is an end in itself. This Mecca of French intellectual endeavour is sited in the rue d'Ulm, just down from the Panthéon in the very heart of the French academic establishment. Bourdieu went there when he was 21. The ENS, at least up until Bourdieu's time, was the traditional home of the future French intellectual elite. It bestowed on all who went there a sense of their own destiny, mixed with a share of its intellectual heritage. Sartre and de Beauvoir went there, as did Raymond Aron. Bourdieu shared his year with the controversial postmodernist Jacques Derrida. There were also connections with the world of politics. Jaurès and Blum were *normaliens*, as was President Georges Pompidou. Its pupils were therefore encouraged to think both intellectually and politically in implementing their ideas. Writers such as Nizan and Brasillach represent the spectrum of Left and Right political thinking. The sharing of this intellectual inheritance endowed each *normalien* with a strong *esprit de corps*, which accompanied them throughout life despite intense differences of opinion. It has been said that, after the intensive cramming for the competitive examination to gain entry to the ENS, life there was fairly easy. At least its pupils were given a high degree of autonomy in deciding what to study and where. In many cases, this meant attending courses at the Sorbonne and building up an intellectual portfolio. Indeed, at this level, it was assumed that the *normalien* was already an original thinker and so capable of developing their own talents.

It goes without saying that, by this stage, Bourdieu had had much of his country background 'socialized' out of him: 'I spent most of my youth in a tiny and remote village in south-western France, a very "backward" place as city people

like to say. And I could only meet the demands of schooling by renouncing many of my primary experiences and acquisitions, and not only a certain accent' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992a: 204). But, it is the time spent in the Rue d'Ulm, which proved to be most intellectually formative. In theory at least, Bourdieu was a philosophy student, but he also studied a wide range of other subjects.

INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE

The 1950s in France had been dominated by existentialism, a philosophy based on action and personal choice as an expression of being and freedom. This philosophy itself owed much to German writers such as Husserl and Heidegger, and a whole tradition of subjective philosophical perspectives based around phenomenology and hermeneutics. Its French leader was the 'total intellectual', Jean-Paul Sartre. A philosophy of personal choice, action and their consequences may well have suited the spirit of the 1930s and especially the 1940s, when it was necessary not only to choose between alternative political systems but whether or not to undertake heroic action in the face of invasion, collaboration and resistance. The 1950s, however, was another era and the post-war generation grew impatient with both existentialism and the tradition of classical philosophy to which it was deemed to belong. For the new generation, another tradition – that of culture, rationality and history – seemed more relevant to the new age of social reconstruction and political pragmatism. Michel Foucault summed it up in philosophical terms as a split between 'a philosophy of experience, of sense, of the subject, and a philosophy of knowledge, rationality and of the concept' (quoted by Pinto 1998: 21). If the latter seemed more pertinent to the pressing philosophical theories of the day, its advocates included a wide range of French intellectuals: Cavaillé, Bachelard, de Koyré. Bourdieu cites these and others – Canguilhem, Gilson, Gouhier – as philosophical mentors (1986a: 36ff.). However, he also makes the point that many of these were not mainstream intellectuals and he had to search them out as 'marginals' in the field. Guiding principles here might be 'applied rationality', 'constructivism' and 'contextual knowledge'. Philosophers such as Merleau-Ponty and Canguilhem sought to combine philosophical reflection with questions of embodiment taken from the biological sciences. The 'Sciences of Man' were rehabilitated by such writers as Benveniste, Dumézil and the celebrated structuralist, Claude Lévi-Strauss. It would be fair to say that Bourdieu imbibed something from all of these writers. At base, however, there existed a chronic antipathy between the disciplines of sociology, philosophy and anthropology.

Bourdieu states that the academic philosophy on offer was mostly not very 'impressive' (ibid.: 36). He was not impressed by existentialism either, however,

finding it an 'insipid humanism'. The structuralists – Foucault, Althusser and Lévi-Strauss – were a different generation. Clearly, these philosophical issues and positions were experienced at a personal level by Bourdieu. They were also the source of fierce institutional rivalry. Life at the ENS was clearly eventful in response to the politics of the day. His period there coincided with the 'triumph of Stalin': 'The Stalinist influence was so strong that some of us at the *École normale supérieure* – among them Derrida, Blanco and Pariente – formed a Committee for the "Defence of Freedom". Le Roy Ladurie then denounced us at a Party meeting at the *École* as "social traitors"' (ibid.: 35). But, it was probably still at the level of the personal that Bourdieu's feelings stirred most acutely. He reports being shocked when Georges Davy, president of the *agrégat* in Philosophy panel, distributed seminar topics for the *normaliens* at the beginning of the year. All those looking for distinction were interested in conducting a seminar, but one female student was refused because she did not 'fulfil the prerequisites – namely to have attended the *École normale supérieure de Seve, BS*' (ibid.). Bourdieu wanted to organize a boycott but was considered too 'excessive'.

If the fashions in philosophy were not to his liking, sociology seemed to fare not much better: 'Sociology then was averagely empirical, lacking any theoretical or empirical inspiration' (ibid.: 37). He states that most of the post-war sociologists did not arrive there by the 'royal route' – the *École normale* – and were deemed 'failed philosophers'. The distaste that his year felt for sociology was heightened by the fact that the Chair of the *agrégation* panel was held by a sociologist, who could 'force them' to attend his lectures on Rousseau and Plato.

There is a spirit of radical dissent in these ideas. Bourdieu continued his ambivalent relation with education describing himself as 'half in half out', 'being deeply attached to it while rebelling against it' and as a consequence of 'high expectations and disillusionment' (ibid.: 39). He nevertheless saw himself as a 'philosopher', taking his *agrégation* and working on the 'phenomenology of emotions – or, more precisely, the temporal structures of affective experience'. At this stage, Bourdieu could well have been simply recruited into the French university system as a philosophy lecturer. Military service in Algeria changed all that (2004: 63ff.).

To find oneself faced with the exigencies of war, a colonized people and a society apparently divided against itself must surely have focused his mind, both in terms of what was said about Algeria and what was happening there in reality. Bourdieu speaks about 'two arduous years of war' before beginning a book on Algeria as a kind of '*livre militant*' (Bourdieu with Grenfell 1995b: 2). This work was more an effort to understand and to make understood a phenomenon that was misrepresented in French society. Bourdieu's reaction to Algeria was, of course, personal. He took several hundred photos (see Bourdieu 2003) as well as undertaking numerous interviews during journeys throughout towns and

countryside. It is perhaps little wonder that his response was ethnographic rather than philosophical and that this impacted on his own affective life:

Algeria permitted me to accept myself. The comprehensive ethnographic look I gave to Algeria, I also took of myself, of the people of my country, of my parents, the accent of my father, my mother . . . I could see similarities between the people in Kabylia and those with whom I had spent my youth. (ibid.: 42)

It is unsurprising if Bourdieu did not simply return to philosophy when back in France: 'I wanted to do something useful . . . Maybe I wanted to be useful in order to overcome my guilty conscience about being merely a participant observer in this appalling war . . . I wanted to do something useful and earn a living . . . I could not be content with reading left-wing newspapers or signing petitions, I had to do something concrete as a scientist' (1986a: 39). Teaching first in Algeria and then France, followed by his accession to the directorship of the Centre de Sociologie Européenne offered this opportunity to 'do something'. The Centre already existed but Bourdieu was charged with developing its profile; in particular, its empirical work (Bourdieu with Grenfell 1995b: 22). Books on Algeria, education, art galleries and museums, and photography followed. In these works, we see the same intent to make a difference, to explain the pressing events of the day and their political implications: 'The sociological works on education I undertook by the same logic as my research in Algeria. I undertook to do research on students, firstly, to better understand what it was to be a student, concretely in the class where I taught, and also to put a bit of clarity into the very confused debates of the day' (ibid.: 2). In a sense, philosophy had provided Bourdieu with theories of what it was 'to be' and 'to know' in the world. Algeria, and subsequently education, had forced on him the practical exigencies of national policies and politics. If these two positions represented a tension between philosophy and ethnography, Bourdieu was to undergo a veritable conversion in seeing how sociology represented a reconciliation of the two:

There was a kind of horror of Durkheim. No one wanted to hear him spoken about. He was despised . . . I recall when I came back from Algeria, I had a post as assistant at the Sorbonne. Aron said to me: 'You are a *normalien*, you are capable of teaching Durkheim'. Nothing could be worse. I had read Durkheim as a pupil, the *Rules of Method*, etc. Then I had to read them in order to teach them, and it is then that I became interested in them since they helped me a lot in my empirical work in Algeria. Mauss even more. After, I went on to Weber. I taught Weber and I found the notion of 'field' which I had confused in my head while teaching him. I did not succeed in

teaching the chapter on religious agents. That bored me a lot. It was totally destructive: a series of types with exceptions. I did not see the logic. And then, one day, I began to make a sketch on the board, and I said to myself: 'it's obvious – it is necessary to study people *in relation*' . . . I had a kind of structural matrix. If I was able to do that, it was because at the same moment, I was doing structuralist-type research on parenthood, and on the Kabyle house. I read pre-structuralist texts with a structuralist mode of thinking. (Bourdieu with Grenfell 1995b: 5)

And,

I recall very well, it was in a seminar, it was an illumination to connect Husserlian theories of doxa with the doxic relation to the social world and the analyses of the young Marx on praxis, practice, etc., and to draw out everything concerned with reflexion, opinion, and so many things normally kept separate. (ibid.: 34)

In such statements we see Bourdieu's personal experience of the theoretical conversion he was to undertake. In sum, this amounted to a move from philosophy, to anthropology, and to sociology: 'I had to break with the pretension to theoretical *hauteur* that came as part of my academic trajectory as a student of philosophy at the École normale supérieure, while at the same time constantly calling upon my training, and particularly my theoretical and philosophical training, to put it in use . . . It goes without saying that the conversion I had to effect to come to sociology was not unrelated to my own social trajectory' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992a: 204).

Bourdieu's personal and professional trajectory, as well as his response to the world that surrounded him were therefore bound together as one. Besides Algeria, he took photos in his own village in the Béarn where he set out to study the marriage strategies and patterns of bachelorhood among the peasant farmers there (see Bourdieu 2002b). These actual photos, as much as personal mental images, provided Bourdieu with the raw material for his analyses. But, we should not forget the socio-historical context of these experiences.

POST-WAR FRANCE

Post-war France engaged in a process of rapid modernization. The rural exodus, from land to town, intensified in response to French *dirigiste* planning. In a way, the old and the new worlds were counter-posed throughout Europe and the world at large. The pull of the new was necessarily felt that much more strongly

in countries which, until that point, had remained traditional. Traditional reactions in France had been underlined by the Pétainist principles of *famille, patrie, travail* of the collaborationist government in the Second World War. These reactionary forces were delivered a serious blow when the Nazis, and with them their sympathizers, were defeated. This defeat gave fresh vitality to the growth of a fully fledged modernism. Of course, there were progressive trends in French society long before this time. The law making secondary education free for all seven years had been passed as early as 1933. No doubt, Bourdieu himself benefited from the liberalization of French institutions. Reform was rarely clean-cut, however, and in reality the new and the old existed side by side in an uneasy relation.

As noted, classical philosophy and the perceived amateurism and verbalism of existentialism were challenged as part of a rhetoric of new social relevancy. Structuralism and its Marxist variants were in vogue. Concerns with 'social philosophy' coalesced in the extensive spectrum of the 'social sciences'. Bourdieu was therefore able to 'mix and match' in developing his epistemological vision: the history of science of Gaston Bachelard and Georges Canguilhem; the phenomenology of Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty; the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss; the existential presence of Sartre; the Marxist structural reproduction of Althusser. It is wrong to suppose that any one mix, or match, was linear and explicit, and Bourdieu states how the actual process was much more blurred: 'I passed from one option to another without really recognizing it' (Bourdieu with Grenfell 1995b: 3).

Education in the 1950s and 1960s was understood in France and abroad to be a key element in building the 'new world'. The young generation sought education as a process of social advancement, professional training and personal development. Growth in the number of students itself changed the nature of the educational field. New courses were designed and implemented, new staff recruited, new academic institutions established. With democratization came diversification. In a sense, a new style of intellectual was formed; one less based in classical disciplines or in the traditional lines of academic succession. The École Pratique des Hautes Études and the Centre de Sociologie Européenne were products of these developments and provided Bourdieu with a new-style institutional base for his work. But what was the actuality of this base?

In terms of teaching, Bourdieu undertook a series of influential seminars at the École Normale Supérieure. Somewhat lacking in confidence, and seeing financial support as a key performance indicator, Bourdieu also procured grants to undertake empirical research – for example, from Kodak for his work on photography. A large proportion of his empirical data collection was carried out at this time: for example, much of the data for *Distinction* (1984a/79) came from a survey and questionnaire carried out in 1963, supplemented by other

work in 1967–68, making a total of 1217 subjects (ibid.: 503), even though the final analysis of these did not appear for several years to come. Research students were brought to the Centre de Sociologie Européenne – for example Boltanski, Lagneau and Karadi – and a network of co-workers established – de Saint-Martin, Passeron, Castel, Darbel. But what was their world?

THE WORLD OF THE PARISIAN INTELLECTUAL

Hamon and Rotman (1981) in their study of the French 'high intelligentsia' – the '*intellocrates*' – begin their book with a tour of the Parisian left bank. They state: 'it is a village. Just a village'. Certainly, an hour's walk, commencing with the Cimetière de Montparnasse (where Sartre and de Beauvoir are buried) and centring on the Jardin de Luxembourg, will take in almost all of the prime French academic institutions, establishments and publishers. These are: the two most prestigious Grandes écoles – l'École polytechnique (now moved) and the L'École Normale Supérieure; the École des Mines and l'École des Beaux Arts; the post-war training school for politicians and the civil service – l'École Nationale d'Administration; the centre of French university life itself – the Sorbonne; the Collège de France is nearby. Besides a high density of bookshops, most of the leading French publishers are based there: Ramsay, Gallimard, Fayard, Grasset, Minuit, Seuil, Flammarion. As a village, this is a way of life. It is a world, which takes in places of work, rest and play: academic institutions; home; and restaurants (le Coupole, Le Balzaar, etc.). It is, therefore, perhaps unsurprising if every individual involved defines themselves by the matrix of interconnecting structures they create. In a world where promotion is often dependent on presentation, juries and elections, getting around and being known is a must. Fractional differences of background and academic provenance are expressed in fraternal communities, large and small, allegiances and rivalries. Geographical location itself expresses an academic and intellectual trajectory. It is possible to follow Bourdieu's own: Lycée Louis-le-Grand and École Normale Supérieure in the vicinity of the Panthéon; next door – the Sorbonne; down the road – rue de Tournon, home of the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHS); next – Boulevard Raspail, and with it the large black and glass building that is the Maison des Sciences de l'homme – home of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (and the Centre de Sociologie Européenne) after it was created from EPHS in 1975; Éditions de Minuit are based on the crossroad with the Boulevard Saint-Germain. The Collège de France is located in the rue des Écoles, forming three parts of an institutional square with the Sorbonne and the Panthéon. Bourdieu gave most of his annual *leçons* in the large downstairs amphitheatre housed there; his office was in the Collège annexe up the road in

the rue Cardinal Lemoine; he lived a brisk walk away near La Bastille, the symbolic heart of the French revolutionary spirit.

Bourdieu's academic home for many of his formative years was the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS). It began in 1975, in the same year that Bourdieu launched his review – *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*. However, its origins can be traced back to the Second Empire. In 1868, an École pratique was founded outside the normal university structures in order to develop the links between research and teaching. Almost a century later in 1947, two historians, Braudel and Febvre, created a 'VI-ième section' there dedicated to the social and economic sciences. The fact that this establishment was a suitable home for Bourdieu and his activities is underlined by the orientations of Braudel and Febvre. The latter, with Marc Bloch, founded the review *Annales, Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, which gave birth to a new approach to history; one which focused less on events and more on the evolution of social and economic trends over time, including mental, ideological factors, and myths. In time, the *Annales* would take in a whole range of other social sciences, not yet recognized in the academic world – ethnology had no institutional status before affiliation with the Université de Paris in 1927; no sociology degree was recognized until 1958.

This 'VI-ième section' was given a boost following the Second World War. First, Braudel recruited young, talented staff. While traditional diplomas and many years of service were required for the classical academic career, young lecturers could enter EPHS without even a doctorate (as Bourdieu did). Secondly, generous financial means were created to allow rapid growth. In a few years, over one hundred 'director of study' posts had been created, mostly ethnographers, anthropologists and linguists (Aron, Touraine, Le Goff, Bourdieu, Le Roy Ladurie, Richet, Nora, Juillard, etc.). In time, structuralism largely took the place of history, but this discipline remained a 'foundation' subject for them, and it is from the 'VI-ième section' that EHESS was formed in 1975. This was a direct result of the *loi d'orientation* of 1968 making it more like a Grande école, retaining its specificity while giving it greater freedom.

Given Bourdieu's intellectual temperament, it is perhaps unsurprising that he often spoke approvingly that his own university career was actually quite brief and that he had spent much of his time in a 'parallel academic universe'. This marginality created an autonomy, which would be the envy of many conventional university academics in France and abroad. If the names listed above represented a range of ages, they formed part of a new dynamic generation of intellectuals. Frequently on television or in the academic best-seller lists, they also forged powerful international links, most noticeably in the United States. As Hamon and Rotman conclude: 'while the "ordinary university" creaked, the EHESS established itself as the intellectual home of a worldwide audience' (ibid.: 43).

But there were rivalries, most noticeably between academic disciplines and their representatives, and indeed, within disciplines – and the various schools of thought to be found there. Sociology in the 1960s and 1970s produced figures other than Bourdieu. Raymond Boudon for example developed a perspective on social phenomena as the aggregation of individuals' social action, which itself was seen as constitutive of rationality. Michel Crozier wrote the celebrated *La Société bloquée* (1970); a view of society as overrun and ensnared by bureaucratic systems leading to a kind of social gridlock. However, the biggest rival to Bourdieu was probably the sociology of Alain Touraine. Touraine at the time was initially that much more politically affiliated to social movements and their role in social change. For him, May 1968, for example, announced a new society and way of living (1968), while Bourdieu took a more sober line and took exception to numerous points of detail in Touraine's outlook (see Chapter 3). For Bourdieu, these alternative sociologies simply reinforced the systems they challenged, because they utilized the same social components, institutions, personnel and principles. Real change, for him, could not be brought about by simply reforming these. He believed that his own sociology implied a much more fundamental 'conversion' or 'rethinking' of the way systems of thought and action constituted themselves.

Such theoretical contentions also expressed themselves in terms of institutional power. Hamon and Rotman (*op. cit.*) offer a vivid picture of life in the EHESS in the 1970s. Friendships and rivalries begun in *khâgne* or at the École Normale Supérieure continued in EHESS. Each leading figure had his or her team of co-workers. Particular networks were supported and developed – certain individuals supported for election. To be elected there as Director of Studies entailed making one's case; in particular, with the heavyweight academics – Aron, Lévi-Strauss, etc. The traditional dominance of history was retained in successive elections for President. The historians generally showed greater solidarity with each other than with the sociologists. Close links were forged between EHESS and the media; in particular, the popular French leftist news weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*. Many EHESS academics also wrote in *l'Observateur*, especially the historians. In this we see an accentuation of the new phenomenon: the 'media intellectual'. These individuals combine teaching and publishing with a media profile, which might include appearances on television and radio, as well as regular columns in French dailies and weeklies. Intellectual 'celebrities' were born. Individual seminars and programmes were published in *l'Observateur*, attracting a general public as well as the normal student audience.

The rivalry between Bourdieu and Touraine was legendary: 'Between Touraine and me there is an irreconcilable division. This opposition is at a scientific level. There cannot exist in sociology people who have an absolute exclusive approach to the discipline. If I am right, what he does is not sociology. It's

him or me' (*ibid.*: 46). This rivalry came to a head in 1980, when both sought election to the position of Chair in Sociology at the Collège de France. The august institution was set up by François I to counterbalance the intellectual power of the Sorbonne. It is an exclusive 'club' of just 52 members, who are meant to represent the very best in French academia across a range of disciplines. Entry there is by election from its members. Election, therefore, normally depends on making oneself known, meeting with other *collégiens* and presenting one's case. The attraction for Bourdieu of the Collège, besides, presumably, the academic prestige it bestowed, was probably the autonomy and marginality it enjoyed (and still does). In a way, its structural independence is analogous to that of the EHESS compared to the mainstream university system. In this sense, one is protected from the cut and thrust of the normal academic maelstrom. There is less teaching to do – Chairs are only obliged to deliver a limited number of public lectures – and, of course, there are higher salaries. Nevertheless, Bourdieu's attitude to going there was ambivalent. Hamon and Rotman write: 'when one comes to such a degree of glorious concentration, the social imperative gives way to cerebral stakes. Bourdieu, for example, is far from being a social conformist – his personality and work proves it. But he went to the Collège de France because in his eyes intellectual capital was at stake' (p. 51). Reputedly, he rebuffed overtures from the Collège for three years before agreeing to stand: 'It was a horrible trial for me. I did not want to join the Collège mostly because of this idea that I was going to become a big deal. My father died the same year and I think I linked these two events psychologically. I had six months of virtual insomnia' (Eakin 2001). The worst part of the ordeal was delivering the inaugural lecture (Bourdieu 1982a) to the entire Collège (including esteemed intellectuals such as Lévi-Strauss and Foucault) and various dignitaries and politicians. 'Up until that very afternoon, he thought he wasn't going to go' said Loïc Wacquant, 'it was like Sartre refusing the Nobel Prize. He just could not bring himself to participate in this ritual consecration' (Eakin *op. cit.*). Still, his election, and therefore, the defeat of Touraine, was a huge personal achievement and the symbolic conquest of the triumph of one version of sociology over another.

BOURDIEU AND THE FRENCH INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

The French intellectual tradition is, of course, a vast field of study, and itself forms part of European and global traditions. It is therefore necessary to fix the parameters of our discussion. The contemporary context has its most direct roots as far back as the 1700s. At that time, France, and specifically Paris, was the centre of the reforming zeal that spread across Europe. This eighteenth-century movement became known as the Age of Enlightenment (see Hazard

1954, Gay 1973). France gave us key thinkers in this intellectual current: Montesquieu, Rousseau, Tocqueville, Voltaire. At this time the man of letters and *philosophe* were born: a group of radicals who inhabited the French court and the Parisian Salons, polemicizing among themselves and against the world. It is arguable that many of their ideas fed into a way of thinking that not only shaped subsequent philosophical thinking but provided the foundations of the social sciences. France also gave us two of the acknowledged 'founding fathers' of sociology: Auguste Comte (1798–1857), who seems first to have employed the word 'sociology' to depict the science of society; and Emile Durkheim (1858–1917). Nevertheless, the word 'intellectual' was little used until the 1890s, and did not gain widespread currency until 1898 when Zola wrote his famous open letter to the French President – *J'accuse* – to bring public attention to the miscarriage of justice meted out to Captain Dreyfus in the light of military misdealings and their cover-up. A subsequent petition signed by many of France's leading writers of the day – Proust, Gide, France and Bouglé – became known as the 'manifesto of intellectuals', establishing a recognized social grouping with a particular voice outside of the normal French political systems.

In the twentieth century, it became possible to study French intellectuals as a discrete, if somewhat heterogeneous, faction of society (see, for example, Jennings 1993 and Drake 2002). French intellectuals are unrivalled in terms of the international attention given to them. Both in France and abroad, it is possible to speak about them as an identifiable movement in a way that would be impossible in other countries. This is partly to do with their tradition and heritage, which has given public recognition and official esteem to them in a way that exists nowhere else. In Britain it would be hard to imagine the State funding academic establishments and individuals who essentially acted as fierce critics of the government. We have nothing similar to the Collège de France – an institution representing the pinnacle of academic thinking. British culture is essentially suspicious of intellectual endeavour, mocking it, and preferring pragmatism and 'good sense'. In France, intellectual ideas are everywhere and form part of the Republican principle of equality of access. They feed into the notion of the autodidact so that philosophical and political ideas are regularly featured in discussion articles in the French daily newspapers and weekly news magazines. Television debates and review programmes often capture large audiences: for example, the *Apostrophes* series hosted for many years by Bernard Pivot. Where does Bourdieu fit into this tradition?

Sand, in addressing the self-images of the intellectual in France (1993), describes their various characteristics, and exemplifies each of these with a particular French intellectual 'ideal-for-his-type'. These aspects are presented as a series of opposing traits. For example, the *man of letters* (Voltaire) versus the *philosophe* (Rousseau); the call on *spiritual power* (Comte) versus *revolutionary*

zeal (Tocqueville); the *savant* (Durkheim) versus *socialist mandarins* (Sorel); the *clercs* (Benda) versus *watchdogs* (Nizan); the *authenticity* of intellectual action (Sartre) versus its *opiate* delusions (Aron). Of course, these pairings are not necessarily dichotomies but overlap. They are best understood as a series of continua. Indeed, it is possible to read something of Bourdieu in each of these: the man of State tutelage with his base at the EHESS and the Collège de France versus the marginalized philosopher railing against both politics and intellectual establishments; the belief in social *science* and intellectual thought as a positive alternative to conventional political action; the right of intellectual intervention in the affairs of the world and criticisms of such intervention as self-promoting; the need for establishing social values in a secularized modern world together with suspicion of the spiritual lobby (most notably in the heritage of the 'non-conformist catholic intellectual' personified in the *Esprit* review with whom Bourdieu frequently clashed); the commitment of the 'total', 'public intellectual', as the guardian of universal principles of emancipation and humanism and the warning against the intellectual fantasy of believing in their own omnipotence.

Bourdieu's own position of course changed over his academic career. Earlier, he was hostile to the 'pretension' of intellectuals and sociologists who sought to change the world. He states: 'I think that sociologists do not have a realistic vision of their trade . . . They do not know how to distinguish between what is a strategy coming from the necessity of the moment, and what is personal investment' (Bourdieu and Grenfell 1995b: 25). In other words, he criticized intellectuals because their political interventions amounted to nothing more than personal promotion and ambitions. Later, however, he too took on a public role in opposing social and political policies and events.

Certainly, the role of the intellectual in contemporary society has evolved. Debray (1979, 1980) argues that there were three principal phases of intellectual life in France. These can be distinguished by where intellectuals locate their activities: the university cycle (1880–1930); the publishing cycle (1920–60); and the media cycle (1968–). We need to be flexible in interpreting these dates. In a sense, all cycle types might be present at any one time, as for Bourdieu. He had an academic career, albeit principally outside of the university (cycle 1). He also published public addresses in the same way as the vogue in the proliferation of reviews and pamphlets in France in the 1920s and 1930s (cycle 2). These appeals to the public, both specialist and non-specialist, were clearly akin to Bourdieu's own newspaper letters and petitions. Furthermore, he later intervened in the media on tv and in film (cycle 3). Such a range of operations was deliberate and intentional on Bourdieu's part. However, it is the final cycle, the modern world of mass communications, which raises the most pressing questions about the intellectual *modus operandi*.

Clearly, the explosion of mass communications in the second half of the twentieth century has had its impact on intellectuals. Sartre was a pivotal figure in this development. Here was a philosopher who also turned his hand to novel and playwriting. He addressed the public directly in newspapers, short works and on television and radio. The media intellectual was soon born. Bourdieu spoke somewhat contemptuously of people who would do almost anything in order to get 'three lines written about them in *Le Monde*' (Bourdieu with Grenfell *op. cit.*: 26) and who believed that 'nothing else counts once their book comes out'. Behind these developments of public orientation, lie significant issues concerning just what the role of the intellectual is in society. Are they visionary 'prophets' leading society? Do they speak of 'universal truths'? Is their job simply to inform us and offer expert insight on particular specialisms? Should they support the State and nation or offer radical critiques of the actual events of the day?

The twentieth century offered ample opportunity for French intellectuals to respond to these questions when faced with the actuality of the changing world of politics. In France, the Dreyfus Affair, the First World War, the 1930s, the Spanish Civil War, the Popular Front, Munich, the Second World War, Communism and Stalinism, Algeria, Indo-China, 1968, and the crises of the last quarter of the century not only provided French intellectuals with the chance to take a stand on contemporary socio-political issues. It was by taking these positions that they defined themselves. But, something else had happened. For Bourdieu, intellectuals had traditionally been caught in a kind of pendulum swing 'between two possible attitudes towards politics, commitment or retreat' (1996a/92: 341). He argued that Zola and the Dreyfus Affair had partly resulted in this tradition being overcome. However, for him, what political commitment that had been gained was now increasingly under threat as the century proceeded, as a result of the 'media effect'. The media, he argued, attack the 'unstable combination which defines the intellectual towards one or another of apparently exclusive positions, either towards the pole of "pure writer", artist and scholar, or towards the role of political actor, journalist, politician, expert' *with all the compromises this entailed* (ibid.: 343, my italics). In other words, intellectuals were classified as being politicized or not, rather than offering intellectual neutrality which might be harnessed for political action. Behind this issue is the question of the intellectual 'expert' or universalist: one with a limited range of expertise, or one who is prepared to address all topics and subjects. Bourdieu's later work in the 1990s might be viewed as him moving from 'expert' to 'universalist'. This stance itself could be understood as a defiant one, to move outside of the position as 'tamed' sociologist the media would have had him occupy. These issues raise questions about ways of political acting and being which will be addressed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has allowed free rein to a range of biographical treatments of Bourdieu: the personal – in his own and others' words – the bibliographic, the socio-historical. Which is most accurate? In a sense, none of them. Bourdieu himself wrote of the 'biographical illusion' (1986b) in attempts to discern a 'master plan' or coherent sense in an individual's life history. Pinto (*op. cit.*: 19) argues the best way to understand Bourdieu is to use the very precepts he has derived from his work on Bourdieu himself. In order to do so, it would be necessary to situate Bourdieu within his *field*.^{*} In order to study a *field*, Bourdieu advocated a three-level approach (1992a: 104–7). First, to analyse the *habitus* of individuals and the dispositions this gives them. Secondly, to consider the structure of the *field* in terms of particular relations between those involved – in this case, the categories of writers, etc. and the ideas of the day. Thirdly, to understand the *field* in terms of the overall *fields* of power – including socio-political events and heritage. This chapter has sought to cover these levels in an introductory fashion in order to offer something of Bourdieu's life – his education and professional trajectory, his work and the socio-historical background which surrounded them. In itself, this approach begins to employ Bourdieu's own conceptual terminology. It is not the main *raison d'être* of this book to examine and discuss these theoretical thinking tools. Indeed, they will feature in a secondary role to the socio-political issues raised by his work. Nevertheless, in order to address the range of topics in the various chapters, it will be necessary occasionally to employ Bourdieu's own terms of analysis. The postscript to this chapter therefore sets out a brief account of his main theoretical concepts as a kind of glossary to guide reading where the ideas occur in the chapters which follow.

^{*} From this point, *italics* are used when I am employing these words from a specific Bourdieusian theoretical direction.

Postscript

THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

It is necessary to understand that many of Bourdieu's concepts developed over a number of years. For example, the notion of *habitus* was used in his early work on the Béarn farmers to describe their habits and physical action (2002b). It was then applied as 'habitat' in *Les Héritiers* (1979b/1964) to refer to the cultural conditions of life, which gave individuals the necessary prerequisites for an academic career. In *La Reproduction* (1977a/70) it is used to express durable dispositions of individuals which guide social practice. Over the years, these terms evolved and became more integrated with the whole theory. For the most part, in what follows, I shall not take account of the evolution of these concepts but describe them in their most succinct and developed sense.

At one point, Bourdieu describes what characterizes his theory as *constructivist structuralism* or *structuralist constructivism* (1989a: 14). This is the point where I wish to begin this account. The two key words here are *structure* and *constructivism*. Both have a wide range of meanings, but it is probably best to begin by thinking of *structure* in its phenomenological sense. In Husserlian phenomenology, when we interact with the world, we establish intensional structures with it – and the world might include material objects, other people or ideas. Our relations with and interpretations of these are determined by two forms of consciousness: *noematic* and *noetic*. The *noema* is everything that one knows about an object of thought; the *noetic* represents individual moments of perception. What we 'know' at any one instant therefore is not *all* that we know – much of it remains unconscious – but is a product of the interaction between what we know and new sense data. There is then a dynamic interplay between the *noetic* and the *noema*.

The Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky developed a theoretical approach, which focused on a similar dynamic interplay between the individual and society (1962, 1978). He famously argued that nothing appears in the *intra*-psychological without first appearing in the *inter*-psychological. Moreover, he saw human development as a form of self-regulation or control over *objects*,

people and *self*, including thoughts and feelings which were also in part constitutive of the material and social world which surrounds us. Although Bourdieu did not address psychological issues as such, his own position resonates with this very basic phenomenological level. This dialectic, or dynamic interplay, between the individual and their social environment was also taken up by Berger and Luckmann (1971) in the 1960s in 'their social construction of reality', which was a synthesis of the theories of knowledge of the founding fathers of sociology. This approach was summed up as 'the externalisation of internality and the internalisation of externality' – terminology which Bourdieu also employed for a time (for example, 1968).

Bourdieu was a student of the phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty, who was concerned with the physical embodiment of these relations; in other words, they involved the body and physical action as well as the mind. When Bourdieu employed the term *habitus*, therefore, it was to signify a set of generative structures defined in both phenomenological, social and psychological terms. Such structures must be understood as fluid, or dynamic, constantly changing and developing, but durable and stable in establishing *dispositional* knowledge: a tendency with limits towards certain responses when faced with external stimuli (cf. Bourdieu 1993a/80: 87). Bourdieu too underlines the *embodiment* of these structures as *hexis corporalis*; that response may be at a physically active level as well as the mental.

Individuals are surrounded by *space* – physical and social – with degrees of proximity – close and distant. This *space* is differentiated and is *structured*. It is in encountering this *structured space* that *habitus* is formed. Moreover, this *structured space* is made up of recognizable bounded territories: for example, the professional (various professions), personal (families, social networks, residence) and political (administrative institutions, political agencies). For Bourdieu, these are all examples of *fields*: *fields* are 'networks', 'configurations', 'objectifiable structured spaces', 'have specific interests and stakes', include states of 'power relations', 'share common interests' (ibid.: 72ff.). It is central to Bourdieu's theory that the structures of *habitus* and *fields* are somehow *homologous*. They share generative principles. The logic of their founding principles is common to both. The *subjective* and the *objective* are therefore mutually constituting in an ongoing, dynamic but always partial, way. There cannot be a perfect fit between the two since both individuals and fields are always evolving. Nevertheless, they are disposed to maintain their defining principles and relationships, indeed to reproduce them in altered forms, thus creating the illusion of openness in a system of closure; with strict definition of inclusion and exclusion for those involved. Bourdieu writes of the 'ontological complicity' (1982a: 47) between *field* and *habitus*: 'on one side it is a relation of conditioning, the field structures the habitus . . . on the other side, it is a relation of knowledge or cognitive construction:

habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world' (1989a: 47). Clearly, *fields* can be large or small, and there are *fields* within *fields*. So, all *fields* connect, near or far, somehow with others. The *homology* between *field* and *habitus* means that their constituting structures need to be understood in a dynamic sense – they are *structured and structuring structures* – and they include both the material, social organizational and personal (1982a: 14).

Since there is this *fit* between *field* and *habitus*, what is doable and *thinkable* (and *unthinkable*) within the *fields* is limited and defined in terms of what is *legitimate* for that particular area of *social space*. This way of thinking and acting might be defined as the orthodoxy in this social territory – the *doxa*. Anything outside this is unorthodox – *heterodoxa* – and therefore a challenge to the status quo of the field. Clearly, what is *doxic* in one field might be *heterodoxic* in another, and vice versa. Moreover, it is partly in such challenges that *fields* evolve over time; although, there is often resistance to fundamental change. Finally, of course, there are orders of *legitimation* in these *doxas*, and, ultimately, the State holds the most power to impose its official forms of orthodoxy.

Since material, social, physical and mental structures are differentiated by a range of logical principles, they are valued differently from each other and the dominant logic. Bourdieu expresses these structures and their products as *capital* and, because they only have value in terms of a socio-culturally defined *arbitrary*, they need to be understood as *symbolic* rather than designating any ultimate worth. Bourdieu argues that *Symbolic Capital* has three principal forms: *economic* (real money and possessions); *social* (contacts and networks with well-placed individuals); and *cultural* (education, qualification, marks of distinction – accent, clothing, behaviour – and actual objects – books, art, etc.). How these are defined depends on the *field* and the hierarchy of *fields*. How much is available for any one individual or group, and the configurations of these three principal forms, also depends on the *field*. However, in theory at least, there is always competition for what is available, which only has value because it is relatively scarce. Such competition operates within *fields* and between them, where there is a struggle to assert particular dominant forms of *capital*, new *capital* definitions, and to devalue others. Bourdieu refers to some *fields* as *markets* – for example, the linguistic market – in order to express that the way they operate is analogous to economic systems. There can also be *symbolic violence*, where there is a struggle between the dominant forms and their representatives; that is 'a struggle over the power to impose (or even inculcate) the arbitrary instruments of knowledge and expression (taxonomies) of social reality' (1991a/82: 168).

Such capital has value in as far as it is known and recognized by those within and external to the *field*: 'agents possess power in proportion to their symbolic capital, i.e. in proportion to the recognition they receive from the group' (ibid.:

106). Knowledge (*connaissance* in the double French sense of 'knowing' and 'being familiar with') is productive of thought and action; recognition (*reconnaissance* in the double French sense of 'acknowledgement' and 'recognized worth') (ibid.: 111f.). In this sense, one only knows one holds *capital* when its practical power is activated by recognition. Some exert tremendous effort to acquire such capital and knowledge. However, effort is a sign of aspiration and of non-possession; for example, in the overly correct accents employed by some in their linguistic utterances (*hypercorrection*), while those who already possess linguistic capital express themselves with an ease and confidence which even allows deviation from the norm (*hypocorrection*). Moreover, this is '*misrecognized*' (*méconnaissance*) as, for example, when *symbolic capital* (accent, cultural possessions, education, etc.) is taken to be inherently more valuable rather than what it is – i.e. culturally arbitrary (ibid.). No surprise, therefore, that the closer the fit between *field* and *habitus*, the more likely is someone to feel like a 'fish in water', and vice versa.

Having a 'combination of dispositions and interests associated with a particular class or social position which inclines individuals to strive to reproduce at a constant or increasing rate the properties constituting their social identity, without even needing to do so consciously or deliberately' (1988a/84: 176) gives a certain *Conatus* or know-how. However, the other side to this coin is illusion – *illusio* – or 'belief in the game and in its stakes (and) the basis of all the allocations of meaning and value' (1996a/92: 172ff.). This illusion is often expressed in terms of *common sense* in asserting the self-evident value of *doxa* (2000a/1997: 188). Here, *misrecognition* is perpetuated in the interests of the established order(s).

Over time, *fields* evolve, of course – configurations of *capital* change. In fact, it is possible to identify groups, distinguish between them, and plot how one of these changes into another by the patterns of *capital* they possess. However, the effects for the individual involved are not always, or necessarily, positive. Some are caught in contradictory positions – *double binds* – not knowing which way to go, creating internal division and suffering (ibid.: 160). Here, mixed messages between *field* and *habitus* result in conflicting action – a kind of social schizophrenia. In other cases, the *field* moves beyond the *habitus*, whose *structural dispositional possibilities can no longer respond to the actuality of the field*. This situation – *hysteresis* – leads to action, which is no longer appropriate or relevant for the present state of the *field* and the 'collective expectations'. 'This is the case, in particular, when a field undergoes a *major crisis* and its regularities (even its rules) are *profoundly changed*' (ibid.). It is perhaps at these times that the constitution of *field* and *habitus*, their relationship, and the *misrecognized consequences* become most acutely apparent. Many social fields now experience a time of such crisis.

In a sense, what Bourdieu is offering is a theory of practice which allows one to break with the illusion of passive acceptance of society as it is given and presents itself, and provides foundations, derived from breaking with *field*-based knowledge, to develop an emancipated form of *scientific knowledge*. The fact is, of course, that pointing out *misrecognitions* is unlikely to make one popular! This breaking also allows for the *libido dominandi* to be 'sublimated' into a *libido sciendi* (ibid.: 111). What the application of this theory of practice amounts to, and the socio-political implications it raises, is the topic of the following chapters.

PART II

CHAPTER 2

Algeria

The case of Algeria, the former French colony, raises questions of national independence in postcolonial countries. The Algerian crisis was the first political event on which Bourdieu commented publicly. He was on military service there in the 1950s and was able to see insurgence and war at first hand. He also conducted a series of ethnographic studies of the Kabyle peasant. This chapter sets the Algerian war in the context of French history and tracks its events and subsequent outcomes. The chapter connects Bourdieu's emerging sociological thinking with what he discovered in Algeria; in particular, it will contrast traditional and modern societies. The chapter links with later discussions of modern capitalism and its effects on Third World economies, as well as with the type of life involved for both men and women.

As the last chapter showed, Bourdieu was not particularly impressed by sociology as it existed in the 1940s and 1950s. For him, it was lacking in both theoretical and empirical inspiration. However, a new sociological mood was forming. This was probably best summed up by C. Wright Mill (1959), who wrote of the 'sociological imagination' and the need for sociologists to become involved in the everyday lives and experience of everyday men and women, as well as public responses to their troubles. It is as if Bourdieu took this call to heart.

What we see here is the beginning of a sociology of involvement and participation. Sociologists began to go into the field as participant observers to gain insight of what was happening there. Such insights could be brutal and sudden in their revelations. In a sense, the theoretical 'conversion' that Bourdieu underwent was one such moment. These are 'epiphanies' – nothing else looks the same after that. However, the biggest revelations for Bourdieu possibly arose from his own confrontation with everyday life in the situations in which he found himself. Two are most striking. The first of these was in his own home region, the Béarn. Here, a single incident: a village Christmas 'ball'. Bourdieu observes the scene, noticing, in particular, the middle-aged bachelors gathered around the perimeter – watching but not dancing (see Bourdieu 2002b). These are the '*unmarriageable*'. Why?

The second was in Algeria. Bourdieu was in his twenties when he did military service in Algeria in the 1950s. After teaching philosophy for a year at the lycée de Moulins (Allier), he arrived in Algeria in 1955. Later, he also taught at the *faculté des lettres* in Algiers, not returning to France until 1960 when he was invited by Raymond Aron to teach at the Sorbonne. Bourdieu refers to the 'the shock of Algeria' (1992a: 104). It has been said that Bourdieu's stay there coincided with some of the most troubled and violent times in Algerian history. The political events which surrounded him at this period stretched beyond Algerian borders and implicated North Africa, the Middle East as a whole, and indeed the constitution of the French Republic. But, it was the immediate and first-hand experience which was most striking for Bourdieu.

The capital of Algeria, Algiers, had grown rapidly throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Yet, the urban population was highly differentiated. Besides the French colonists, there was a minority of Algerian middle class. These were individual families who had risen in symbiotic relationship with the colonial rulers, and who saw assimilation with France as the best balance between imperial occupation and breakaway independence. The majority, however, were the 'dispossessed', former Algerian peasants, without land, who drifted to the capital in search of seasonal and unskilled work. Some returned to work on the large, profitable farms, owned by Europeans. Some remained in the city unemployed and lived from hand to mouth. However, another group organized themselves as private entrepreneurs, setting up businesses or dealing in low-level commerce. Those who could not afford premises took to the streets. A new breed of stall-holders expanded in number, individuals buying and selling, sometimes in collaboration with shopkeepers, in response to seasonal produce or the needs of the moment. It is as if Bourdieu was asking: Who are these people? Where do they come from? And what conditions produced them?

Bourdieu was a keen photographer, and we see both the Béarn and Algeria captured on film that he took at the time. In the case of the Béarn, there is a series of photos which graphically depicts the actuality of social space for these peasant bachelors (see 2002b). Men dressed in their 'Sunday best' stand arms folded, or hands behind their backs, looking on at the festivities from which they are apart. Their physical stance embodies their affective state of discomfort: belonging and not belonging. In Algeria, Bourdieu took several hundred photos (2003), many of which were used in his subsequent publications. The sociological part of the 1963 study of *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* is preceded by three photos: of a farmer in the fig orchards of Kabylia, of peasants *sans terre* and of a steelworker in a factory in Oran. The first of these is also used as a cover to *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* (1977b/72). A farmer, possibly separating the wheat from the chaff, appears on the cover of *Le Sens pratique* (1990c/80). In one sense, the photos speak for themselves. We see: the nobility of rural

labour amid overhanging fruit trees, the disaffection of unemployment, the hot intensity of industrial work, the vibrancy of the street-seller with their world on a cart, ready to go anywhere and sell anything. It is as if the pictures pose the questions themselves: who are these people and what made them like this?

Bourdieu's immediate answers to these questions were structurally ethnographic, as he tried to make sense of the traditional structures of Algeria and the different sections of the populace – *Sociologie de l'Algérie* (1958). This study formed the basis of further analyses which addressed the social and political issues of Algeria much more explicitly, *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* (1963), *Le Déracinement, la crise de l'agriculture traditionnelle en Algérie* (1964). These early works represent Bourdieu's first phase of work on Algeria. There were two further discernible phases; indeed, no other topic perhaps more justifies Bourdieu's often-made remark that he had only really published his 'works of youth'. The second phase – including *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* and *Le sens pratique* – reworked his ethnographic details in order to develop his theory of practice. The third phase, stemming from the 1980s, saw Bourdieu engaging directly with the events of terror and near civil war in Algeria. I want to consider each of these in turn. However, first, I sketch in some detail of the background to the Algerian situation in order to contextualize Bourdieu's response to it.

BACKGROUND

Bourdieu opened his first study of the Algerian situation (1958) by pointing out that Algeria itself is a social construct. It should not be understood as a pre-given 'cultural unity' but as a social-historic product. Of course, everything in the social world is the outcome of social, economic and political forces, their events and outcomes. However, the point is particularly pertinent with regard to a country such as Algeria, whose very foundation was marked by colonial invasion. The question of the 'Nation State' is a contemporary concept, in a world of global politics. Before the age of mass communication and speedy international travel the national entity was less clearly defined. Such lack of definition was used by some to justify invasion in the first place. In fact, it could be argued that in the case of Algeria, France was a reluctant colonizer. The original invasion seems to have been as much a diversionary tactic to prop up the restored monarchy of 1830 than a genuine desire to occupy this north African terrain. Even so, once installed, France proved itself to be an enthusiastic and tenacious occupier. Large numbers of Frenchmen were encouraged to settle in Algeria when various nineteenth-century economic crises resulted in an impoverished French workforce. Arriving dirty with virtually no possessions, they

were quickly dubbed *pieds noirs*, a name which has stuck to this day. However, once settled, this imported population proved itself to be a voracious neighbour. Algerians did resist. However, the general thrust of colonial occupation was unrelenting.

By the end of the Second World War, the indigenous population occupied an inferior position by virtually every social indicator. The colonialists had taken the best land and the best farms. Europeans similarly held all of the positions of power. What little indigenous representation there was, was confined within strict limits of power. Unlike some imperial powers, France took an 'assimilationist' line on colonies it held. Here, the colonized lands were appropriated as 'French territories'; in other words, they were taken to be part of France, returning their own *députés* to the French parliament. French culture was privileged, French language promoted. By the twentieth century, sections of the Algerian population had indeed been 'assimilated', and believed the best deal for a future Algeria was some form of cohabitation with France in terms of semi-autonomous self-government. Such government, however, was still to be dominated by the European colonialists.

It is into this context that the Algerian War of Independence exploded in the 1950s. Official documents refer to 'events' and 'operations to restore order'. Bourdieu wrote of the 'conflict' which was the latest in a history of civil unrest. With hindsight, we give these events the status of 'war'. Bourdieu stated that:

My choice to study Algerian society was born more from a civic than a political impulse. I think that the French people at the time, whether they were for or against Algerian independence, had one thing in common – a poor knowledge of this country. And they had as many bad reasons to be for it as against it. (Bourdieu 2000d: 7)

It is impossible to fully understand the reaction of the French, both in France and in Algeria, without setting that reaction in the context of the development of France itself. As noted in Chapter 1, in the 1950s, France was only just emerging from the experiences of defeat and invasion meted out to them in the Second World War. This war itself was the culmination of social historic forces arguably set loose at the time of the French Revolution of 1789. France was attempting to 'reinvent' itself as a nation, as a democracy and a world power, but was meeting unresolved tensions. During the 1930s, the '*ni droite – ni gauche*' line taken by French intellectuals reflected the disaffection they felt for the dominant alternatives to liberal democracy. Liberal democracy was seen as the culprit for the financial crises of the 1920s. Antipathy to American commercialism was rampant. Some Frenchmen turned towards socialism, more specifically Communism, others to National Socialism – Fascism. The Popular Front

of the late 1930s and the Spanish Civil War had offered two rehearsals for resolving the issues. The forthcoming world war was the final performance.

The defeat inflicted on France in 1940, was the third trauma of war in less than one hundred years, and in each case – the Franco-Prussian War, First World War and Second World War – the aggressor came from the north-east. Still, the French sense of vulnerability was more than military. Extensive experiences of war had taken out large numbers of the younger generations, already weakened by decades of falling birth rate. The historian Marc Bloch writes of the 'sclerotic' leadership in the French government and army. They lived in the past. Many looked back to Empire and past glories. In 1930, the centenary anniversary of Algerian colonization was seen as a celebration of French culture leading the 'uncivilized' world. But, French society was still predominantly rural. Apart from the industrial regions of the North and East, and around major cities, France it seemed was reluctant to embrace modern industrial capitalism. Yet modernism was afoot, and with modernism, secularism. The Third Republic had finally and definitively separated from the Catholic Church in its systems of administration. *Dechristianization* had been a recognized phenomenon throughout the nineteenth century, and one against which a multitude of Christian movements fought. By the 1930s, secularization, economic crisis, an ageing population and political instability had all conspired to undermine French identity. The defeat of 1940 was therefore perceived as a moral as well as a military defeat.

After being overrun by the German invaders, therefore, it is perhaps unsurprising if many Frenchmen embraced with enthusiasm the return of Pétain and his policy of cohabitation, his leaning towards collaboration and his national call to traditional principles. Many French opposed Vichy, but resistance was far from coherent. The Hitler–Stalin pact had made the options difficult to interpret for French Communists, while French nationalists such as De Gaulle mounted resistance in the name of the glory and independence of France as much as for the freedom of its individual inhabitants. Resistance to Vichy and the Germans therefore brought together the Left and Right of the political spectrum, as well as the apolitical. Allied victory in which the free French shared, failed to purge France of these dichotomies.

The forces of reaction and tradition had been muted but their voice was still strong. Both defeat at the hands of the Germans, followed by the Pétainist collapse, resulted in humiliation, anger and uncertainty. Nowhere was this more acutely felt than in the French army. France struggled to find its political feet in the early years of the Fourth Republic; governments came and went, as ministers and leaders crossed the political horizon. If anything, the instability of the French political system only exacerbated the tensions between reaction and progress which had beset France for so many years. The political Right took considerable strength from the apparent failure of parliamentary democracy. In

this context, Algeria had a powerful political and emotional significance for the French. This was the socio-political climate which marked Bourdieu's formative years.

In a sense, Algeria in the 1950s presented a classic colonial situation, where the minority French ruled the majority – the Arab and Berber population. Successive French integrationalist and assimilationist policies had blurred the distinction between occupier and occupied. Second- and third-generation *pieds noirs* born in Algeria were able to consider themselves as 'Algerian French' and entitled to their French inheritance of social and thus economic superiority. They were also able to play to the national pride of the French army and traditionalists which saw Algeria as a jewel in the crown of French might and glory. Independence, however, was in the air, fuelled by the recognition that more concessions should be made to the indigenous population as recompense for the part they played in defeating Germany. Other colonial powers had also moved towards granting greater independence in what now might be seen as a gradual withdrawal from occupied lands. In Algeria, successive French prime ministers and governors general alternately pursued a hard or soft line on granting concessions towards further indigenous representation, all while moving to stamp out opposition to the French occupation. Various factors made the situation more acute. First, the Algerians themselves were impatient for change. They saw anti-colonial victories elsewhere in the world and were encouraged to push their case for independence. In 1954, the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) was formed, quickly growing in strength to join with others fighting for Algerian independence in the Conseil National de la Révolution Nationale. Increasingly, independence was articulated in revolutionary terms, given legitimacy by language borrowed from the Soviet revolution. Secondly, the French settlers had much to lose. They refused to recognize the case for independence. Bourdieu writes (2000d: 6) how a colleague at the Faculty of Algiers, Marcel Emerit, had his effigy hanged by the *pieds noirs* students when he established that the rate of school attendance in Algeria was much higher before 1830 than after. This finding upset the colonial university establishment. They did not like what they heard. The third factor was the relative political weakness and instability of the Fourth Republic and the consequent stand of the French army. Humiliated in the Second World War and stung in the years which followed and by defeat in Indo-China, the military desired to draw a line against further loss of ground. There was, then, an alliance between the settlers and the army to keep Algeria French. They were ultra-sensitive to any concessions to self-determination, and saw off politicians' attempts to heed to FLN demands.

Algeria was yet another issue in that long line on which the French people 'had to choose', and which apparently split the country. There were extremes. At one end were the revolutionary Communists who argued for the overthrow

of colonialists in the name of 'the people'. The leading existentialist, Jean-Paul Sartre was among these. He issued the *Manifesto of the 121* in 1960 which called on French army conscripts to desert. At the other extreme, was the Comité de Vincennes which fought for maintaining Algeria in French control. The formation of the Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS), and extreme Right terrorist groups operating in France and Algeria against Algerian independence, precipitated events. These were the years when Bourdieu undertook his military service and returned to teach in Algeria.

During this time, the French Republic itself was threatened. De Gaulle was brought in, apparently on his own terms, and set about resolving the issue. As a political pragmatist, De Gaulle was first able to reassure both the settlers and the Algerians without making promises. He then balanced somewhat precariously between the two against a background of the political machinations of French social and political uncertainty. De Gaulle was able to evoke his honour and status as a defender of free France in the Second World War and thus as the 'father' of the nation. An attempted assassination had failed as he took power after the war. A putsch by army generals in 1960 was also unsuccessful.

Another key factor was the severe violence of the French army. French army suppression of public opposition in Algeria had a reputation for being excessive. In the battle of Algiers in 1957, the scale of reprisals and torture carried out by the French paratroopers shocked the nation. The French police too reacted excessively to demonstrations in France against the OAS. Civil liberty was therefore called into question which ultimately acted against those who fought, sometimes openly and aggressively, against what they saw as a lack of commitment to keep Algeria French as a symbol of its national might and its status as a world culture. The failure of attempts to overthrow De Gaulle and abhorrence at the extreme violence, which was apparently spreading and spinning out of control, allowed De Gaulle to move. In 1962, a ceasefire was followed by an FLN–OAS truce. A referendum in Algeria was called. Finally, a free Algeria State was created with the nomination of Ben Bella as President.

STUDYING ALGERIA

As stated above, Bourdieu's response to this socio-political history was initially to attempt to understand the actuality of Algeria. There is a clear progression in Bourdieu's early publications on Algeria, with points of detail showing how his thinking and understanding evolved. *Sociologie de l'Algérie* offered a social topography of traditional Algerian society. The intention is to show the extent to which French colonialism had destroyed it. Bourdieu set out his analysis of Algerian society in terms of four principal groups: the Kabyles, the Shawia, the

Mozabites and the Arab-speaking people. The fact that there are these four distinct tribal groups strongly suggests that the Nation State of Algeria was a loose concept. It also points towards the way that European colonialism imposed boundary norms on land territory which was previously only roughly defined. In other words, a delicate historical, geographical and cultural balance had been disturbed. I want here to raise distinct aspects of the cultures of the four groups before contrasting these with modern-day living. I consider the land territory to which each group belonged, the role of women in the family, and both the home and religion.

Land and society

Bourdieu begins each section on the four groups with an account of their geographical placement in the Algerian territory. This initial focus on the land is an important reminder, much in the Marxist mode, that humanity exists first and foremost in its physical environment, and that this physical environment is transformed in the process of living and surviving. The transformation *is* economic and this economy *is* social.

The *Kabyles* were settled in dense, difficult terrain and were arboriculturalists. Their villages were self-contained, 'turning their back on the outside world'. Yet, they were organized in a way which allowed them to maintain a 'close and secret intimacy', but as a 'settled unit' within the world.

The *Shawia*, on the other hand, occupied the vast mountainous region of the Aurès. They took advantage of particularities of terrain and climate: cereal culture on the high plains, irrigated valleys and oases; horticulture and arboriculture in the valleys; and exploitation of the resources of the Sahara edges.

The *Mozabites* were desert dwellers and therefore faced extremes of terrain and temperature. Mozabite towns had been established in such an environment which acted as a scaffolding structure for emigration and commerce. Money was needed to maintain oases and irrigation systems to supply these.

Bourdieu completed this social topography by setting out the complexity of the *Arab-speaking peoples*, those who had the same language, religion and style of life but differed in their origins, their lifestyle and their traditions. For example, in the Chélif Valley, there was a great mix of populations following Berber immigration and invasion from the West and Orient. In this case, the *arabisés* were more numerous than the *arabes*. Here, linguistic differences were particularly acute and defined the various cultures. It was also from these regions that the colonials employed the first occupants.

On the face of it, what Bourdieu was offering was a classic account of traditional society, or *community*, in contrast to modern *society*. In this, he wrote in

a tradition which had a long history of contrasting different forms of social organization, as well as the individual in relation to society at large. At one point, Bourdieu (1958: 78) quotes approvingly from the *Cours de linguistique générale* of Ferdinand de Saussure: 'In the whole of humanity, two forces act forever together and against each other: on the one hand, the individual spirit . . . ; on the other hand, the force of "intercourse" which creates communications between men.' In the *Division of Labour in Society* (1964/33), Emile Durkheim had drawn a distinction between traditional and modern society in terms of the type of solidarity it offered to individuals within it. As a prescription for the nature of France and French society under the Third Republic, he seemed to describe the development of an *organic solidarity* where individuals can be interdependent, neither over-imposed upon by societal expectations, nor cut loose from any affinity with what surrounds them. 'There are', Durkheim wrote, 'two consciences: one contains states which are personal to each of us and which characterises us . . . the second [state] represents the collective . . . society' (ibid.: 105-6). And: 'the individual personality must become a much more important element in the life of society . . . it is not enough for the personal conscience of each to have grown in absolute value, but to have grown more than the common conscience. It must have been emancipated from the yoke of the latter' (p.167).

These ideas are significant since they can act as a guide to interpreting Bourdieu's work. Durkheim contrasted the *organic* solidarity of modern society with the *mechanical* solidarity of traditional communities (to use a distinction often made by social writers on these themes). In the case of the latter, the individual can only operate according to a communally given role, as 'an appendage of the collective type, following it in all of its movements' (ibid.: 100). Bourdieu offered a similar opposition in his account of traditional Algerian life and how it had changed in modern society.

Women in Algeria

Traditional Kabyle communities would have been considered 'unenlightened' by any modern measure of sexual equality. Everything favoured the man in the family. He had authority over all important decisions, a right which passed to his son on his death. The women, on the other hand, took care of domestic matters, some worked in the fields, and organized tasks for other females. At the time of marriage, a woman gave up her rights of inheritance. Bourdieu writes: 'Marriage only liberates women from the authority of her father to deliver her up to the total domination of her husband, or more exactly, her husband's group, most notably the mother-in-law. Her duty is to be loyal and obey. Obsession with virginity only gives way to fear of sterility' (1958/61: 14).

Marriage was not to be seen as a personal matter but the business of the group. Young girls were only told about the marriage once the choice has been made and the deal concluded between the fathers. At the time of the marriage, the father of the groom paid a dowry to the father of the bride. Bourdieu noted that some writers on the Kabyles had seen this payment as a contract, a guarantee, or a price on services rendered. However, for him these explanations took second place to the symbolic rôle that the dowry held. It needed to be understood as a 'commerce of honour' which placed an obligation on those to whom the 'gift' had been given. It created a moral and religious link, and imposed a duty to 'give more than has been received'.

Some social phenomena appear to be based on universal principles; for example, social differentiation, the family and gender roles. It is then not surprising that when we turn our attention to another Algerian sub-group, there are both similarities and differences with the Kabyle situation.

In many respects, the position of the Shawia woman was similar to that of the Kabyle, with the man dominating both in the family and the community. According to a Shawia proverb, 'for a girl there is only marriage or the tomb' (p. 28). Yet, the 'choice' is different. The extended family was all-important in Shawia society. A man optimally selected the daughter of his father's brother, or his mother's. A Shawia girl might have more say than with the Kabyle, but such liberalism was tempered by fierce retribution in cases of adultery. In the family, too, the man and wife were relatively more equal, with the woman having more say in domestic business. The Shawia woman did not tolerate polygamy which was permissible under Muslim law, and also had the right to divorce her husband. Bourdieu wrote that the Shawia girl was quickly initiated into the 'secrets' of the woman's world in a society that has a strong attachment to all things magic. Women banded together in the face of the 'common adversary' – all things masculine – and held the key to protecting goods and the harvest against the 'evil eye' and evil spirits:

It is thus that the opposition between the masculine world and the feminine world shows itself not only in the division of labour between the sexes . . . but also in political life, legal status and in the ritualistic practices. (ibid.: 30)

For the Mozabite women, Bourdieu remarked that, as in the whole of North Africa, they constituted a 'distinct society'. They had their own songs and special work. The masculine and feminine worlds were strongly separated which in itself conferred a certain autonomy. However, as such, the women had also developed their own 'religion' which was quite distinct from the official form followed by the men. This 'witchcraft' had its own distinct rituals and beliefs.

Algerians and economy

Having established the fact of man's physical presence in the world of the four groups, Bourdieu went on to show how social-economic organization was partly constituted in response to these specific demands. For example, the Mozabites were settlers in harsh territory. Their economic survival depended on temporary emigration and commerce. What Bourdieu was developing here is a 'theory of knowledge': we think the way we are organized and we are organized the way we think. This debate opposes 'infrastructure' and 'superstructure' in Marxist terminology, or ideology and materialism. It is unnecessary to rehearse all the original debates about these oppositions and of the primacy of one over the other, since the answer is clearly that they are dialectical; in other words, they mutually reinforce each other. This argument of mutuality was to become central to Bourdieu's thinking and one reason why he developed such interrelated analytical tools as *habitus* and *field*.

What was at stake in the Algerian socio-political context was not simply the determinant effects of physical conditions on their economic make-up but also the force of ideas. Weber's 'correction' of a crude Marxist line on dialectical materialism sought to show how a particular set of ideas can have constitutive economic effects. An example is how the Protestant work ethic, with its stress on personal salvation through work and asceticism, was the perfect stimulus to capitalism, with its character of work and capital accumulation. Bourdieu drew on this tradition in tracking the physical, social and economic behaviour of the Mozabites: 'one sees how great the forces of integration must be when one knows how great are the forces of dispersion' (1961: 43). In effect, Bourdieu argued that Mozabite identity must have been very firm in order to withstand the migratory nature of their lifestyle. Moreover, its particular religious doctrine acted as a pressure which bound the individual to the group. These life rules were also congruent with the world of twentieth-century commerce and economy. In this respect, some Algerian groups could more easily integrate with modern commercial practice than others.

In a sense, what we have here is an anthropologist's dream: a microcosm of integrated traditional society which had been infiltrated from without by a 'foreign' (in this case colonizing) culture. In Bourdieu's own writing, it is possible to discern approval and disapproval in the way he referred to the various Algerian sub-groups. For example, there is a hint of nobility in his implied admiration for the Kabyles, in the way that group sentiments were converted into general principles which were recognized and adhered to for the sake of the group and the individual rather than rationally imposed by modern society: 'the individual will is immediately and spontaneously conforming to the general will. But this ideal only comes about because it is not posed and held up as ideal,

because it is not objectively formulated as a formal and abstract principle, but is lived as a sentiment, as an immediate and intimate certainty' (ibid.: 24ff.). This explanation hints at Durkheim's vision of mechanical solidarity.

It is the encounter of these traditional communities with the modern world, and the consequences of such contact, that formed the core of the rest of Bourdieu's early coverage of Algeria. These encounters were also significant in terms of the heritage they passed on to the newly formed independent nation in 1962. In *Sociologie de l'Algérie* Bourdieu was able to see a 'common core' in traditional society: of the fact of the invariance of social structures despite the extreme diversity of types and conditions of life. By the final chapter, Bourdieu employed the Marxist term 'alienation' to describe 'modern Algeria'. *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* (1963) gives a detailed description of the effect of the new division of labour in Algeria, and the title of *Le Déracinement* (1964) – the 'uprooting' or 'eradication' of traditional Algerian agriculture – speaks for itself.

Algeria and the modern world

At the basis of this discussion is the question of relations: to the earth, work, within social groups, economic practices, religion and time. In traditional communities, farming is not much more than at subsistence level, but significantly, it is linked to a whole way of being in the world. The link that the Algerian *fellah* established with the earth was more mystical than utilitarian: 'he belongs to his field more than his field belongs to him'. This relation is one of 'submission' to rural rites. One is dependent on the land. Bourdieu concluded: 'This fatalism that one associates with Islam, is it not rather peasant fatalism, aware of his powerlessness in the face of the capriciousness of nature?' (p. 91). Modern society, modern capitalist society – in this case, that of France as colonial power – intervened in these relations. Bourdieu summed up the devastating effects of colonialism which were then accelerated by the War of Independence. He wrote of 'destructuration' and 'restructuration' to describe how land was taken over, farms confiscated and established cultural boundaries destroyed. In their place, grew up large modern farms owned or sub-let by European settlers. Villages were often created for military interests, and European industries – such as viticulture – were established. Bourdieu wrote of a veritable social 'vivisection' when he describes what happened in Algeria. He was well aware of how language was used to mask the intentions of the colonial force. Talk of integration really disguised a policy of exploitation, and:

It is not by chance that colonialism has found its ultimate ideological refuge in the language of integration: in fact, segregationist conservatism and assim-

ilation only give the appearance of being opposites. In one case, one invokes differences of fact to deny the right of identity, in the other case, one denies differences of fact in the name of legal status. Or rather, one accords the dignity of man, but only to the virtual Frenchman; or one arranges to refuse it, by invoking the originality of the Maghrabin civilisation, but a totally negative originality, by default. (1964: 25)

What is described is a process of disruption which accelerated and decelerated pre-colonial features. So, where traditional communities remained, for example in the mountain region, they did so relatively isolated from the rest of society; elsewhere, whole communities were destroyed. The traditional family peasant was rooted in the earth. Bourdieu invoked the word *niya* to describe the sense of naivety and rightness with which the peasant existed in life. As we shall see below, their work, life, house and tools all formed part of a single universal logic. A spirit of capitalism with its calculation of profit and future projections of worth could not be further from this world. When it did come, this unity was destroyed:

Breaking with the old environment and the routines to which it is associated, the growth in social field relation, even the structure of domestic space, whether within the group or the house, encourage urban behaviour and stimulate the preoccupation, interests and aspirations of town dwellers. Every time that the satisfaction of vital needs leave some money available, it is kept for some comfort purchase, such as cupboards, tables and chairs, petrol lamps which replace the oil lamps and the candle . . . diet diversifies and takes the place of foodstuff bought from the market: semolina replaces barley . . . consumption of meat and fruit becomes more frequent . . . one buys jackets for the men and shoes for the children. (1964: 143)

Of course, some of these changes could hardly be considered to be regrettable. But, they are bought at a cost. The local group was dispersed and the family unit broken up as a result of enforced resettlements. Some were caught in between, still attached to peasant farming and to a way of life which was dying. Others were uprooted, thus confirming their retreat from the 'old' ways. The old, in particular, suffered as they were unable to adapt to new environments. The New World was one of the urban habitat, a different structure to the day and a changed network of relations. Paradoxically, liberated from attachment to the land, the woman became still more dependent as the capitalist mode of existence only recognized those with monetary worth. Conversely, the dependency of the young decreased as they earned a salary and with it a degree of self-determination. Their urban education also allowed

them to adapt more easily to the modern world. Towards the end of *Le Déracinement*, Bourdieu writes: 'The peasant cannot be liberated from the colonialist without being liberated from the contradictions that colonialism has developed in him' (p. 170). The same might have been said for the Algerian population as a whole, since these included the very contradictions of modern capitalism.

By contrasting traditional and modern society, therefore, Bourdieu was not simply showing the extent to which they differed, but pointing to the degree to which they resembled each other. Oppositions then appeared as two sides of the same coin. I now want to develop these ideas further with reference to three aspects of Bourdieu's Algerian ethnography: the Kabyle house, their sense of honour and their relationship to time.

Space, time and honour

Earlier, I pointed out the way in which physical engagement is a primary fact of human experience. It is the nature of this physical space which offers an initial structuration of affective life. Moreover, it is not simply the natural world which presents itself but human physical constructs. Thus, in analysing the Kabyle house Bourdieu was looking for, and found, commonalities of organizing principle between the material and the ideational:

Thus the house is organised in accordance with a set of homologous oppositions: fire/water; cooked/raw; high/low; light/dark; day/night; male/female; animal/human; fertilising/able to be fertilised; culture/nature. But the same oppositions also exist between the house and the whole and the rest of the universe. Considered in relation to the external world – the male world of public life and farming work – the house, the universe of the woman, the world of intimacy and secrecy. (1979a/77: 140–1)

Bourdieu was able to trace both the structure of the domestic abode and cultural traditions and beliefs, and found in them the same oppositions. These principles extended to the other ideational dualities: down/up, wet/dry, cold/hot, left/right, west/north, east/south, night/day, male/female (ibid.: 27). The point is that in traditional societies, relations to and within both the physical world and affective life conformed to an organizational logic which harmonized these distinct spheres. This harmonization was mediated by a symbolic system which 'enchanted the experience of time by magic' (ibid.). It was this magic which had been destroyed by colonialism and the demands and habits of the modern capitalist economy. Two of the more developed examples

which Bourdieu gave, were relations to honour and time. The two are closely linked.

In traditional Algerian society, Bourdieu wrote, to challenge someone was to honour them in that it bestowed recognition of worth on them. *Ipsa facto*, to challenge someone not able to meet the challenge was to dishonour the challenger. Moreover, a challenge had within it an implied time-line for a response. On the one hand, the longer a challenge was not met, the more danger there was of falling into dishonour for the challenger. At the same time, the challenge created a symbolic link. Bourdieu saw a gift as a challenge, in that it similarly established a moral connection between giver and receiver. This was the case with the marriage dowry, but everywhere in traditional Algerian society there was the same sense of gift exchange as a form of social cohesion rather than for individual profit. To borrow a bull to work in the field was to honour the owner and challenge the borrower to reciprocate in time. In this way, economic attitudes depended on attitudes to time. This was a different way of doing things to the modern economic notion of 'interest on the loan' which established a rational-legal relation which was impersonal and into which the lender entered purely for a calculable money profit. Beliefs, economic practice and attitudes to time and to others were therefore all mixed up in the same logic: 'the prohibiting of interest on loans, is it not anything other than the negative opposite of a positive prescription of the moral of honour, in other words the duty of fraternal mutual help' (1958/61: 99). Only the heterodox communities of the Jews and Mozabites were exceptions to this rule.

In traditional communities, farming is geared to consumption. Over-production was, therefore, thanks to past efforts, an end in itself, not the means (often artificially supplied through a credit loan) to the end of future profit. So, the relation to time is all-important: 'the peasant spends in relation to the income derived from the last harvest, and not the income expected on the next' (1979a/77: 9). In contrast, in the capitalist economy, production cycles are larger and longer. The result is that those involved no longer have a grasp of the production cycle as a whole. This is the contrast between the traditional craftsman and the modern technical worker. In the modern economy, production time itself becomes abstract and unconnected with the experience of labour. In this sense, the 'organic relation' between worker and work product is broken and, with it, a certain relation to time. Indeed, a capitalist form of production depends on this 'cycle of reproduction' being broken. In such an analysis, we can see implications which go beyond the case of Algeria. What is being described is common to the modern economic condition. Bourdieu finally looked at the social structures formed in this process and their consequences for social and political action.

Algeria and class structure

By the 1960s, the destruction of traditional Algerian society was a fact. Bourdieu attempted (1963: 383ff.) a structural taxonomy of the contemporary division of labour in Algeria, basing his analysis on four differentiating criteria: the economic sector; professional stability; type of activity; and qualifications. He distinguishes between six major categories. The first is *sub-proletariat*. These are workers without permanent work and without qualifications, and include the unemployed, small merchants/artisans and labourers. The second are the *proletariat*. These are skilled manual workers with a permanent job; the modern industrial workers. There are then those in the *traditional sector*. These form quite a heterogeneous group in terms of material conditions but share, according to Bourdieu, the 'same cultural universe'. There are the *semi-proletariat*, existing on the margin of the capitalist economy. The *traditional bourgeoisie* is made up of the inheritors of industrial and semi-industrial firms. The *new bourgeoisie* are investors mainly in the new textile, clothing and food industries.

The characteristic principles of living described above obviously affected such groups differently. What was at stake is not a pre-given determined, mechanical way of acting but a set of options towards which individuals had dispositions and predispositions. Bourdieu argued that a particular form of material conditions of existence shaped the way individuals viewed the world; especially with respect to future options. These were structuring and structured structures of social *fields* and the homologies set up with particular *habitus*. Those who saw no future did not succeed in formulating the means to bring an objectified future into being. Moreover, this failure can be collective. Indeed, different groups define themselves in these terms. So, the sub-proletariat, as uprooted and demoralized, were identified as not having sufficient control over the present to be ready to take control of the future. While the organized workers had a grasp on their present circumstances and so were all the more likely to act in order to reappropriate what was to come (see 1979a/77: viiiff.).

Bourdieu predicted that as the mass of the dispossessed could not go beyond their experience to project a future, they did not have revolutionary potential. In other words, the effort to master the future could not be undertaken until the conditions for ensuring it were provided, while it was to the *petite bourgeoisie* that Bourdieu looked to provide the force to 'revolutionize' Algerian society. This group included non-manual workers of the modern economy. They were qualified and had permanent jobs at middle management level conferring on them a certain status. Bourdieu referred to them as *autodidactes*. They typically read both *Le Monde* and *Le Canard Enchaîné*, thus characterizing themselves as caught between modern living and traditional values. They were tempted by

modern European ways of living, all while remaining faithful to Islamic values. They were able to hold seemingly reactionary and progressive views side by side, and needed to be understood as a veritable *intelligentsia prolétariöide* (a term used by Weber):

For this petite bourgeoisie dreaming in its aspirations and committed to a socialist rhetoric, independence and the departure of the Europeans represents the fulfilment of all its expectations. The modern middle class, middle management of the public or private sector, members of liberal professions or teachers, will it be satisfied with this half-revolution . . . which will allow it to dominate or will it produce a revolutionary intelligentsia, the only ones capable in such a context, to define revolutionary aims in rational terms, and to bring together the sub-proletariat of the towns and the *proletarianised* peasants in a work of radical transformation, by putting charismatic *prophétisme* to the service of rationalism? (1963: 389)

I began this chapter with the image of Bourdieu struck by the proliferation of street traders as he went around Algiers: who were they? why were there so many? why were they doing what they were doing? The answers to these questions lie in the meeting of the old and the new world. To be a street hawker is a job which requires no initial outlay of money, no qualifications, no special skill, no premises or workshop. It therefore suited the sub-proletariat, the landed dispossessed. Bourdieu invokes (1979a/77: 40ff.) the misery of this way of 'earning a living', the income of which can be derisory. Nevertheless, it *was* work, and therefore had the symbolic value of putting off the ultimate degradation of having others feed them. A peasant morality therefore still exists amidst the modern capitalist environment.

BOURDIEU'S POLITICAL RESPONSE

Bourdieu's political response to the events in Algeria might be understood as both public and personal. I wish to deal with each of these in turn.

In two key articles at the beginning of the 1960s, he refers to the Algerian situation as a 'revolution': 'Révolution dans la révolution' (1961) and 'De la guerre révolutionnaire à la révolution' (1962c). The aim of these articles was to ask the question of 'how to substitute revolutionary objectives for the objectives of a revolutionary war' (ibid.: 5); in other words, how to move from a state of war to a stable system which would break with the past. As we have seen, the thrust of Bourdieu's argument was that Algeria should be seen as an objective fact or situation born out of and giving rise to objective conditions. Traditional

socio-geographical structures had been torn up which displaced peoples, between groups and within families, and disrupted the symbolic systems which connected men with their universe. The War of Independence only heightened these differences and the distances between the 'dominated' and the 'dominating'. At an affective level, the result had been humiliation, disgust, desperation and resentment.

It is important to place Bourdieu's ideas 'in their time'. During the 1950s, with Bourdieu in Algeria, the world was still recovering from war, nation states and international alliances were still forming. The Marxist criticism of capitalism was alive and had spawned two great powers – the Soviet Union and China – as well as a developed intellectual rationale. At this time, there was an alternative to Western capitalism and it was Communism, with all its revolutionary rhetoric. But, for Bourdieu, the 'revolution' against the colonial system and the disrupted caste structures in Algeria should not be understood in terms of class struggle. In particular, he criticized French intellectual writers of the Left for their 'complicity' in ignoring the inadequacies of the Algerian intelligentsia to grasp the causes, consequences of and, thus, solutions for their own socio-political problems (2000d: 7). He cited Sartre (1960) and Fanon (1961). In these works, colonized peoples are presented as the heroic overthrowers of the imperial power which was at the same time a revolution, a liberation and an assumption of consciousness. Bourdieu writes: 'the political question which occupied revolutionary intellectuals at the time was the choice between the Chinese and the Soviet route to development. In other words, it was necessary to know whether the peasants or industrial workers were the revolutionary class' (2000d: 8). Both Sartre and Fanon took the line that it is from the repressed that the revolution is generated. However, for Bourdieu, the topographical facts, at least as far as Algeria was concerned, did not confirm this theoretical reasoning. The sub-proletariat were caught between a real wish for change and acceptance of the world as it was. If this were true, then clearly the political aims of revolutionary leaders were overly ambitious. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that many of the Algerian proletariat peasantry were actually living in France, while the remaining petite bourgeoisie and intelligentsia poorly understood what was happening in their country.

If there was a word to sum up the situation it was 'immaturity'. What the colonial system bequeathed to a free Algeria was a populace who were backwards in looking forward. The Algerian peasant might be revolutionary, but he wanted to preserve traditional structures which provided security against the unknown. The intellectual class poorly understood how the reality compared to their revolutionary rhetoric. Moreover, inherent tensions between the French-speaking and the Arab-speaking peoples had partly been eased in their shared opposition to the French. But, this opposition became amorphous:

Everyday experience is lived as the result of a sort of systematic plan conceived by a malign will. The colonial system is seen as a hidden wicked god who, according to time and circumstances, is embodied in 'The Europeans', 'The Spaniards', 'France', 'The Administration', 'The Government', 'They', 'Them', 'The Others'. (1962: 10)

Bourdieu noted (1961: 27) that in such an environment, Islam takes on a different role, uniting the 'masses' in revolutionary opposition. He called on Algerians not to give in to the rule of old customs and the traditional ancestral values, but to found a 'new art of living' for edifying social harmony (1961: 40). In particular, there was the need for mediators, dialogue and education to replace the unity of resistance. Bourdieu saw this as the only way to prevent the force of the revolution being lost *in* the revolution and instead turning itself *into* a true revolutionary force.

INDEPENDENT ALGERIA

These words now seem prophetic in the light of subsequent events in Algeria (I am indebted in the following comments to the analysis of Alex Thomson for his coverage of Modern Algeria (2000: 232–9)). With independence came nationalization, with its promise of self-management for the workers. However, the reality was that they were inadequately equipped to deal with such freedoms. The ruling class was divided, with a military which failed to recognize the legitimacy of democratic institutions. As in so many governments in post-colonial Africa, the executive in Algeria became dominant, with the FLN as the sole political party. Colonel Boumédiène overthrew Ben Bella in 1965 in the name of 'authentic Socialism'. In reality, this meant a state monopoly by the FLN and the military, with Colonel Chadli becoming President in 1978. Protests against this system grew in the 1980s, increasingly being organized by the civil society of Islamic groups. The background to these protests was an economic situation and political system which, if it at first provided improved health and education services, also produced a bloated bureaucracy, agricultural stagnation and occasional food scarcity. Algeria was reliant on oil and gas revenues for foreign earnings. Attempts to restructure, to liberalize, and reduce debt threw many Algerians out of work. As is often the case, Algerian youth were most affected. The situation was made worse by the fuel crisis of 1986. By now the old allegiances to the FLN were all but dead and the divide between the ruling elite and the people became all the more apparent. Concessions to found a multi-party State paved the way for free elections. 1992 provided a shock when the main Islamic party – the FIS (*Front Islamique de Salut*) polled 47 per cent of the vote

in the first round of the parliamentary elections. However, if the Islamic party increasingly behaved like the 'government in waiting', their aspirations were thwarted when the second round of elections was cancelled by the military, who established a provisional ruling council – HCE (*Haut Comité d'Etat*). Subsequently, a state of emergency was declared and the FIS banned. These events and the increasing victimization and torture of Islamic sympathizers encouraged many supporters to switch to armed struggle. The FIS-led *Armée Islamique du salut* (AIS) attacked both state structures and their personnel. The more radical *Groupes Islamiques Armés* (GIA) targeted all secular manifestations in the country and looked for the formation of an Islamic republic.

Civil war beckoned. Assassinations, car bombs, massacres, ambushes and gun battles became daily events. By July 1997, some 100,000 people had lost their lives. The HCE appointed their own President, Liamine Zéroual, who worked to restore political representation and confidence in State institutions. The 1997 elections were a major victory for him and his alliance of parties – *Rassemblement National Démocratique* – received 33 per cent of the vote, compared to 14 per cent for the largest Islamic party. The military, however, continued to dictate what happened in political life. In 1999, the army-backed Abdelaziz Bouteflika won the presidential elections when all six of his opponents withdrew the day before the poll.

There are elements in this history of independence which are common to all postcolonial countries: the lack of a mature ruling class; the call for Socialism to replace imperialism; the disrupted socio-economic structures leading to a centripetal force towards a rural exodus for the towns; the one-party state directed by the military; the international aid which became an overburdening debt; the 'secondary' colonialism of the French; the birth of post-postcolonial generations with their own agendas; the clashing of old and new; the role which traditional religion played; the language of rhetoric and the socio-economic reality. If these trends were common to many postcolonial countries, the way each country responded was particular to them. For example, in African countries such as Zambia and Malawi, the Christian Church or trade unions were the focus for organizing pro-democracy rallies and protests; while in Algeria, it was the Islamic groups. Such a difference meant revolutionary Islamic ideas became a strong voice of opposition in Algeria, with the aim of founding an Islamic State, not a democracy along Western lines.

Bourdieu showed that a whole ethnography was needed rather than a revolutionary theory to explain what had occurred and the national dispositions this had bequeathed to the country. This was a structural topography, but structure here implied a whole practice and set of beliefs, in short a world-view. By analysing the objective conditions of Algerian society, he showed the *practical logic* which guided traditional communities and how this had been destroyed by a

new 'capitalist' logic. He predicted that there would be future tensions between the bourgeois, who had benefited from the War of Independence, and the 'proletariat' (1963: 380). It might be best to understand the country as possessing its own *habitus* configurations, with its own dispositions and predispositions within a national and international *field* network of relations. However, the 'revolution within the revolution' which Bourdieu wrote of, became less a move to harmonious civil order and rational reconstruction, than an eruption of further violence leading to civil war. Bourdieu had written in a Marxist way that Algerian society could not change until the social forces constituting the present situation were used up and conditions created for the new order to be born. In other words, both the disappearance of the old and the harbouring of the new needed to be the focused goal of Algerians who would make this their project (1979a/77: 94). Unfortunately, such individuals were insufficient in number and were systematically attacked by others with a different agenda.

The colonial order clearly did contain within it the seeds of its own destruction, but then so did what replaced it. Bourdieu summed up:

The Algerians became masters in retrospective revolution which often acted as an alibi for establishing conservatism . . . the Algerian army repeats what the French army had done . . . with the same phobias, mania, the same primitive reflexes of barbaric militarism . . . the socialist rhetoric is used to mask and support the perpetuation of lineage privilege. (2002c: 321)

In this sense, the future reproduced the mistakes of the past in the present.

THE 1990S

As Bourdieu himself became more a public intellectual in the 1990s, he addressed the actuality of the events occurring in Algeria with greater explicitness. In 1993 he joined with other intellectuals to create CISA – *le Comité international de soutien aux cadres algériens*. The aim of CISA was to support Algerian intellectuals, many of whom had been assassinated, and to draw attention to what was happening in Algeria with a 'total independence' of view. The Charter of CISA states that 'Islam is not incompatible with the lawful State'. Their analysis is that the violence was a direct inheritance of the colonial situation, and they write against the culture which had been installed 'in the name of true religion, science and the spirit of the people or the logic of the market' (2002c: 295), referring to the legitimating discourse of violence. In its place they called for a 'consensus of compromise' and of a culture built on a 'multiplicity of concrete experiences' (ibid.).

The list of those assassinated in Algeria that Bourdieu had arranged to have read out at the Panthéon in France in March 1994 (ibid.: 307) is truly horrifying. It includes some of the country's leading artists, TV directors, doctors, writers, intellectuals, teachers and lawyers, as well as ordinary men and women. At a conference that year, Bourdieu (ibid.: 311) called for a 'political party of civil peace'. Here, Bourdieu linked part of the problem to those who had become demoralized by the violence – the demoralized silent majority – who were pulled between acts of heroism and simply giving up. In these cases, the 'concern to survive prohibits living'. Bourdieu called on all those in Algeria holding authority – intellectual, moral, religious – to unite in a call for peace which he believed would have 'an immense symbolic effect'. He recognized that this might seem 'utopian', but suggested that such naivety was a measure of anxiety. It also needed to be matched with concrete action such as the cancellation of international debt. Bourdieu criticized France for the inadequacy of its response; in particular, to helping those in danger. In 1989, France granted 800,000 visas to Algerians, by 1994, this had fallen to 100,000 (ibid.: 319). France, of course, had a tradition as a '*pays d'asile*', as a country which offered political asylum to people threatened in their own country. But, in 1994, the 'right of residency' was redefined, making it much more difficult for Algerians to settle in France. Bourdieu made the point that it is in its stances on such issues as these that France in turn defined itself, and that struggles against 'xenophobic hate' and 'patriotic masks of sordid egotism' were to be found at the heart of French society: 'ceux qui voulaient condamner Dreyfus ont ouvert la voie à ceux qui plébiscitèrent Pétain' (p. 316).

Bourdieu's objections did not simply rest with France but also targeted the international community in its 'complicity of silence' over what was going on in Algeria. This masked general antipathy to the Islamic cause. In 2001, a United Nations fact-finding team was invited to Algeria by the government there, keen to have recognized its newly established democratic principles and to correct its human rights reputation. A letter went out from the *Comité international pour la paix et les droits de l'homme*, co-signed by Bourdieu (p. 429). It begins in ironic tones by listing all the positive aspects of restored normal life that the team will see: the 'residual' terrorism, the new democratic institutions, religious tolerance, the free press and newspapers. Consequently, the team is likely to leave reassured that, although there are still troubled times ahead, the country is on the road to true democracy. However, the letter urges the team to broaden its horizons: to meet the witnesses and victims of 'les forces de l'ordre' (the police); to hear about the penal sentences based on testaments extracted under torture; to meet legal judges whose independence has been reduced to nothing; to meet the families of the 'disappeared' – those taken off by 'les forces de sécurité'; to speak with banned journalists and newspaper editors; to hear

about the abuses of human rights. Also, to ask: if, according to the constitution, the army has no political role, why does it hold such a decisive position in the political system?; what guarantee can the State give that anti-terrorist measures will be applied within internationally agreed policies on human rights?; is it possible to visit the fourteen detention sites which have been designated centres of torture by the International Federation on the Rights of Man?; is it true that 18,000 political prisoners are being held? – in what conditions?; is the law of 1994 in place, prohibiting the media from broadcasting items concerning security other than official communiqués, and do the three principal news publishers continue to have ministerial 'comités de lecteur'?; why did not the police intervene in the massacres which took place between 1997 and 1998, and what about the witnesses of Amnesty who attest that the army took part in these massacres or that they took place with their support?; is it true that there are 5000 *Groupes de légitime défense* (GLD) made up of some 150,000 men and these take part in action with the police? – according to what legal texts? These questions suggest a different actuality from the one put together by and on behalf of the Algerian government to satisfy international opinion. Such questions clearly go beyond sociological issues and illustrate Bourdieu's changing engagement with events in Algeria.

CONCLUSION

In the introduction to this chapter, it was pointed out that Bourdieu's preoccupation with Algeria spanned his career and made up three distinct phases. Algeria impacted on him personally, and the result gave rise to both theoretical and political statements. At one point (2000e: 23ff.), he writes that it was only after long hours talking with a Kabyle peasant that he was able to break with his own common beliefs; for example, in the case of the loan, it was the lender who might feel obligated in Algerian society. These revelations, and others, later formed the basis of his developed theory of practice to explain individual action and beliefs. However, it is to the juxtaposition of the old world and the new that I wish to return in concluding this chapter. In Algeria, as in his native Béarn, Bourdieu was concerned with the effects on individuals whose world had passed by. In the Béarn, this represented the death of a way of life, but it was a transition which was bloodless, albeit that the bachelor casualties suffered as a result of the decline of their rural existence. In this case, the modern world passed over them. However, in Algeria, the transition had been forced by colonial occupation which skewed the direction of social developments. That the outcomes of this process should finally end in such violence is a human tragedy, but one not without, for Bourdieu, sociological explanation and response.

CHAPTER 3

Education and Training

By the 1960s, the French education system remained very much as it had been shaped by nineteenth-century Napoleonic State organization. The system reached a crisis in 1968, when students took to the streets to join workers in a general strike, immobilizing the country. This chapter will address the content and organization of education. Its background is Bourdieu's own major works on education (*The Inheritors* 1979b/64 and *Reproduction* 1977/70) and the systems he critically analysed in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The chapter will show how his own thinking developed in the light of the 1968 events which eventually saw him chairing the ministerial committee for educational reform in the newly elected Socialist governments of the 1980s. The chapter discusses subsequent developments in educational philosophy and organization (for example, the curriculum, and professional and vocational training). It will extend the discussion to cover the very specific character of French training schools, and how these prepare the future political elite. Issues here involve State centralism and the philosophies which shape it. The future of contemporary education and training are at issue at a national and international level.

Rather than examine his sociology of education in depth, the chapter aims to offer a discussion of issues of policy and practice in the context of the French background to Bourdieu's work and to suggest the ways the themes he addressed are pertinent today. This discussion interweaves Bourdieu's own engagement in the field, his educational experiences and his analyses.

At the end of *Le Déracinement*, Bourdieu wrote that the only way to reconcile the demands of cultural and economic forces in Algeria was to institute an education policy which was 'total and entire' with clear, realistic ends. He saw the need to reconcile the demands of education for society and the economy with the personal needs of individual development. This chapter looks at the range of treatments Bourdieu gave to education and of these two issues. It begins by considering French education in the later 1980s and early 1990s in order to show the outcomes of policy reform over the previous thirty years. Bourdieu became an active member of a government committee on education when the

Socialists gained power in the 1980s. What the committee proposed and how these proposals can be understood in terms of reforms following the events of May 1968 is discussed. The extent to which the education system in the 1960s resulted in this crisis is examined, as well as the core of Bourdieu's analysis of the effects of *pedagogic reason*. The chapter concludes with reference to educational events and issues to which Bourdieu responded in the 1990s. First, the context for his work on education is set out.

BOURDIEU AND EDUCATION: THE FRENCH CONTEXT

The apparent conflict of interests between individuals and society referred to above can be traced back to the Age of Enlightenment and beyond. Rousseau in *Emile* described the development of an individual through a process of the growth of natural gifts. Here, human nature is the source of knowledge. Post-revolution France, however, saw a much more instrumental form of education put in place. The Jacobin tradition of centralized republicanism combined with Napoleonic *dirigisme* to establish a system of education as State-servicing. Revolutionary aspirations had insisted on an education system which was secular and open to all. However, these principles were overtaken by imperial pragmatism, what Flower (1971: 149) describes as 'efficiency in the State and stability in Society'. In effect, this meant separate systems for the elite who would govern, and the masses who needed little education beyond minimum levels of literacy and numeracy. It is worth noting here that many elements of the Imperial University (1808) still exist to this day: lycées, the baccalauréat, the École Normale. When Durkheim was writing on education at the beginning of the twentieth century, his aim was to found 'a pedagogy for the modern world'. With shifts from traditional to modern society – rural to urban, communal to individual – and the disenchantment of the world brought about by secularization in the face of a new technological industrial age, he argued that it was necessary to instil group norms and values in individuals through an education grounded in a new societal context. To this extent, pupils needed to be educated to be *in* the world. However, the content of education should also establish and transmit the moral force in meeting and balancing group and individual needs and aspirations.

The issues of the extent to which education might operate on the side of the individual or on the side of society continued in the decades which followed the First World War. The crisis of the 1920s and 1930s was not only economic. It was also social, cultural and moral. In France, creeping secularization had led to the phenomenon of *dechristianization* as rural workers moved to urban environments to take up jobs in industry. Here, the Church was no longer the centre

of village life. Community was replaced by urban anomie: disenchantment with the mechanized world and the isolated life it offered. Resistance to this situation was mounted by the Church in the numerous youth movements it created in both rural and industrial environments. Resistance also came from the Catholic intellectual movements of the 1930s, the so-called 'non-conformists'. Such intellectuals spanned the political spectrum but they shared a concern with the effects of 'modern' life on the individual. As mentioned earlier in this book, they were suspicious of American consumerism and saw the economic crises hitting the modern world as symptomatic of a way of life that was morally bankrupt. Some sympathized with the notion of a 'crisis in capitalism', even if they were not Marxist. However, many did find resonance between their own religious faith and Marxist notions of alienation and the liberation of man through revolution. Before the horrors of the holocaust and the Soviet gulag, many Europeans were seduced by the alternatives of fascism and communism. The 'ni droite, ni gauche' (neither right, nor left) philosophy was a principle around which diverse factions could group. In the *personalism* of Emmanuel Mounier, with its concept of 'l'épanouissement de la personne' (the blossoming of the person), we have a philosophy which attempted to ground itself in the best of human nature rooted within the social group. Indeed, personal fulfilment was seen as an expression of the group. This argument echoed Durkheim, when he suggested that in *organic solidarity*, there is a need for a pedagogy which instils norms and values derived from the group but upheld and respected by the individual. Such solidarity was, of course, also an element of experiences of resistance in the Second World War when individuals of different social background were thrown together in close-knit communities.

The 'philosophy of the individual' was also the root of existentialism, with its tenets of personal responsibility and action, but, as noted in the last chapter, this is hardly what inspired Bourdieu. In Bourdieu's first major publication on education, *Les Héritiers* (1979b/64), he was mostly concerned to establish the fact that differences in scholastic outcomes should be understood in terms of differences in social provenance – especially the culture of pupils and the way their background meshed or clashed with the dominant culture of educational institutions. He concluded that a truly democratic education should 'allow the greatest possible number of individuals to acquire for themselves, as soon as possible and as completely and perfectly as possible, the largest possible number of competencies that the scholastic culture can offer at any given moment' (ibid.: 114). Bourdieu was not alone in his early concern to draw attention to the way different outcomes in scholastic achievement needed to be understood in terms of gradations within the social origins of students and pupils. For example, Musgrave (1966) and Banks (1968) produced enough statistics to demonstrate this social differentiation of outcome as a fact. What is perhaps distinct about

Bourdieu's approach was the way in which he explained the process by which this phenomenon occurred and the implications his sociology of education had for what might be done about it.

Bourdieu claimed that a democratic education was opposed to both the traditional system of producing an elite in society, based mostly on birth, and the made-to-measure production of specialists of technocratic, vocational education for the masses which now complemented it. A simple democratization of education, that is making everything available to all – in theory, at least – was not enough. Alongside the demand for equality of opportunity, there needed to be the foundations of a *rational pedagogy*, the aim of which would be to 'methodically neutralize' the influence of socio-cultural factors on scholastic achievement. This *real* pedagogy for fairness and equality would cover the educational spectrum of institutions and apply to all matters of recruitment, both of pupils, students and teachers. In *Les Héritiers*, and subsequent publications (Darras 1966, Castel and Passeron 1967), a number of themes emerge; most noticeably, the structure of various European societies of the day and their differential causes and effects within them in and on their education systems. In this sense, education was seen as a key tool in social reconstruction and engineering. In one interview, Bourdieu states somewhat innocently 'I undertook research on students, firstly, to better understand who they were, and also to put a bit of clarity in confused debates surrounding them' (Bourdieu and Grenfell 1995b: 2). Both *Les Héritiers* and *La Reproduction* are empirically based and include a large number of statistical analyses. However, *La Reproduction* also offers a highly developed theoretical explanation of educational systems and their work. A second wave of research produced two voluminous studies on French universities, *Homo academicus* (1984) and on elite training schools, *La Noblesse d'état* (1989). These works, together with numerous articles and papers, mean that Bourdieu can be truly regarded as a sociologist of education. It is certainly education which received his most comprehensive treatment.

FRENCH EDUCATION

Up until the advent of the Fifth Republic in 1958, France remained on a track which set a clear dichotomy between primary education, with its basic vocational training, and secondary education which was essentially classical in content. As Bourdieu himself noted: 'all were trained as apprentice professors and not professional apprentices' (see Bourdieu 1964/79b and Flower *op. cit.*: 155/165). From primary school, pupils would pass to the lycée for secondary education, and, eventually take the baccalauréat as preparation for higher education. The primary/secondary divide was therefore a major cut-off between a

basic life training and education for the more elite professions. The middle classes, sensing this, sent their children to *classes élémentaires* which acted as a 'middle school', between primary and secondary education, and guaranteed access to the lycée. This system structure was later superseded when the *collèges d'enseignement secondaire* (CES) were established in 1963. The CES was intended to be open to all and to provide secondary education between ages 11 to 14, whereas the lycée became a kind of 'sixth-form' college or senior high school. By the 1970s, the CAP (*Certificat d'Aptitudes Professionnelles*) was established as the main end of secondary school diploma. From this point, students would either go to the lycée in order to prepare the 'bac', to a lycée technique for specialized vocational training or enter the world of work. These structural changes to the education system demonstrate that the decades following the Second World War were marked by two key policy principles: democratization and vocationalism. By democratization, we mean improving access and making opportunities available to all; for example, in the later policy that at least 80 per cent of the post-sixteen age group should undertake further education and training. Vocationalism refers to the way education was increasingly linked to the world of work.

At this point, I want to offer a picture of the state of education in France at the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century. I do this in order to indicate the results of decades of reform. This discussion leads to a consideration of the extent to which the events of May 1968 can be understood as the harbinger of this situation. This discussion includes Bourdieu's most active involvement in education policy reformation in the 1980s.

French education in the 1990s

In 1993, Bourdieu with his team published *La Misère du monde* (1999a/93), a voluminous account and witness to 'social suffering' in contemporary French society. It includes a number of personal biographies of individuals in several social and professional settings: the rural peasant, the town dweller, the immigrant, the old age pensioner, young people, factory workers, teachers and students. Education plays a significant part in many of the collected passages. The accounts do not present an image of a successful education reform with a policy of democratization and vocationalism. For Bourdieu, there were 'outcasts on the inside' of the system. These were the pupils and students who had access to education and were present in it, but whom it did not serve well. Why?

Up until the 1950s, the system as it existed excluded the 'untalented' from secondary education and beyond. But, increasing access had only increased competition. By the 1990s, the same qualifications 'bought' less in terms of job

prospects and the prestige associated with academic success decreased as the number who possessed it then increased. The academic prizes therefore became illusory, or 'simulacra': 'cheap diplomas, high in name only' (ibid.: 425). Success here was a relative failure, and students were caught in the 'double bind' of working for devalued qualifications or accepting the stigma of total exclusion. Such contradictions were more than theoretical and were felt at a highly personal level. Young people were aspirant and had high expectations. When these expectations were not met, they became disillusioned and impatient; for example, the school protest movements in France in November 1986 and November 1990.

Of course, the effects varied from place to place and group to group:

On the one hand, there are the schools which have been hastily put up in the ghettoized suburbs where they are intended for greater numbers of ever more culturally disadvantaged students . . . On the other hand, there are the schools that have been carefully maintained where the student life of upper- and middle-class students is not that different from the one of their fathers or grandfathers. (ibid.: 421)

Timing is all. The sons and daughters of the elite apply themselves at the right time and in the right place, drawing on all their social, cultural and economic capital. The disadvantaged are left to their own devices. Without advice, they act inappropriately or out of turn, missing opportunities. Bourdieu argued that the case was similar to that of the Algerian sub-proletarians. Individuals were unable to reconcile the contradictions of the present, and the future itself became indistinct and stretched out in an undifferentiated way. The concept of the 'eternal student' was born: detesting the scholastic system, but fearing the possible alternatives. Being in education at least means not being unemployed and avoiding threatening factory work (see pp. 9 and 429).

There is the further 'double bind', or 'dual consciousness', between an education with no end and involvement in a game which is illusory. The effects of this were experienced at a highly personal and affective level which lead to psychological dysfunction. In *La Misère du monde*, we read of Malik, the son of an Algerian immigrant, who refers to school as a 'dumping ground': 'I am going to leave here, but right now, I don't want to' (ibid.). This indeterminacy is permissible in a system which itself wishes to prolong education through the 80 per cent policy mentioned earlier. It contrasts with a system which also selects and categorizes at a younger age. In an age where streaming and selection occurs earlier and their consequences appear later, parents and their children need to keep an accurate eye on the professional trajectories associated with certain academic disciplines in order to choose the correct route at the right time. It is not surprising therefore

that policy moves to impose option choices at an earlier stage in post-secondary education were key to the so-called 'high-school malaise' which came to a head in strikes and demonstrations. Dysfunction might therefore be the unintended consequence of democratization. Can the same be said for vocationalization?

In the early 1960s, Bourdieu had described the ideal French *homo academicus*:

Coming from parents and grandparents who are themselves teachers, [the winner of] *the first prize* [coming first in the baccalauréat] in Philosophy in 1964, aspires mostly to prepare for the École Normale Supérieure [the most prestigious education university of France], to gain the aggregation there [a competitive exam which qualifies the candidate to teach in a prestigious upper school or university] and to become a philosophy teacher; while the [winner of the] *first prize* in Latin 'has read the whole of French Literature by the age of fifteen and a half' and, 'ferociously individualistic', 'surprising in their precociousness', only hesitates between research and teaching. (1964: 65–66 my comments in brackets)

But times had changed. Bourdieu had criticized the overt classicism of the system and the way it worked against those not from a 'noble' background. The immense increase in student numbers in France required a more diverse range of post-secondary specialisms. Humanities became popular in the 1960s and, with this, growth in commerce and higher management, as well as an orientation towards technology and science. The French baccalauréat diversified, with separate strands for Humanities, Economics, Science, besides more professionally orientated options. These diverse routes became social markers with economic implications. In *La Misère du monde*, Malik refers to the new vocational baccalauréat as 'a dead-end street' and, 'it hasn't been around for long and I don't trust that kind of diploma' (p. 435). Another student refers to the 'royal road of the sciences' (p. 441) – everyone else is looked down upon. For this student, choosing which track to study implied a whole divide between being amongst the 'best' and the 'rest'. Her literature teachers suggested to them that the science track is best (p. 444). Even to get into a university humanities programme it is better to have the science baccalauréat.

Clearly, in France, the move from secondary school to sixth-form college or high school (lycée) is an enormous shift. Pupils describe how a community-based education is replaced by a system that is hierarchical and segregated. In the name of democratization and access, more students are encouraged into post-secondary education. However, in order to meet the targets of the 80 per cent policy, some students who would have been sifted out are allowed through by overvaluing their achievement. Then, in baccalauréat classes, selection bites

hard. Those who in the past would have accepted their modest academic success, find their raised expectations dashed when faced with this harsh regime. The reality is that access has to be limited eventually because of scarcity of scholastic prizes. The later this selection is left, the greater the disappointment. Competition similarly becomes keener and more finely tuned. At this level, the least academic hiccup results in total failure: 'those who can't keep up, too bad for them . . . once you fail somewhere, you're guilty' (p. 448). Here, differentiation becomes arbitrary and the sense of deception for those who do not quite make it, is both acute and chronic. Such intense emotions affect self-esteem and life experience. No wonder, then, if the literature classes become the 'place of recovery' for the science failures.

What of the teachers' views? One lycée teacher describes students' behaviour as 'terrible' and 'intolerable'. They lack motivation, are 'hopeless' and 'unsalvageable' (p. 457). The 80 per cent rule is 'demagogic' and results in students who 'should not be here'. They need individual help and do not get it. The 'vocational kids have scores to settle . . . either they sink into passive acceptance of their inferiority compared with the eggheads, or they become violent' (ibid.). There is no parental control.

Another teacher in a vocational lycée describes teaching and teacher/student relationships as 'devastating'. She is 'truly worn out fooling around with devalued qualifications' and describes her job as more like being a 'prison guard' (p. 488) with gangs and the law of the jungle operating. Is it any better in secondary schools? One teacher states:

From the moment you go into the class via stairs and hallways covered with graffiti and where there's endless coming and going where things are always boiling (a real pressure cooker) you feel you are done for. On each floor on either side of a central corridor, there are 10 classrooms with class partitions halfway up which are a great source of amusement since they only have to jump up a little to act like idiots and disrupt the class that is going on . . . The first obstacle is lining up at the classroom door. Even that's impossible . . . 15 (out of 30) of them get in line but then one calls to a friend in another class, they have to make up after a shouting match . . . It's endless insults and verbal abuse. In the stairway, one steps on another's foot, there's a volley of insults and the other one who is evidently thinking it's a matter of honour wants to take a swing . . . just coming into the room takes 10 mins. (p. 486)

This is what it was like to be a teacher in France in some contexts in the late twentieth century. It is important to remember the particularity and the mundaneness of what we often discuss in highly abstract and philosophical language. What effects does this professional experience have on teachers' personal lives?

One secondary teacher talks of the 10-hour days and exhaustion which routinely made her unavailable to her husband. It damages family life and eventually they divorce. Her colleagues are depressed and personal and marital problems are common. Work is 'relentless' (p. 464). Another speaks of 'devastating conditions'. The word *conditions* probably best sums up the principal contributing factors to the educational malaise. Clearly, there are large differences in material conditions between schools in deprived or wealthy suburbs of French towns. The pupils and students in the latter possess sufficient cultural accoutrements to find the '*bonne route*'. Even here, however, the squeeze is on the need to gain a place in the 'right track' and to compensate for the constant devaluing of academic titles by mobilizing a whole range of social, economic and cultural strategies to ensure passage to the prestigious positions.

Compare this context with a secondary school in an 'education priority zone' near Lyon (pp. 492ff.). Here, the percentage of pupils lagging behind when they enter the school is 65 per cent. The majority are from working-class families and three-quarters of these have parents who are foreign nationals. Seventy-five per cent of pupils are on State assistance. What is provided by the State is simply not enough to compensate for these conditions. The State implements policies to 'ensure diversification and individualization of teaching' (government directives of 1985) but again the material and resource conditions are not provided to compensate for social and economic influences. Indeed, the possibility of insisting that pupils stay on to a later age exacerbates the problem since insufficient resources are then spread across a greater number of students. In other words, the conditions are simply not created in which such policies can succeed.

There were insistent calls for 'school autonomy' in France during the 1970s and 1980s. Faced with the traditional autocratic centralization of the French State during the 1960s, the desire for greater independence, diversity and cultural choice is not surprising. However, even here, a seemingly desirable democratic principle paradoxically had a negative effect on schools. They may have gained greater control over their resources, but they are now also accountable when success does not follow. Social problems become the fault of the school rather than society. Moreover, schools have to compete with each other. Although the idea here is that the school knows its constituency and what they can offer it, such measures in the name of independence and parental choice merely result in a further 'hierarchization' of educational institutions. Magnet schools and relegation sites are created from 'succeeding' and 'failing' schools. 'Academic exodus' becomes the phenomenon whereby the best students are lost to better schools. Vacant places have to be filled, so the more problematic students are taken on to replace them. The conclusion is that behind the government rhetoric of 'success for all' lies another reality. Bourdieu describes it:

Polarisation over the extension of time in school to the detriment of teaching conditions, and the urging of ill-considered competition between schools, confronted by very unequal difficulties, seem to have contributed to concentrating and aggravating problems in those places where the most disadvantaged students are increasingly being relegated. (*ibid.*: 462)

What is described here are changes which might best be characterized as *structural* since they relate to the relations between institutions. Those relations can be expressed in managerial or organizational terms, and imply changing roles and responsibilities. However, behind the changing shape of the structure of the educational field lie personal causes and effects. They result from decades of reforms, many of them arising from the crisis of 1968.

1968

1968 remains an enigma. At the time, the French Fifth Republic was barely ten years old. These had been eventful years. The Franco-Algerian War had kick-started the Fifth Republic. In the war and its aftermath, social and political scores had been settled under the grandfatherly presidency of Charles de Gaulle. His style of autocratic *dirigisme* had many benefits for a country stalled in the past. Strong economic planning directed industrial and commercial developments in a coordinated manner. The populace was mobilized in the name of modernization and revitalization.

The causes and consequences of the 1968 events have been hotly disputed but what is clear is that the significance of what occurred touched all aspects of French society – social, political and economic. It was also a very personal event. Neither should we ignore the international spirit of the times: the youth movements, the peace demonstrations and the idealism of liberation – both individual and communal. In 1983, Bourdieu wrote in his own personal reflection on 1968 of its 'two faces': one of the 'minor clergy' with its resentments, wishing to call society to account; the other of 'social innocence', of youth inspired to 'question everything' and undertake an enormous 'social experiment' (2002c: 62). Student demonstrations were triggered by a clash between students and academic authorities over freedom of access to residences. This might seem a rather mundane issue but it was symbolic. The Imperial Université founded in 1808 had maintained a highly centralized control over education. The dominant disciplines were Law and Medicine, designed to provide the necessary doctors and lawyers for the State. Over one hundred and fifty years later, this tradition had changed little. There was then a sense of overriding authoritarianism which was resented by students. The student body had become less homogeneous.

Numbers had increased (136,700 in 1949 compared to 508,199 in 1967 – see Hanley *et al.* 1979: 36). A significantly higher proportion of the students also now studied Humanities and Arts courses rather than following the traditional elite routes to the most prestigious professions. Overcrowding, as well as top-down regulations were issues. Existentialism was in the air and, with it, a questioning of society's right to perpetuate a self-reproducing elite. In 1967, 57 per cent of the children of top management and the liberal profession attended university, compared with only 3.4 per cent of children from the working classes (*ibid.*). Faced with growing unemployment, many students questioned the education they were receiving and its suitability for eventually gaining a job. The educational reasons and sentiments behind 1968 were therefore complex, various and contradictory. For students to be critical of a system upon which they were also dependent led to what Bourdieu called a state of 'dual consciousness' or 'double bind'. They were caught between two apparently non-resolvable, opposing positions. If education provided the initial impetus for 1968, many of its causes and consequences were rooted in society at large. France may have had enough of De Gaulle and his style of paternal authority which reduced all decisions to a personal choice between him and what he advocated or 'chaos'. Or, perhaps France was simply 'bored'. However, the student cry for *participation*, *autogestion* (self-management) and *autonomie* resonated with workers' sense of being cast as pawns in economic renewal.

How one interprets and understands specific events of this sort is dependent on individual perspective. For some (for example, Tourraine 1968), they represented a new type of class struggle within the Marxist paradigm. For others, the personal struggle against the modern 'one-dimensional man' could not be discounted. To call the events of 1968 a 'crisis of civilization' is probably an overstatement. Indeed, it is debatable what the immediate, or many subsequent reforms amounted to in terms of participation, independence and self-management; although, as we saw above, democratization and vocationalization did become the guiding principles of subsequent education policy.

Somewhat fortuitously, perhaps, Bourdieu was undertaking major empirical data collection and analyses in the period just prior to 1968. This work formed the basis of his two major 1980s books: *Homo academicus* (1984) and *La Noblesse d'état* (1989). For Bourdieu, *conatus* is: 'that combination of dispositions and interests associated with a particular class of social positions which inclines agents to strive to reproduce at a constant or an increasing rate, the properties constituting their social identities' (1988a/84: 176). In *Les Héritiers* and *La Reproduction*, Bourdieu had offered examples of such *conatus* in the oppositions between social background of students' *habitus* and the culture of the scholastic *field*; in other words, how the dominant culture represented in higher education worked to favour the socially reproductive dispositions of

those originating in groups who already possessed that culture, to the detriment of those who did not.

Homo academicus and *La Noblesse d'état* are much more refined analyses of those same concepts of *habitus* and *field*, this time set in a historic context. These books are probably best read as an exemplification of a sociology of history. In these accounts, the elements of time and structure are central to understanding, not only how a specific *field* is constituted, but how it is, in fact, in a state of flux. The result is an example of social processes as they change and the consequences of their evolution. Everything follows from this basic approach that social positioning is constitutive of individual thought and action. For example, Bourdieu shows how interpreters' views on 1968 can be understood in terms of their own structural positioning in the education *field* (1988a/84: 160). Workers' level of participation in demonstrations could also be explained in terms of social position, as it increased with their level of instruction and in inverse proportion to age (*ibid.*: 166). However, Bourdieu also showed how the structural nature of the higher education *field* itself had changed: 87 per cent of teachers who acceded to posts as lecturers in classical languages between 1950 and 1962 were younger than 32 at the time, as opposed to 59 per cent after 1960 (*ibid.*: 139). In literature, the proportion of women went from 19 per cent in 1963 to 28 per cent later. In history, 50 per cent of lecturers between 1950 and 1960 were at least 32, compared to 57 per cent after 1960. What we have here is a picture of the changing size, popularity, status and thus morphology of different academic disciplines – as they were represented and who represented them.

Bourdieu shows how new academic *fields* had challenged the orthodox hierarchy against the traditional dominant disciplines of Law and Medicine. Business, Management and the Civil Service began to offer prestigious jobs. Individual students therefore altered their academic horizons. Oppositions operated within the dominant academic *field*, as well as between it and the rest. Science and Art were characterized according to different forms of enquiry: of underlying causes and experience (p. 59). Subjects like theology, law and medicine were constituted to serve government, while history, geography and language were for the individual. Dispositional relations to these subjects were tracked by Bourdieu; for example, in the case where membership to trade unions could be directly associated with whether a graduate came from a Science (15 per cent), Art (30 per cent) or Medicine (6 per cent) background. Bourdieu's point was that, by the eve of 1968, the large increase in the number of students, together with the changing status of disciplines had led to enormous structural tensions within the teaching force as much as the student body. The older 'canonical' professors, with their background of training and expectations, were distinct from the newer lecturing body recruited to deal with mass teaching. These two groups possessed different forms of *capital* and

different configurations of *capital*, with consequent differing values, which could be 'spent' within the academic *field*. To this extent, 1968 should be understood as much as a conflict of generations as of age. In some ways, new lecturers benefited from the changes. Larger numbers of students necessitated more teachers. Therefore, recruitment to posts in higher education became easier to obtain. But, conditions of service changed in response which de facto 'redefined' their employment. Time was a crucial element. Those who did not get on the boat at the right point, or took too long completing theses for example, missed it altogether:

By breaking the relation of anticipated identification with the masters and their magisterial positions, and ending the complicity of holders and claimants in support of the norms of legitimate promotion, the transformation of norms of appointments laid the university open to the combined effects of the old career law and transgression of that law; and it is difficult to see where there might arise any forces capable of imposing in practice the establishment of an order where recruitment and promotion would depend on the sole criteria of pedagogical or scientific productivity and efficiency. (ibid.: 158)

As mentioned above, Bourdieu uses the term *hysteresis* here to refer to the state of being 'out of place and time'; in other words, where structural *field* conditions alter before changes in the expectations produced by them. As a result, all sorts of phenomena arise which might seem incongruent with the logical principle of the *field*; for example, those normally excluded are included, and those normally included are excluded. In 1968, there were sufficient structural homologies between the educational *field* and the industrial *field* that alliances were set up; in this case, between students and workers. Although Bourdieu remarked that they stand a better chance of successful collaboration the more they do not actually meet! (ibid.: 178). When resonance is sufficiently strong between social groups, they all temporarily 'become one'. Everyone imagines themselves as a collective person. Individual time and public time become one (pp. 185 and 188). In this case, there is an objective break in the circle of expectation:

An important fraction of the less subordinate among the subordinate . . . leave the race, the competitive struggle implying acceptance of the rules of the game laid down . . . to take up a struggle which we *may* call revolutionary. (p. 172 my italics)

Behind the events of May 1968, Bourdieu saw dislocations within society and individuals. Indeed, the two were coterminous within the structural homologies which Bourdieu saw as mutually constituting *habitus* and *field*. Socio-

cultural characteristics at a particular place and time manifested themselves in individual actions which in turn transformed those characteristics. But, what remained of 1968 after the wave of personal and public protests subsided? In 1983 (2002c: 62) Bourdieu concluded:

What has remained of this great shaking of the symbolic order? In the political field, frankly, almost nothing: the logic of the apparatus and the parties, that the liberal critique did not spare, is better constituted to express the virtuous rationalisation of corporate interests than the anti-institutional sentiment which will remain for me the truth in the laughter of May.

In Bourdieu's crisp summing up, we see the linking of the events with economics and institutional structures. In *La Noblesse d'état*, Bourdieu offered an analysis of the ways educational institutions changed in the post-war period and in the twenty-year period between 1968 and the 1980s. In particular, he focused on the elite training schools outside of the university system. Why was such a complementary study necessary to understand the changing nature of French education?

In the nineteenth century, the French university system, itself an elitist institution, had been complemented by the so-called *Grandes écoles*; most noticeably, the *École Normale Supérieure* (ENS) and the *École Polytechnique*. These elite training colleges produced the elite of the elite, and provided the main routes into industry and the offices of State. In 1881, the *Écoles des Hautes Études Commerciales* (HEC) was also established. In *La Noblesse d'état* Bourdieu treated these different institutions as 'clans', since they were each characterized by a distinct culture, they attracted students from cognate backgrounds, and they serviced particular sectors of the economy and State. Moreover, they developed in response to the changing environment and resulting needs of the economy and State. So, it is necessary to understand the setting up of the HEC as responding to the growing commercialization of industry. Similarly, in 1945, at Liberation, the *École Nationale d'Administration* (ENA) was established specifically to provide a supply of modern-day technocrats to drive French political, social and economic reform. There are three main strands to Bourdieu's analysis. First, that student numbers in higher education had indeed increased during the post-war period. Secondly, that changes in size should not mask relative qualitative changes; in other words, the relative positions between the excluded and the excluding continues. Thirdly, that changes were taking place among the ruling elite in response both to the democratization of education and the developing nature of French society and culture in a world of emerging globalization. So, what we see is a growth in some discipline areas – for example, Humanities – and the founding of 'technological

universities' (IUTs) to provide professional degrees. However, some aspects of the structure of the elite *field* remained largely the same; for example, the size of the Parisian Grandes écoles was static in the period between 1950 and 1971 while the top schools received even more students from the dominant factions of the bourgeoisie. Bourdieu remarked that the proportion of working-class students in the ENS had moved from 'nothing to next to nothing' (1996b/89: 189). Bourdieu frequently referred to the French bourgeoisie as 'nobility', a satirical comment on the way he saw them behaving in the same way as aristocratic families under the French monarchy – constant back-watching and back-stabbing, and shifts and manoeuvres to occupy the most privileged positions in society with a view to perpetuating family stock.

By the later 1980s, two important changes had occurred: first, the increase in the importance of the ENA had changed the structure of the *field*; secondly, the development of new institutions, such as schools of management, marketing, advertising, journalism and communication. The ENA culture was in the ascent and, in a technocratic age, it performed the same role that the HEC had done in the late nineteenth century (p. 200); namely, to spearhead the dominant character of the socio-economic climate. The diversification of associated institutions allowed the business bourgeoisie to 'circumvent the increased rigour of academic law' (p. 187); in other words, in a world of greater academic competition, they acted strategically in order to maintain their social positioning. Bourdieu saw cause and effect everywhere; for example, whereas the traditional industrial bourgeoisie came from conservative, Catholic backgrounds, where *economic capital* was the basis of the dominant *rite de passage*, the newer technocratic class were obliged to draw on a wider and more complex *capital* portfolio, including educational, *cultural* and *social capital*. The role of academic *capital* increases as ties with the founder of a business weaken (p. 284). It was necessary to have money and training, but it was also necessary to have social contacts:

'To be of noble birth is a great advantage,' as Pascal said long ago. 'At the age of 16 it places a man within the select circle, known and respected, as another would have merited it at 50. It is a gain of 30 years without trouble.' (*Pensées*, 322) (1996b/89: 373)

It is worth pausing here to ask the extent to which what is being described is an exclusively French phenomenon. Clearly, the particularities are French. However, the underlying logic of social differentiation, as well as the strategies to bring it about might be seen as a human universal. In his Foreword to the English translation edition of *La Noblesse d'état*, Loïc Wacquant writes of the book as being 'doggedly franco-centric'. Should we be concerned with these machinations of the French bourgeoisie? Wacquant responds by suggesting how,

although the actual organizational names and structures are different in the USA, the outcomes and mechanisms are not dissimilar (pp. xivff.). Briefly, he notes that because of a historic preponderance of *economic capital* over *cultural capital* among the American dominant class, there is not a separation between rival tracks in higher education – between universities and Grandes écoles, as in France. Instead, distinction is achieved in the relative status of disciplines – arts, science and professional disciplines, the relations they have established with the powers that be, and the logic by which they define themselves – creative/real, critique/expert, research/service. He also demonstrates how scholastic origin is an important factor in university entry and eventual professional career, with the high-status boarding schools assuring higher education and senior managerial careers. In other words, although the actual signifiers are distinctly American, the logic of distinction and its outcomes remain very similar between the USA and France. It would be possible to undertake a similar comparison of the particular signification of English scholastic achievement and its impact on social trajectory. The analysis Bourdieu presents is that the very way we think is a construction of social background and the academic system. Although this 'view of the world' may be arbitrary, it has very real social consequences.

BOURDIEU AND ACADEMIC THINKING

In 'Systems of education and systems of thought' (1971a/67), Bourdieu extended an argument presented by the art historian Panofsky that there was symmetry between the structure of scholastic thinking and the structure of Gothic architecture. In other words, in a very Weberian sense, a certain way of thinking produced a certain way of acting in the world. By extrapolation to schools, Bourdieu argued, for example, that: 'Many of the distinguishing features of English "positivism", or French "rationalism" are surely nothing other than the tricks and mannerisms of the schools' (ibid.: 204). He also argued that the cult of team sport in English public schools was both nourished and fed by the anti-intellectualism of the imperial elite which valued loyalty and group spirit over personal development and independence (1989: 74).

We might ask what is this dominant way of thinking and what effects does it have on the world other than providing a means to an end for factions of the dominant classes? Just as he had done in *Homo academicus* about the French university intellectuals, Bourdieu showed that, in the Grandes écoles, the very organization of work imposed a relation to that work. The 'subordination of learning to the imperatives of urgency' (p. 85) implies a challenge: can you survive in difficult situations? Divisions are created: between what is intellectual and physical, between the public and private, between 'real' men and 'common men'. 'These

schools attach importance to activities that are formal, gratuitous and not very gratifying because they are reduced to mere intellectual and physical discipline' (p. 110). Form over content is all. He quotes from a speech of Lord Plummer to old Etonians: 'They taught us nothing at Eton. It may be so, but I think they taught it very well' (p. 111). The implication here is that if we remove the social dynamic offered by an English public-school education, its content is vacuous and of little value. Similarly, in France, it is not that the Polytechnique creates engineers but that it creates a 'certain kind of engineer' (p. 205). They have style and ease. This type of education implies an affirmation of public values, a victory over the masses, a justification for superiority, and a reaffirmation of a specific world-view. It also implies a personal relationship to mind and body:

The phrase 'I am master over myself and over the universe' is an ethical profession of faith in which a dominant individual justifies his domination in his own mind by referring to his natural capacity to dominate nature. Becoming educated is in this sense a rite of mourning; the old (in this case) young man, with his passions, his desires, in a word, his nature, must die. (p. 110)

Affirmation of this social norm becomes loving oneself in others, by affirming what is recognized and ignoring what is not. *Recognition* and *misrecognition* therefore are part of a process of defining identity by distinguishing between self and the 'other'. Those who do not possess common features are condemned to prove themselves incessantly, knowing that they are already 'out of the game'. Academic erudition implies effort which contradicts a founding justification of the educationally dominant: that their position is based on talent. It is therefore necessary to be 'effortless' – the privilege of 'ease'. Bourdieu wanted to reverse the dominant pairings which claim talent over heredity, worth over birth, what is conquered over what is received and achievement over ascription, and to assert the latter of each as the basis of what goes on in the name of education.

The conclusions from this discussion argue that education in modern society forms a certain kind of individual, and their type is mostly a product of the trends in the economy. There are the elite and the non-elite, but the whole needs to be understood as in constant flux in terms of processes and product. The structure and form has changed, but the tendency is for the outcome to remain the same. Even so, Bourdieu argued that the nature and character of both the elite and the non-elite had changed. In particular, there was greater interpenetration between the public and private sectors and greater recourse to both family and school-based modes of reproduction. Indeed, the fact that individuals could now justify their position in terms of being 'self-made' men enhanced their legitimacy, in a way that the heirs to fortunes could not. In this case, the power 'to be' had passed away from purely economic capital to include complex

configurations involving both *social* and *cultural capital*. The fact that these social changes had economic provenance was not lost on Bourdieu.

Bourdieu was therefore suspicious of the notion of the *liberating school*. In a paper given at the conference, 'La Semaine de la Pensée Marxiste' (reprinted in *Démocratie et Liberté*, 1966a), he criticized the Jacobin ideology which, by arguing for equal opportunities and access, had been complicit in preserving the social inequalities it reproduced erstwhile denouncing it: 'the values that schools promote, what they demand from teachers and pupils, teaching methods . . . recruitment criteria and the judgements used, the procedures of orientation and selection, the content of culture that they transmit contributes to favour the most favoured, and to disfavour the most disfavoured' (ibid.: 170). Schools, he wrote, persuade people who are excluded that their exclusion is due to merit, not birth. Such is accomplished through a mystification of process. To take a common-sense notion such as the 'school as liberating force', therefore, and to show that, in fact, the very concept obscured the process of social selection inherent in it, challenges the liberal view of and justification for the apparent meritocracy from which benefactors of the educational institution draw. Bourdieu concluded: 'How indeed could they think of the new academic elite as a nobility . . . [they would have] to break with an entire universe of more or less unconscious representation' (1996b/89: 374). In other words, to break with this illusion required a whole different way of thinking.

BOURDIEU AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT: POST-1968

Given these views, there is a question of what Bourdieu advocated in order to change the situation. In the heat of 1968, he was party to various public calls for reform or democratization. An archive document (2002c: 63) appeals for the 'organisation of the States General for education and research'. Familiar themes are listed: reduce social inequalities; transform teacher recruitment; work to include the excluded; minimize the effects of birth; reduce the power of qualifications to define competence; reform the exam system; introduce modern teaching techniques. As a result of the 1968 events, various reforms were indeed granted by the government in the name of autonomy, participation and plurality. However, the forces of conservatism were and are as strong as the needs of the State, and people were caught between the vested interests of teachers, academics, students and politicians. In the event, it was very easy for autonomy to be recast in terms of institutional accountability, and for democratization to lead to a system of 'more chasing less'. The 'haves' continued to outmanoeuvre the 'have-nots' to gain the most prestigious jobs in a world of global economic and technological intensification.

In 1981 France voted in a Socialist President – François Mitterrand – and then government. This was the first Socialist government of the Fifth Republic. In 1984, Mitterrand commissioned a report from the professors at the Collège de France: a series of propositions for the future of education. The report (2002c: 199) set out a series of guiding 'principles': the unity of scientific knowledge with the notion of a plurality of cultures; the diversification of the concepts of intelligence and excellence; the opening up of routes for a range of scholastic achievement; the protection of institutions and individuals from the negative effects of competition and segregation; the review of curriculum content; the establishment of a common core to studies; lifelong learning; the use of modern technologies and techniques; a policy of openness and independence in schools and teachers.

How far these principles are achievable, of course, is a debatable point. Politicians may well claim that their policies have aimed to realize them. For example, we might believe it is common sense that schools should develop links with the external world, including the local community and businesses. Moreover, to argue for a strong and independent teaching force would seem desirable in raising the professional training and esteem of teachers. However, the interests and world-views of parents and teachers may not be the same as they come from distinct cultures. Parents on the management boards of schools come with their own vested interests and beliefs about what should be done which might not accord with the teachers' or head teachers' professional views, or, for that matter, what is in their interests. Moreover, if businesses are to be involved with schools, they do so for reasons other than altruism. In this case, the development of an authentic *vie associative* is compromised by a clash of cultures and the values they represent.

While co-signing the Collège de France report, Bourdieu described the way educational reforms under the Fifth Republic had failed 'because they do not know what type of individual they want to make' (1986c: 4). Therefore, he seemed to continue to believe that changing the system was not enough. A more fundamental change of vision was needed. One again suspects that the needs of the State and individuals' wants are different. The art of politics is to achieve the first while selling the notion of the second. For Bourdieu, the education reforms of the Socialist government did nothing to change the situation. In a postmodern world of the 'death of ideologies', the politics of a new realism had been established. Principles of equality, fraternity and solidarity had been denounced as illusory. In their place, we had the reality of productivity, industry, the balance of payments and the imperative of international politics. Commenting on the Socialists in power, Bourdieu employed an old Kabyle proverb – 'he puts the east in the west for me' – arguing that the Socialist party apparatchiks had put the Left in the Right. A party of the Left was implementing policies traditionally

associated with the Right. He argued that Britain followed a similar course from the 1990s. The implications for education were devastating:

We know to what aberrations an educational model can lead which, like the Japanese, subordinates all pedagogic undertaking to the logic of competition, competitiveness, selection tests . . . it is the infernal logic of the struggle of all against all, of competition without mercy for a good grade, a good class, a good stream, a good school and college, etc. (ibid.)

In 1988, a further committee was set up by the then Minister of Education, François Gros, with the brief to reflect on the curriculum and plan its revision. The committee, chaired by Bourdieu, produced a set of 'principles' towards: 'a restructuring of the division of knowledge, a new definition of the elimination of outdated or outmoded notions, and the introduction of new knowledge that stems from research as well as technical, economic and social changes' (1992b/89: 308). The report argued that course content must be reviewed regularly, and new subjects added to the curriculum must be compensated for by the removal of others. Education should prioritize how to organize and present knowledge as well as facts. What was indispensable to pupils and what was transmittable were not the same thing, as the latter depended on the ability children had to assimilate it. Curriculum reviews therefore needed to take this into account. In order to improve transmission, teachers needed to work as groups to define what was compulsory and what was optional. Bourdieu argued that the divisions between academic disciplines needed reviewing and such a rethinking might be helped by more team teaching that brought teachers together. Coherence was required for balance and integration. Bourdieu argued that these principles amounted to a call for a change of how knowledge was defined, organized and taught, and learnt within schools, colleges and universities. In particular, he suggested that the 'universalism' of scientific thought needed to be reconciled with the 'relativism' of the human sciences, implying the plurality of cultural traditions and lifestyles. Indeed, for Bourdieu, History had a fundamental place in any education:

It is not a question of history as defined by historians. It is a question of history as a real genealogy of concepts, ways of thinking, mental structures . . . to reintroduce the historical point would be to 'de-dogmatise' education . . . it would be to give everyone the means to re-appropriate the structures of their own thinking. (1985: 9)

However, Bourdieu also recognized that history had gone out of fashion in a technological age. It is clear that the sort of principles and propositions with

which Bourdieu was associated were qualitative in nature, while the reforms introduced in France were mainly organizational and structural. In such reforms, relations between institutions, teachers and pupils, lecturers and students, education and society were redefined. They were also implemented in the name of 'good' principles cited above – democratization and vocationalization. However, the values and principles listed in these propositions were not realized, or even central to subsequent pedagogic practice. Reforms rather were cast according to other principles: of competition, individual achievement at all costs, realism and performance. It is perhaps unsurprising that this should be the case. It is always easier to create policy which redefines structural relations than it is to work on the values that underpin them. It is a tragic testimony to Bourdieu's work on education that the very liberal reforms he denounced, and which perpetuated the 'conservative' nature of school and education at large, were implemented in the name of equality, access, choice and opportunity. To believe that true change can come about at this macro level of reform is perhaps to be misled. The final section of this chapter considers some of the more fundamental features of teaching and learning from the perspective of Bourdieu's work in order to explore the possibilities of change at the micro level.

BOURDIEU IN THE CLASSROOM

In 1968, Bourdieu had written of the 'inequalities between children from different milieux, fundamentally connected with differences which separate popular language from scholastic language' (2002c: 69). Language, that very knowledge medium of education, is also a problem. In order to develop and manipulate complex conceptual ideas, it is necessary to possess the requisite mental structures which are in turn a product of language. Language has different levels of expression: form, or structure, and content. Both form and content may exist in a way which favours certain ways of thinking and of expressing that thinking. Moreover, they may act as a mechanism for cultural transmission which itself advantages and disadvantages those who encounter it depending on their background and the affinities (or not) that this sets up when they enter a scholastic field. Bourdieu wrote of the importance of language in the *academic discourse* and how it operated in education. If academic discourse is predicated on an assumption of communication between the teacher and the taught, this relationship is fraught with faulty signals:

There are, in fact, two systems of contradictory demands that pedagogical communication needs to satisfy, neither of which can be completely sacrificed: first, to maximise the absolute quantity of information conveyed

(which implies reducing repetition and redundancy to a minimum); second, to minimise the loss of information (which, among other measures, may imply an increase in redundancy). (Bourdieu, Passeron and de Saint Martin 1994a/65: 6)

The paradox of language in the pedagogic relationship is that it cannot satisfy these contradictory demands. Moreover, these demands are intensified by the social origins of learners and teachers, representing as they do differing world-views and ways of expressing them. He offered evidence of this 'misunderstanding' everywhere in his empirical studies of language in education:

the traditionalist professor can slide from the *right* to demand that his students learn . . . to the *fact* of making this demand when he has withheld from them the means of satisfying it . . . The world of the classroom where 'polished' language is used, contrasts with the world of the family . . . the teacher's self-assured use of professional language is no more fortuitous than the student's own tolerance of semantic fog. (ibid.: 8–10)

In these early works on education, Bourdieu was posing the distinction he observed in the classical education which characterized the French system and which separated the elite from the masses. Paradoxically, it is a separation in which parents often actively collude, as for example, when a mother says of her son that he is 'not strong' in his mother tongue (1979b/64: 109). In *La Noblesse d'état* Bourdieu developed the notion of linguistic distinction in academic discourse and showed how the language used in evaluations of students' work demonstrated a hierarchy in the way their work is valued: from 'simple-minded, inane, slavish, common, insipid, flat' through to 'careful, earnest, attentive, sound' and 'inspired, masterly, well-educated'. He showed how these terms gravitated towards a similar hierarchy of socio-professional categories: small commerce and tradesmen, middle management professionals, and traditional careers in law and medicine (pp. 30ff.). There were also distinctions within the dominant groups. Bourdieu draws (p. 25) on the language used in *agrégation* reports to show further *oppositions* which exist between the 'well-rounded good student' and the 'dull laborious student': 'so the measured balance of academic good form . . . contrasts with the suspect cleverness of vacuous virtuosity and the uncontrolled audacities of creative ambition no less than with the pedantic platitudes of didacticism or the uninspired stuffiness of pure erudition' (ibid.).

In the cases Bourdieu cites, it is as if one party in the discourse does not *hear* the other, as if one was speaking in a form and/or content for which another did not have the necessary matching structures to interpret what is being communicated. 'Lack of communication' was indeed one of the prevailing forces

behind 1968. Lack of communication, first between the presidential State and the populace, but also lack of communication between teachers and pupils, students and lecturers, the authorities and scholastic establishments, between political parties and voters. Eventually, lack of communication became a generational phenomenon – parents and their children – as well as typifying relations between the workers and students who led the protests. Language and words are never benign for Bourdieu. Rather, they imply dense energy matrices which could only be decoded within the *field* in which they are found and in terms of the legitimate logic principles which define the sense of practice inherent in them.

Later in *La Misère de monde*, Bourdieu wrote of the identity of words and how they obscure reality. Words such as school, student, teacher, secondary studies, or baccalauréat hide the diversity of things: 'that the establishment into which they have been directed by educational tracking is a place for assembling the most disadvantaged; that they are working on a cheap diploma' (p. 425). It is not surprising therefore that Bourdieu warns the would-be researcher to 'beware of words' (1989d: 54) because of their nature in hiding the social construction of what they represent under their common-sense meanings.

Armed with this social constructivist understanding of language, it is possible to go back into the classroom to observe the way that academic discourse excludes some, not only by the clash of cultures represented differentially between teachers and pupils, but pupils and pupils as well in the hierarchies set up within classes. Neither is this observable simply in terms of social class oppositions. Sometimes, the *cognitive machine* (cf.: 1996b/89: 52) of the teacher does not match that of the pupil. What is left out of the pedagogic act can be the way the pupil sees the world and the problem presented to them (see Grenfell 1998: 72ff.). Moreover, it could be that the teacher is trained in a certain way to induct a 'certain way of doing things' (see Grenfell 2004). For example, Alexander (2000: 429) analyses a number of classroom transcripts from a range of countries and concludes that they have differing dominant principles of pedagogic discourse: rote learning (India), democratic pedagogy (United States), readiness (England and United States), acceleration (Russia), and conciseness and rapidity (continental Europe).

These differences themselves suggest that there are options and choices; albeit that they are often prescribed by social-cultural histories. Moreover, such different possibilities can have effects at both a personal and public level. Reflecting on the Collège de France report Bourdieu identified two principles of the education system on which its reproductive function is founded (1985a: 9). First, *hierarchisation*, defined in terms of a distance from a notional *perfect* competence. Consequently, every position is a point of relative failure. Secondly, the *verdict*.

To understand the effect of the verdict, I always refer to *The Trial* by Kafka. One can read it as a metaphor for the school system. It is a universe where one enters to find out who one is . . . They tell you in a quite brutal and insidious way: 'you are on a . . .' – followed by an insult sanctioned by the institution . . . One can imagine the effects these verdicts, without appeal and often reinforced by parents, have on children. These traumas of identity are probably one of the biggest pathological factors in our society. (ibid.)

Why should educational practice be predicated on such judgemental principles?

BOURDIEU AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

In *La Reproduction* and *Les Héritiers* Bourdieu had been concerned with the place of education in national redevelopment. The example of Algeria was a case in point. However, underlying these calls for an effective educational system were concerns about fairness and equality, for greater democracy in education, so that the children of the dominant social categories were not always favoured. We have seen that behind these concerns was a suspicion of the inherent nature of education itself. *Reproduction* begins starkly: 'Every power to exert symbolic violence, i.e. every power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the foundations of its force, adds its own specifically symbolic force to those relations' (p. 18). It follows: 'All pedagogic action is objectively a symbolic violence to the extent to which it is an imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power' (ibid.). In educational phenomenology, there is a tradition which aims at discovering the finite series of principles to describe education as an inter-human, existential phenomenon; for example, that children require help and that education takes place within a social-historical content. An important characteristic of education is that 'authority is involved in every pedagogic relation' (see Vandenberg 1974: 198). The argument follows that even in the case of the most progressive education, some form of authority is implied. Without it, the teacher would have to see the child as already grown up, thus not in need of help, thus, the pedagogic relation disappears. However, for Bourdieu such authority implied an imposition, the exclusion of one world-view by another. Authority is seen as a form of *symbolic violence*, in other words, 'the power to impose (or even inculcate) the arbitrary instruments of knowledge and expression (taxonomies) of society' (1991a: 168). It is constituted within a field and is expressed and impacts on individual *habitus*. Is there an alternative?

In many ways, Bourdieu's analysis of education offers quite a gloomy picture of the potential for change. Little wonder, therefore, that writers such as Giroux

(1983) criticized him for leaving no space for resistance. The title of another article, published in *Esprit* says it all: 'Une sociologie stérile'. Here, Prost (1980) criticized Bourdieu for his analysis of education, while admitting that it was 'fair'. Nevertheless, he writes that what we want is 'modification' not simply 'reproduction'. Bourdieu's work, together with that of other cultural theorists, was used in the 1970s and 1980s, especially, as a way of inducting teachers, both in initial and in-service training, in the processes of social reproduction. The assumption was that if we know about it, we can do something about it. The three most popular responses led to three possible options: resistance, celebration and compensation. By *resistance*, what is meant is opposition to the hegemonic forces. Dominant culture is seen as alienating and pacifying; therefore, it should be opposed. Wherever its effects can be identified, names should be named and inequalities unmasked. Resistance needs its own point of focus and *celebration* of alternative cultures can provide one. Here, another cultural heritage, be it social or ethnic, is applauded for its richness and diversity. Such a celebration may be an end in itself – an honouring of non-hegemonic culture – or as a means of providing an alternative to the dominant one. *Compensation* occurs when steps are taken to make up the difference between one culture and another. Positive discrimination was one approach here, where those lacking in the particular cultural forms expressed in education were differentially favoured at the expense of those already culturally endowed with the prestigious social accoutrements which social background provides. If the children of certain social groups are seen as impoverished in certain respects, the solution is to provide a top-up. At one time or another, Bourdieu was tempted by each of the above and acknowledges their potential worth; although, essentially, what they often do is serve only as a palliative. What any individual teacher can do is limited:

It is impossible to imagine a teacher able to maintain with his own discourse, his pupils' discourse and his pupils' relation to his own discourse, a relation stripped of all indulgences and freed from all the traditional complicities, without at the same time crediting him with the capacity to subordinate his whole pedagogic practice to the imperatives of a perfectly explicit pedagogy which could actually implement the principles logically implied in affirmation of the autonomy of the specifically scholastic mode of acquisition. (1977b/72: 126)

Elsewhere, Bourdieu has been criticized for not having solutions to the problems he identifies. His reply is stark: 'No. But, one thing is clear: it is not by the single effect of the reforms undertaken without either investigations or analysis, like all those over the past twenty years, based on an almost total ignorance of the real issues and the real mechanisms' (1984b: 89). He went on to say that

you cannot continue to treat teachers and researchers like rats, by alternatively food and electric shocks, without them going mad.

His involvement in the ministerial committees of the 1980s was partly to answer this charge with attempts to engage directly in policy formation. In France, further strikes and protests in education followed; for example, the primary schoolteachers' strikes in 1987 against reorganization, and the student protests against the Devaquet proposal (ministerial delegate for education in the Chirac government) to raise the qualifying levels for attending higher education. Further high school college demonstrations in 1990 led to many students being stigmatized in the press as rioters, and these being identified as coming from immigrant families. Having been contacted by them, Bourdieu wrote to the lycéens des Mureaux (2002c: 227). Once again, he warned against the power of public language in referring to them all en masse, while there are distinct particularities; especially in associating the rioters with immigrant backgrounds. At the same time, he argues, such students did indeed have distinct life conditions which needed addressing. What is clear is that implemented reforms did not always have the envisaged results: 'the best intention in the world risks giving effects strictly opposed to the ends pursued' (1999a/93: 198). The accounts from *La Misère du monde* at the beginning of this chapter suggest that this is exactly what had happened in France; and, it is not exclusively a French phenomenon. Partly, it is perhaps a question of time. Ministers of Education are often only in office for comparatively short periods of time. They need to be seen to be doing something – now! While 'real revolution' would be something much more 'modest . . . more intelligent . . . with familiarity with the realities, attention to small things and "small people"' (1984b: 90). But, such changes would take 'at least three or four generations' (Grenfell and Bourdieu 1995b: 24). Politicians and educational policy designers are seldom interested in working to this timescale.

Education is the site of complex processes. As I wrote at the beginning of this chapter, on the one hand education offers a form of self-expression and fulfilment; on the other it provides for a job and financial security. One objective is personal, the other is public. What happens in the name of education needs to be addressed at both the personal and public levels. We have seen what can occur in the name of educational reform. Finally, many students and pupils are still excluded at both levels in forming a relation with education which suits them. They may not connect with what education offers them because the way thinking is represented in its systems is simply alien to their own cognitive *habitus*. In these cases, they exclude themselves and/or are excluded. We could evoke the image of pupils literally being 'put in their place' by the encounters which they meet in the classroom. The picture is complicated and what occurs happens by stealth in thousands of small interactions. Although each of these

points is small in itself, there comes a time when the weight of experience becomes determinant. In another context, Willis asks in his ethnographic study of working-class pupils:

The difficult thing to explain about how middle-class kids get middle-class jobs is why the others let them. The difficult thing to explain about how working-class kids get working-class jobs is why they let themselves. (1977: 1)

And concludes:

The astonishing thing . . . is that there is a moment – and it only needs to be this, for the gates to shut on the future – in working-class culture when the manual giving of labour represents both a freedom, election and transcendence, and a precise insertion into a system of exploitation and oppression for working-class people. The former promises the future, the latter shows the present. It is the future in the present which hammers freedom to inequality in the reality of contemporary capitalism. (p. 120)

In *La Misère du monde*, Bourdieu similarly suggested that such a shutting out of one culture in favour of another is also bound up with generational relations. Education forms part of familial inheritance, but it is not without its ambiguities. The denial of school success on the part of pupils and students is sometimes accompanied by an embracing of physical force in opposition to intellectual power. Such becomes part of a process of denial, compensation, regression and the refusal to conform. Faced with the 'double bind' of success and failure, conformity and betrayal, the *habitus* of some pupils and students is almost divided against itself. The school colludes with the family in reinforcing a root of suffering where personal difficulties are only the articulation of deeper structural contradictions. Questions of resistance therefore can never be simply about public reform.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have explored both the personal and social aspects of education, for Bourdieu and others. It is perhaps because of this dual nature of education that Bourdieu was so fascinated by it throughout his life. His own academic trajectory amounted to successful engagement in class struggle and education as a liberating force. His work on education continued this commitment as a reflection on his understanding of that success, despite his origins as

an 'outsider'. What this engagement threw up was clear but disturbing insights into the nature of teaching and learning and the systems which support them. Many issues highlighted in the chapter, through events and writings across the decades of the last century, are of course still alive with us today.

CHAPTER 4

Media and Culture

La Distinction appeared in 1979 at a pivotal point in Bourdieu's personal and professional life and instantly became a sociological 'classic'. In the book, Bourdieu offered a detailed empirical study and philosophical critique of aesthetics and taste. These themes concern the products and processes of culture and were present throughout Bourdieu's academic career, from the early work in the 1960s on photography (*Un Art moyen*, 1965) and art galleries (*L'Amour de l'art*, 1966) to his public engagement on and about the media in the 1990s.

This chapter describes the expansion of global culturalism in the second half of the twentieth century and the way it was characterized in France. It deals with the French cultural heritage and governments' policy on the importance of culture in the lives of everyday Frenchmen. It discusses Bourdieu's response to this heritage and policy in terms of cultural consumption and production. It also covers Bourdieu's critique of media systems and their effect on the public. The issues at stake in this chapter are the potential that culture has for social transformation and the way that role has been subverted for economic rather than cultural reasons. It concludes with details of Bourdieu's own attack on these systems.

The previous chapters have discussed how Bourdieu's work arose partly as a consequence of his own biography – of who he was, his life trajectory and the social and political circumstances which surrounded him. His response to these environments, historic trends and contemporary exigencies was theoretical and practical. Algeria led him to conclude that education had a central role to play in any social and economic reconstruction. This realization and his own early academic career made further analyses of education systems and their effects somewhat a necessity. Of course, education is not content-transparent. One of his principal arguments was that the very content of scholastic culture acted as a medium for social distinction. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that he should turn his attention to art and cultural practice in a broader sense. Culture, as education, had the power to enrich and transform lives. However, it could also act as a mark of distinction, establishing and legitimating social hierarchies.

What was at stake was a fundamental feature of human development, something with the potential to revolutionize as well as subordinate.

Bourdieu's early work on art and culture was published in *Un Art moyen* (1990a/65) and *L'Amour de l'art* (1990b/66). A preoccupation at this time was cultural *consumption*: patterns of access to and views of cultural products. This work culminated with the publication of *La Distinction* (1984a/79), as a fully developed critique of social aesthetics and the way social reproduction was present in a range of cultural behaviour. A number of articles and papers followed which dealt with further aspects of cultural production (see 1993b), including art and literature. Bourdieu's ideas on cultural *production* rather than consumption were brought together in *Les Règles de l'art* (1996a/92) which sets out to explain the dynamics of the art *field*. Of course, it is necessary to guard against identifying a predetermined logical connection throughout this vast range of work. It is as well to remember that what motivated a particular study needs to be attributed to a constellation of circumstance. For example, the early work on photography can be explained in terms of Bourdieu's own interest in it as a hobby, as well as the fact that as a young director of a newly formed research centre he was obliged to procure financial backing. In this case, funds were made available by Kodak. Similarly, his explicit interventions in the media in the 1990s, and his overt attack on their working practices, initially arose as much out of experiences of being mishandled by journalists, as a clear political motive to change them. Nevertheless, there remains an overall coherence in these various treatments; in short, to see art and culture as potentially powerful tools in human emancipation. The belief that this potential was not being fulfilled is the principle lying behind much of Bourdieu's discussion of the media and culture.

As in the case of Algeria and education, the chapter begins by considering the French background to the issues of the media and culture. The link between Bourdieu's work on education and culture in the 1960s is then addressed. Next, we look at particular aspects of the media and the way it was developing at this time; in particular, the move from a largely newspaper-based media to one centred on television. Finally, further issues of cultural consumption and production are discussed in turn, before considering the forms of resistance Bourdieu mounted in and against media systems in the 1990s.

BACKGROUND

The place of culture in the lives of everyday French men and woman should be set in context. In the post-war reconstruction, it is arguable that De Gaulle took culture more seriously than education. In 1959, he established the first Ministry of Culture and nominated the existential writer and one-time revolutionary,

André Malraux, as the first Minister of Culture. Malraux set about building a number of Maisons de la Culture across France with the aim of 'celebrating culture', bringing it to the masses and decentralizing Parisian excellence to the provinces (the latter term being one of derision in many Frenchmen's minds). For Malraux, art was the 'means whereby the soul attains God' (Ardagh 1982: 325). The Maisons, consequently, were to be seen as *temples de la culture*. Malraux's mission was to provide cultural focus for the 'interpenetration of the arts'. His vision was therefore democratic and didactic.

Of course, France, like any Nation-State, has a rich and expansive cultural heritage. We need only bring to mind Poussin, Descartes, Racine and the writers of the Age of Enlightenment. Bourdieu himself wrote extensively on the work of the nineteenth-century painter Edouard Manet and the writer Gustave Flaubert. The immediate backdrop to Bourdieu's life and work was, however, the twentieth century with its last vestiges of the *belle époque* and bohemian life in Parisian Montmartre. Alongside this sat the aristocratic heritage of opera, theatre and the concert hall. Mid-twentieth-century France, or at least Paris, also saw the growth in the 'left bank', French cinema, and chanson. As previously noted, the Second World War intensified a philosophy of personal liberation, finding expression in the existentialism of Sartre, de Beauvoir, Malraux, as well the Irish *immigré* Samuel Beckett. Personal freedom and expression also lay behind the Theatre of Cruelty of Antoine Artaud and the erotic prose of Georges Bataille.

Culture therefore acted as a source of inspiration in guiding individual and social identities. The personalist Emmanuel Mounier was an existentialist of sorts, addressing this philosophy explicitly in books and articles in *Esprit*. For Mounier, the realization of personal affirmation was to be affected through the social environment. It was one's fellow (wo)man, who offered individual fulfilment. In post-war France, many of those who had come under Mounier's influence in the Resistance now gained important roles in the new political system. For them, the actualization of this individual-community relationship could proceed secularly and through the medium of culture. For example, the movement *Peuple et Culture* (1945) took popular education as its mission. In practice, however, this mission was expressed more in terms of culture than education. The manifesto of this association calls for the continuation of a collective 'witness' between workers, trade unionists, politicians, teachers, students and artists. 'True culture', it states 'is born from life and returns to life' (ibid. 11). The focus here is on the authenticity of experience to be found in the culture of the people which animates individuals and in which individuals animate: 'it is a question of highlighting human principles crushed by everyday life . . . the principles of the value of the personality, firstly' (Cacérés 1964: 117). It is not surprising, therefore, to read the list of books published by *Peuple et*

Culture, aimed to support and for use in local clubs and adult education groups, as including topics such as tourism, sport, cinema, song, television, reading, poetry and photography. There were also books of advice and guidance on family budgets, parliament and Europe.

If such clubs were a 'bottom-up' approach to promoting cultural animation among the French populace, the Maisons de la Culture were designed to provide an institutional base for cultural activities across the regions. Culture was therefore at the centre of post-war French reconstruction and was seen as integral to building new social and political structures. The high-profile nature of culture would not have been lost on Bourdieu. It is perhaps unsurprising, therefore, to see him examining it in detail as if to ask: if not education, what potential does culture have for social transformation?

In the event, the mission of the Maisons de la Culture floundered. First, the scale of some of the centres was off-putting. They often seemed to present an art and culture which was simply too highbrow. Secondly, and somewhat conversely, various directors fell foul of local audiences and local politicians when they attempted to accommodate more avant-garde plays, art and music. Neither highbrow nor progressive culture attracted the archetypal working class, while the traditional middle classes resented culture which was anti-establishment. At Bourges, for example, in the spring of 1968, the conservative mayor was dismissed when he allowed the local Maison to be used by student rebels. By the 1970s, traditional workers accounted for only 2-3 per cent of audiences, the rest being made up of teachers, students, children and the middle classes, while local and State subsidies accounted for two-thirds of the revenue. One needs therefore to be circumspect about the degree of the success of the Maisons de la Culture. Nevertheless, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the profile of art and culture had been established against the backdrop of an expanding international market and the rich diversity that France could offer the world. For politicians, a tradition was set where art and culture had symbolic power in influencing public opinion in their favour. When Giscard came to power in 1974, he instigated a number of high-profile public building projects: the Centre Pompidou (1976), le Musée d'Orsay (1986) and le Musée des Sciences et de l'Industrie à la Villette (1982). Mitterrand continued this tradition of presidential cultural planning when, after gaining the presidency in 1981, he set about commissioning further public building: L'Arche at La Défense, L'Opéra-Bastille and La Pyramide du Louvre.

In France, before most Frenchmen owned a television set, the newspaper, magazine, journal or pamphlet was the main means of diffusing information. The intellectual movements of the Left and Right in the 1930s published a number of reviews in which their commentaries on current affairs were given voice. During Occupation in the Second World War, those sympathetic to

fascism stayed in print, while the voice of those opposing collaboration was suppressed. Following the war, the 'collaborationist press' was seized, and, in a spirit of renewal and rebuilding, new journalistic policies were established. However, suspicion of the press remained, as well as an understanding on the part of politicians of its power and influence. During the Algerian war, papers and periodicals from the opposition press were seized by the police on over 250 occasions, while the popular press remained silent about the torture and killings. In Bourdieu's work on Algeria, we saw how he drew a distinction between traditional and modern society, contrasting life on the land with urban existence. There is an attempt to contrast the reality of things and the way they were represented. In the case of Algeria, he wrote, 'we are dealing with a problem which for a large part is a historic artefact, constructed mostly by the media' (2002c: 325). He went on to argue that, in the modern world, social reality is largely constructed by the media, 'who are the means of dominant production of the dominant discourse on the world' (ibid.). The media therefore takes on a special role as a site for contesting the authenticity of its representations.

France became less a nation of newspaper readers in the later decades of the twentieth century. Fewer people read the Paris dailies today than they did in 1939. In the 1930s, national newspapers sold twice as many as the local press. This proportion has now been reversed, and the local dailies and weeklies, with their diet of parochial stories outsell the national titles (see Redfern 1983). Newsprint has been eclipsed by television and radio as the source of news, information and entertainment. Extrapolating from the impact of his radio broadcasts during the Second World War, De Gaulle moved comfortably to the visual equivalent during the 1950s, when his television appearances became renowned acts of showmanship and political effectiveness. A tradition of State control that the immediate post-war years demanded was established. For a time, De Gaulle had total veto on what appeared on television. Only in 1964, was the Office de la Radiodiffusion et Télévision Français (ORTF) created in an attempt to establish a more independent sector. But, many in ORTF were political appointees, and government influence in its broadcasting policy remained strong throughout much of the 1960s. Liberalization followed 1968, partly due to the fact that ORTF went on strike when the degree of State control had led to a system which was heavy, very bureaucratic and inefficient. Under Giscard, ORTF was initially broken up into seven independent companies; although, its head remained a political nominee and State subsidies were often a necessity in keeping them financially afloat. Under Mitterrand, State control on programming was stopped, extra stations added, and greater commercialization introduced. Since 1970, when advertising on television was first introduced if restricted, the time allotted to commercial publicity has grown apace. The polar points of the French media are therefore State and political control, and commercialization.

In France, up until 1967, the price of a newspaper was still set by the government. There is a Ministry of Communication which directs financial support, manages information flows and controls the balance of content between stations. Subsidies to the press and television companies remain at a significantly high level. Such subsidies are justified in the name of ensuring quality and protecting serious programming. However, there is clearly potential for political interference if continued financial viability is within the power of political parties. Yet, where there is a reduction in economic support from the State, this is only viable with greater commercial success. For example, over 70 per cent of the income of a daily such as *Le Figaro* comes from advertising.

BOURDIEU AND CULTURE

Bourdieu often referred to art as the 'new religion' of the age, albeit with an altogether different tack on the analogy to Malraux's 'temples of culture'. Bourdieu was often referred to as the 'cultural capital man' in sociological circles, for this concept regarding the cultural heritage we all possess and the consequences it held for us. In this case, culture has two distinct meanings. First, there is culture as language, traditions, characteristics and beliefs. This aspect of culture is central to his view of education, suggesting that learning and teaching amount to the acquisition of culturally recognized knowledge which has currency in 'buying' social prestige. We do not enter education as equals, but some, because of accidents of birth, arrive pre-endowed with cultural accoutrements which buy us academic advantage. Secondly, the term culture can be used with explicit reference to aesthetics – art, music and literature. In the last chapter, we saw how Bourdieu refuted the common-sense view of 'natural talent' as a determining factor in educational achievement. In a similar vein, he refuted innate aesthetic appreciation and artistic talent.

For Kant, the aesthetic was an a-priori condition of human faculties, of 'beauty without concept'. To partake in the realm of the aesthetic was thus to be supremely human. The most cultivated (wo)man was the most human, and assumed their right of supremacy. Bourdieu wrote somewhat ironically that the aim of the sociologist was not to refute this belief but rather 'to define the social conditions which make possible both this experience and the people for whom it is possible (art lovers or 'people of taste') and thence to determine the limits within which it can exist' (1990b/66: 109). What emerged from his early work on artistic consumption is damning of aesthetic sense. In studies of museum attendance in the 1960s, he discovered visiting galleries and museums is for the young, middle class and educated. A clichéd view might be that they were full of schoolchildren, students and teachers. Describing education as sometimes

constituting a kind of 'cultural bulimia', he portrayed those from middle-class backgrounds encountering a culture which resonated with their own culture and educated background and thus affirmed and confirmed it and their social standing. For those on the outside, however, such culture was literally 'foreign to them', and, after compulsory schooling, they fell out of the cultivated territories and returned to their own backgrounds:

The heir of bourgeois privileges, not being able to invoke rights of birth (which his or her class historically denied the aristocracy) or the rights of nature, a weapon in the past, levelled against nobility distinctions which would run the risk of backfiring against bourgeois 'distinction', or the ascetic virtues which allowed the first generation of entrepreneurs to justify their success by their merit, can call on cultivated and naturalised culture, on what is sometimes called 'class', by a sort of Freudian slip, on education, in the sense of a product of education which seems to owe nothing to education, on '*distinction*', a grace which is merit and a merit which is grace, an unacquired merit which justifies unmerited attainments, namely heritage. (ibid.: 111)

In this view, the aesthetic sense, cultivated taste as displayed in 'the love of art', is no more than a means to an end – legitimization of privilege – and dominance, as displayed in museum attendance, plays a dual role of equating appropriation of cultural goods with justification for economic advantage and social standing in society at large. Schools are complicit for hiding, or forgetting, or denying, the link between culture and education, and thus transforming 'socially conditioned inequalities in matters of culture into inequalities of success, interpreted as inequalities of talent which are also inequalities of merit' (ibid.). In the last chapter, we saw how aspects of education reform proposed by Bourdieu focused on the issue of culture. For example, in notes on a policy for democratization of education drawn up in the light of 1968, Bourdieu wrote: 'all the means have to be used, from nursery school, to give all children the experiences that children from well-off social groups owe to their families – contact with cultural works, and with other aspects of modern society (organized visits to museums, famous sights, history and geography trips, theatre visits, slide shows and listening to records' (2002c: 69). Moreover, he argued that the traditional teaching of humanities should give way to a 'true' cultural education which gives everyone a historical and ethnological knowledge of Hebrew, Greek and Roman cultures (ibid.). Finally, he called for policy to fill the gap between the marginal institutions of adult education and cultural diffusion (Maisons de la culture, cultural animation, etc.), and schools; in other words, schoolteachers needed to be involved in the organization of wider cultural and educational sites of learning, in the broad sense of the word.

Of course, this view of culture and education, seeing them as potential sources of positive discrimination and compensation, is now a little *dépassé*. In many ways, culture has been democratized. Museums and art galleries are in some ways no longer at issue. The paradox is, of course, that democratization of institutions of education and culture simply leads to a redefinition of strategy to maintain privilege. Cultural content is reconfigured and redefined in order to reassert existing social differentiation and distinction. Certainly, in the second half of the twentieth century, traditional cultural imperatives were somewhat eclipsed by the growth of technological mass media – television and the Internet.

BOURDIEU AND THE MASS MEDIA

It was against this background that Bourdieu developed his critiques of the various facets of culture. He was concerned with the content of culture and the way it was complicit in social reproduction. However, he also viewed the modern growth of the media with suspicion; in particular, for the way it shaped public opinion for political ends.

In the early 1970s, Bourdieu had argued that 'public opinion does not exist' (1993a/80: 157). In a country which gave us the writer Rousseau, who warned against 'dictatorship of the general will', it is unsurprising that society expressing a common opinion or belief should be regarded with suspicion. In the 'common sense' of the 'common people' lies the risks of dumbing down and reducing everything to the lowest common denominator. As Bourdieu saw it, in a world in which individuals acted according to *dispositions*, the way that questions were formulated in seeking to ascertain public opinion, simply resulted in the actualization of particular latent tendencies which themselves were largely attributable to positions in the social hierarchy. The drafting of opinion-poll questions constructed a *field* of issues and problems in a predetermined manner. This predetermination conjured up a polarity which was inherent in the questions and was brought to life from latent dispositions. Bourdieu also made the point that opinion polls constructed to ascertain public opinion assume that everyone had a view on certain matters, and that everyone's view had the same value. This assumption of consensus on issues, he argued, was already a misrepresentation. Moreover, statistical methods were also employed to aggregate individual responses to produce a 'public view': a collective misrepresentation of misrepresentations. Questions are formulated simplistically, in either/or form, or imply policy which no one could argue against; for example 'do you agree in raising pupils' scholastic achievement?' And, yet, public opinion had become the shibboleth of the age:

In the nineteenth century, the democratic vision which made public will the only source of political legitimacy transmuted the opinions publicly associated with social elites into the opinions of the people. (1989b: 204)

For Bourdieu, the idea of 'public opinion' was therefore at one and the same time a misrepresentation, a construction and appropriated as legitimacy and justification by policy-makers and politicians, who claimed to be acting 'in the name of the people'. We live in an age where this recourse to public opinion is the measure of all action; in politics, in social action and in the world of art and culture. The mechanical and technological means to construct and express public likes, dislikes, beliefs and intentions become ever more intensive and rapid. Bourdieu argued that each poll is still only created by aggregating statistically, and obfuscating issues of ambiguities, refusal to respond, those with no opinion, and a whole range of subcategories within society. He made comment on politicians' reductionism and simplification in order 'to pose questions misleadingly and as far as possible to muddy the water in order to obscure divisions and win votes' (1993a/80: 156). This is simply a way of managing public opinion that is rife in the world; in particular in an age of mass media and mass communication, these means of creating, inciting, persuading and dissuading public opinion are simultaneously a marketing strategy, a bid for power and a means of justification. Public opinion is expressed and impacts everywhere:

The publication of results by the popular press [*journaux d'opinion*] which very often ordered their production, is, in many cases, a political coup adorned with all the appearance of scientific and democratic legitimacy, by which a public or private pressure group, possessing all the economic means to meet the costs of an opinion poll, can give to its own opinion the appearances of universality associated with the idea of *public opinion*. (1989b: 205)

Bourdieu argued that this situation is true in the case of sales and marketing, and the same strategies have been adopted in politics, where 'political action appears more and more as the art of utilising a group of techniques developed by specialists of "political communication" in order to "move public opinion"' (ibid.). It is by these means that one of the major problems of political action is solved, namely, to constitute and reconcile both individual and collective opinion – the personal and the universal. There is then a very political dimension to the activities of the mass media. In the production of popular television programmes and articles in the tabloid newspapers and magazines, economic interests are being served and the means developed to 'manage' societal views and behaviour. Predictably, therefore, the world of politics makes use of the world of mass media and culture, both its content and its means of operation.

Bourdieu was initially concerned with the political interference and influence present in the mass media. He was also later critical of the effects of its growing commercialization. He noted the international trends of uniformity, concentration and the push for profit maximization of the media; where more and more of it is owned by fewer international companies in the pursuit of market control and profit. Content becomes uniform, as everything and everyone are under market pressure. The commercial was reinforced to the detriment of the 'pure' – what goes on in the world is reduced to the anecdotal and scandal. Percentage of market share is all. At one point he described the changing in content of *Libération* (a centre-Left national daily), where biting criticism and news of strikes and racist killings had given way to 'Sciences-Po' stories on economics, analyses of American football, or articles on the games of political cohabitation and the presidential elections. He relates this change in editorial policy to the extension of its readership to the 15–24 and the 24–35 age groups. The percentage of business and senior management readers had consequently doubled. There was similarly growth in the numbers of readers from urban backgrounds, with higher education qualifications: 'sportsmen, travellers, and recent owners of stock' (1994b: 39). In other words, the media is aimed at a particular audience with a particular market in mind: 'the editor of *Libération* has to ask himself each day whether he has enough publicity announcements to publish his next edition!' (1995c: 10). The comments referred to newspaper journalism, but Bourdieu was equally critical of television. He at first seems almost nostalgic for the early days of TV:

In the 1950s, television in France was openly 'cultural' because it used monopoly to influence virtually every product that laid claim to high cultural status (documentaries, adaptations of the classics, cultural debates, and so forth) and to raise the taste of the general public. In the 1990s, because it must reach the largest audience possible, television is intent on exploiting and pandering to these same tastes. It does so by offering viewers what are essentially raw products, of which the paradigmatic programme is the talk show with its 'slices of life'. These lived experiences come across as unbuttoned exhibitions of often extreme behaviour aimed at satisfying a kind of voyeurism and exhibitionism. (1998b/96: 45)

Since these words were written in the mid-1990s, we have seen the growth in 'reality TV', as in 'Big Brother' programmes which put audience or celebrities in closed confines and film their reactions, the 'confession' talk show of the Jerry Springer type, where audience members are encouraged to discuss intimate issues on air, and the 'make-over' programme involving home, garden and the kitchen, where experts create new styles and images. For Bourdieu, these were

perhaps summed up as 'populist spontaneism' and the 'demagogic capitulation to popular tastes' (ibid.).

Media journalism creates a vision of the world in a *field* which controls 'public existence'. For Bourdieu, television was the 'mirror of narcissus' (ibid.: 14) for the way appearance on it enchanted those on both sides of the screen. 'To be is to be perceived', wrote Bourdieu, quoting Berkeley, to describe the magic that is bestowed on those on television. It is as if strength of 'being' is measured in viewing numbers. As in the case of newspapers, the temptation to reduce everything to the less demanding in the search for market ratings is therefore great. The 'ratings mindset' legitimizes the market as the means of *legitimation*. If someone loses two points in the ratings, Bourdieu argued, they are lost.

For Bourdieu, the paradox of journalism was that it was inhabited by people who were powerful, but fragile:

Collectively, journalists can crush. Individually, they are also under threat. It is a job where, for sociological reasons, life is hard (it is not by chance that there is so much alcoholism) and their bosses are terrible. They break not only careers but also consciences – also true elsewhere, unfortunately. Journalists suffer a lot. At the same time, they become dangerous: when an area suffers, it always ends up transferring its suffering to the outside world in the form of violence and spite. (1995c: 9)

Journalists work under pressure and at speed. With fast thinking and fast decision-making 'nuance is lost', and is replaced by cliché (1998b/96: 28). The loss of detail and subtlety leads to a situation where their absence is not noticed. Structural amnesia takes over. Moreover, for Bourdieu, a whole world-view and mindset of reactions is implicitly presented as the norm (*nomos*) and establishes the organization of our perception and categories of thought in interpreting the world. Bourdieu quoted numerous examples where slippage of language is used to mask intentions in establishing principles of interpretation. He uses the philosophical trick of declaring 'the King of France is bald'. Here, the focus is on whether the king is or is not bald, not whether there is actually a king (1992c: 29). He saw the same decentring of sense and meaning in tv journalism; for example, 'France is bored' asks whether or not the country is bored, but occults the process of collectivization implied in 'France'. Bourdieu argued that media language sets up oppositions: for example, rich/poor, bourgeois/the masses – notions which go to the heart of the worker movement; or, the way, divisions are established between opposing pairs such as 'national/foreigner', 'indigenous/immigrant', 'immigrants/foreigners', 'them/us', and the way 'immigrant/foreigner' are equated with 'the poor'. Indeed, Bourdieu saw in this

equation of poor and outsider, a means of ignoring indigenous poverty and claiming, therefore, that 'we nationals are all the same', thus realizing 'the bourgeois dream of creating a world where everyone is bourgeois and there is no proletariat' (ibid.: 28). The point is therefore that these implicit, unconscious principles, politics, wishes and desires, slip through language in the way it is presented in the media. Such slippage revives latent dispositions, reinforcing them, and reproducing a world-view which serves the interests of some over the others. And, in these modest ways, *symbolic violence* is created. No wonder that Bourdieu referred to journalists as the 'new magicians' of the age in the way they 'circulate the tacit' ideas to an unknown public, and in so doing create and ratify 'common sense'.

Bourdieu wrote of one of his own appearances on television (1996c: 25), showing how the programme was produced and broadcast, and how in its construction, power of representation and expression were ceded to the programme makers. He showed how the presenter articulated problems in their own image and set the tone of the debate; selected and controlled who spoke and what questions they responded to; prioritized and added urgency where they chose. The way the studio was set up is itself an act of construction, of exclusion and inclusions. He concluded that the worst is not to be present, but to be present is to surrender to the constructions of programmers. He also cites an example in the coverage of strikes in 1995 where strikers were lined up to argue their case with a 'neutral' team of observers. He remarks that it is as if the 'presumed guilty' are called upon to explain themselves to the judges. Moreover, an appearance of objectivity was created by disguising partisan positions or highlighting only some of an individual's activities. For example, Alain Peyrefitte was presented as a 'writer' and not as a 'RPR senator' (politically Right-wing), or chair of the editorial committee of *Le Figaro* (a Right-wing daily) (ibid.).

These fabrications are, of course, everywhere apparent in the media at a national and international level, and have social and political consequences. In 1994, Bourdieu wrote on how the murder of a young provincial girl, an event which might warrant no more than local interest, was drummed up by the media leading to debate in parliament and calls for the return of the death penalty and the establishment of life sentencing. Similarly, Patrick Champagne, a contributor to *La Misère du monde*, recounted how a lycée demonstration in 1990 led to the "fabrication" of an event'. He argues that social malaise only has existence when the media talks about it but, as in this case, it often does so to reinforce all the social stereotypes of poverty, immigrants and the image of 'hot-headed youth' (1999a/93: 46–59).

He also described the ex-Gulf war journalist veterans, who act as 'cowboys' and media stars themselves, aiming for a sensational story. Yet, there is a complicitous relationship between the media and politicians:

The logic of the relations which have been instituted between political actors, journalists and 'public opinion' experts has become such that politically it is very difficult to act outside of the media or, even more so, against them. This is why the press has never met with indifference from those at the centre of political power, who control what is called 'actuality' – when they do not themselves contribute, with the help of their press officers, to fabricating that actuality. Politicians do not like to be surprised, let alone overtaken, by events . . . In short, they try to remain masters of their agenda, and they particularly fear those events that arise unpredictably and are thrust into the foreground of political news because the written press and the tv get hold of them. (ibid.: 56)

It is why political parties now train their politicians in media simulations. Bourdieu's point is that these mechanisms of the media, and the principles which underlie them, now affect other cultural fields. The dumbing-down of culture for mass consumption and the *sensation*-alism of television and radio, together with the tabloid press, are a contemporary fact. We live in an age of mass cultural consumption, in which the risk of commercial ends becoming paramount is growing apace. Cultural supply and demand are coterminous, but whose interests are being served? So far, I have looked at the media as a supplier of cultural products, but what of the consumer?

BOURDIEU AND CULTURAL CONSUMPTION

Of course, even watching television is a cultural statement. If we are watching television, we are not out watching a play or an opera, or playing football or drinking in the pub for that matter. These differences are at the heart of *Distinction* (1984a/79). Can art and cultural practices be seen in terms of socio-political action? The message of *Distinction* has to be 'yes'. Building on his work on museums from the 1960s, Bourdieu offered us a taxonomy of cultural practice of France in the 1960s. A reading of his work therefore needs to be taken against the socio-historic background discussed above: of France emerging from the Second World War, the growth in modern media and the governmental preoccupation with 'cultivating' the people. What Bourdieu initially set out was a dichotomous view of culture and class. Between 'highbrow' and 'lowbrow' we can associate the dominant, consecrated culture of the ruling class and its opposite working-class culture; for example, tennis as opposed to football, the restaurant to the pub, reading literature to reading magazines, going to the theatre to watching tv. For Bourdieu, such practices were the product of dispositions activated in choices. Furthermore, he argued (p. 546) that we all possessed schemes

of perception which were homologous to our position in social hierarchies, and such schemes found affinities and disaffinities when confronted by a galaxy of social contexts. Because these dispositions were partly a product of pre-existent social hierarchies which in turn needed to be understood as oppositional, the schemes themselves could be expressed as alternatives: for example, low and high, with their connotations of sublime, elevated, pure and vulgar; flat and modest; spiritual as opposed to material; exclusive to common; exceptional to banal. For Bourdieu, the essential argument was that these ideal forms acted as points of reference from and against which behaviour is orientated in practical contexts.

This argument amounts to a theory of knowledge: we organize in the way we are organized, we perceive according to our organization. To extend Bourdieu's argument, cultural or aesthetic sense is based on a principle of differentiation or distinction, between 'pure taste' and 'vulgar taste'. Pure taste can be understood as being present in the 'pure gaze' of the cultivated individual contemplating 'pure art'. It is as if like beholds like, as the refined, the selectivity, the rarity of 'high' art resonates with similar attitudes of cultivated individuals, most clearly personified in the elite of ruling class. Consequences follow.

Bourdieu argued that in pre-capitalistic society, art and culture performed a different role from today. In an aristocratic world, cultural practices and artistic objects were used to entertain, to decorate, to be iconic and to display wealth, and thus legitimacy. Inherited privilege was a God-given right expressed in the material display of wealth. However, in the course of the formation of modern, capitalist society and, with it, the growth of urban life, new social structures emerged. A new class of individuals arose between aristocrats and the masses. These middle classes operated a double distinction: they were clearly not aristocratic, neither were they of the masses. This need for distinction found resonance in the 'pure gaze' which analogously offered detachment, refinement and exclusivity, qualities which offer justification, legitimation and consecration of elitism.

Attitudes to art and culture are, therefore, for Bourdieu, homologous to the social space of the individuals involved. As a middle-class, bourgeois society necessitated a separation from the traditional high and low classes, that detached position found expression in the art-for-art's sake of the nineteenth century. It was an attitude which suggested that the individuals involved were in touch with a world unknown to the common man. As noted above, in this way, social distinction was claimed on the grounds of natural distinction. Consequently, 'gross' taste and sensation is abhorred, while 'pure' taste, and the pleasure of experience is celebrated.

On the basis of this argument, Bourdieu was also able to show that different social groups within the 'dominant classes' could be characterized in terms of

their attitudes to art and culture. The traditional aristocratic and early industrial classes were still high in *economic capital*. However, as the bourgeoisie grew, there emerged new groups who were relatively poor in this form of *capital*. The need to acquire *cultural capital* in order to gain and justify their social standing therefore became all the more important. Indeed, it is at this point that educational institutions became so crucial as the mechanism for cultural bestowal. Historically, social groups have had to redefine their position as the socio-economic world changes. They adopt a range of *reconversion strategies* in attempts to maintain and improve position; for example, converting *economic* into *social capital* by buying the 'best' education or a distinguished work of art.

Earlier the point was made that culture for Bourdieu had two fundamental versions: one is taken to express any human practice, thought or product, the other more specific to art itself. The argument in *Distinction* applies to both types. Aesthetic judgements apply not only to our consumption of art, literature and music but what we eat, how we dress, how we speak and even how we hold our knife and fork or sneeze. In other words, the principle of social distinction permeates our every action. Bourdieu suggests that it is in the middle classes that this principle is most keenly felt. He further shows how a distinction needs to be made between *knowledge (connaissance)* and *recognition (reconnaissance)* of culture and cultural practice. While recognition of *legitimate* (high) culture extends across the social spectrum, the knowledge to make use of it is confined to more limited groups. Indeed, it is at the interface of knowledge and recognition that issues of position are fought out most keenly. Caught between low or high, the middle classes exist in a state of chronic cultural insecurity. The economic production of their social ancestors is replaced by a cultural consumption designed to gain sufficient capital to hold and improve social position. Conversely, those 'in the know' show they are in the know by their whole attitude to art and culture which is assertively detached, in control and at ease. Such an attitude is sought by the middle classes who are restrained by uncertainty in knowledge and use which inhibits their confidence. The level of their ascendance in the social hierarchy is therefore determined by their degree of socio-cultural standing.

Bourdieu offers a social topography, much in the same way as he had done in Algeria. With the middle classes, there are factions: the declining 'petite bourgeoisie' of shopkeepers and artisans; the 'ruling petite bourgeoisie' of salaried employees, middle management, technicians and teachers; and the 'new petite bourgeoisie'. Bourdieu gives empirical detail to demonstrate the distinction expressed in their cultural habits: the older groups living traditional lives of order and austerity based around values of work, while later ones are more inclined to a strict practice of imbibing conventional and consecrated culture. The newest groups take a less strict line on culture, now being able to branch

out into popular culture, together with a healthy lifestyle. The 'logic of practice, here, remains distinction and the avoidance of appearing "vulgar"'.

A consumer of culture presupposes a certain degree of spare time, attention and resources. The aesthetic gaze depends on the necessities (food, clothing, lodgings) of life having been already met. Bourdieu's analysis concluded that working-class culture differed from other social groups. Traditionally, it is less ornate and developed, being based more on the simplicities of life. There is also a predisposition to physical rather than intellectual pastimes. In this attitude, Bourdieu saw a refusal of (and opposition to) the middle classes, as well as a link made between manliness and physical work compared to the world of mind and emotions associated with the feminine.

Taken literally, there is a degree of caricature in these descriptions and analyses, but it would be wrong to see them as static and stereotypical. At one point in *Distinction* (p. 103) Bourdieu quotes Bachelard's description of dynamic physical situations as 'fields of possible forces'. In other words, what he was attempting was to highlight what was available when someone entered a *field*, and what happened when they encountered the cultural elements found there. At another point (p. 15), he took three pieces of music – *The Well-tempered Clavier*, *Rhapsody in Blue* and *The Blue Danube*. He argued that the preferences for the first and third of these were in inverse proportion to each other across a social hierarchy of social groups laid out between higher education teachers and factory workers. Preferences for *Rhapsody in Blue* were more evenly distributed. This analysis showed how classical music contains within it pieces which are *populaire* and others which are *raffinés*. Moreover, in a way, the pieces themselves are always in competition with each other. Some of previous high-taste culture becomes popular and therefore sacrifices distinction for celebrity. *Distinction* sets out to establish that cultural consumption (in both senses of the word) is less a means of personal development or enlightenment than many of the cultural missionaries in post-war France had believed. Rather, Bourdieu argued in an iconoclastic way that it was better understood as a medium of social differentiation and, much as education, reproduction. He (1996a/92: xvi) wrote of the outrage that might be provoked if and when one takes a 'sociological scalpel' to Art, for fear of killing the pleasure of cultural consumption. *Distinction* suggests that such love is far from innocent. But, what about cultural production? We have seen what he made of the modern mass media. What about artistic endeavour itself?

BOURDIEU AND ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

In speaking with a group of students from the Art School in Nîmes in 2001, Bourdieu began his talk by evoking the 'crisis of belief' among artists (2001e:

25). His use of the word 'belief' is not accidental. He went on to refer to 'art as a religion', 'museums as churches', and the way art differentiates 'the sacred from the profane' (ibid. 26ff.). He calls Art 'a collective act of magic' in the way it points to a realm of the ineffable, the unknowable, and quasi-spiritual sensitivities. How does this square with the view that Art was also a 'collective act of misrecognition' in the way it is used as a medium for social distinction by certain social groups? Bourdieu's analysis might suggest that artists are in part somewhat the dupes of bourgeois society. They need to be understood as forming part of the dominated factions of the dominating class. Their role is therefore to provide the cultural currency of its legitimation.

Extending the perspective of *Distinction*, Bourdieu's approach was to understand art production itself as being differentiated according to the market it addresses, in particular, the social categories. There is art and there is *Art*. Such different styles as the classical art of Poussin, the Impressionists such as Manet, Renoir and Monet, and the blue-based performance pieces of Yves Klein are all art but in fact appeal to distinct social groups. For Bourdieu, these artistic movements, indeed all artistic and cultural production, could be understood through his *field* analysis:

the science of the work of art has the goal of reconstructing the artistic *code*, understood as a historically constituted system of classification (or of principles of division) which is crystallised in an ensemble of *words* permitting us to name and perceive differences, that is to say, more precisely, the goal of writing a history of these codes, instruments of perception which vary in time and space, notably as a function of transformations in the material and symbolic instruments of production. (1996a/92: 313)

Bourdieu focused the presentation of this approach to artistic production on a particular point in time – the mid-nineteenth century. He set out to show the formation of a 'new' literature and a 'new' art in the work of Flaubert and Manet. His argument went as follows. Art and culture by definition exist to supersede what has come before and to be in their turn superseded. The present *field* is an amalgam of the recognized past and present members and their works. Individual artists struggle for recognition in this *field*. Over time, time changes and the nature of change changes. In fact, there are at least four aspects of time to be aware of in understanding the art *field*: first, socially recognized, physical time moving back from future to present to the past; secondly, an individual artist's lifespan which has a beginning and end; thirdly, the speed and therefore degree that the artists pass through a particular artistic generation or recognized movement; fourthly, the speed or degree to which that movement or generation passes through the present recognized *field* (see 1996a/92: 151). At one extreme,

an artist founds a movement or school of painting which is recognized and remains an established part of the present *field*; for example, the work of Leonardo da Vinci. At the other extreme, an artist works but never receives public recognition, or does and quickly loses it, or forms part of a movement that is not considered important enough for further acknowledgement and passes out of the *field*. Generations proceed and precede generations: the avant-garde becomes a consecrated rear-garde as another avant-garde displaces them:

To impose a new producer, a new product and a new system of taste on the market at a given moment means to relegate to the past a whole set of producers, products and systems of taste, all hierarchised in relation to their degree of legitimacy. (ibid.: 160)

This displacement or relegation is not automatic but is conditional on social circumstances. Bourdieu argued that in France, up until the mid-nineteenth century, artists were trained in sufficient numbers in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts to meet society's need for painting. Their realist paintings were destined for aristocratic, imperial or bourgeois establishments. The best were exhibited in the Salon. However, when an increasing number of painters were trained, this led to pressure on the establishment and the Salon. The Salon des Refusés was founded to exhibit those turned down by the Salon. This outlet formed part of a new generation of journalists and writers, some fired by the events of 1848 and 1871 and socialist principles of egalitarianism. They expressed a desire to shake off the old order which had re-established itself in a different guise in the decades following the French Revolution. The fact that it was the Emperor Napoleon III in 1863 who established the Salon des Refusés is one indication of the way politicians were sensitive to the power of art and culture in connecting with populist opinion. A new art for a new society.

Bourdieu argued (2001e: 43) that Manet destroyed the 'academic eye'; namely, those who looked at painting to provide a representation which could be read in the legitimate terms of the State by means of the orthodoxy of the artistic establishment. What it was replaced by was a 'populist aestheticism' which was reflected in the *content* of painting. Conventional portraiture, and religious, military and political representations were replaced by 'ordinary' people and scenes from everyday life. However, it was at the level of *form* in painting that a more significant transformation took place. Transgressing all the orthodox techniques, style became an end in itself. Nowadays, Impressionism is often viewed as being the ultimate form of the middle classes, decorative art, focusing as it does on the light, colourful evocations of rural and urban scenes. However, in their day, Manet and the Impressionists, Bourdieu argued, were truly revolutionary in founding a relation to art best described as 'art for art's sake' (1996a/92: 218).

In a sense, this artistic revolution only came about because 'conditions were right'. Manet and the Impressionists were able to mobilize not just numbers of fellow artists but writers, journalists and critics, who gave them recognition and thus *legitimation* in French society. However, for Bourdieu, the fact that they struggled to constitute a *field* which was independent of the establishment, makes their achievement all the more 'heroic'; especially, since they originated from the same bourgeois world against which they were rebelling. To constitute a *field* in this way was, in Bourdieu's terms, 'the institutionalization of anomie' (1993b: 238–53), since it implied the acknowledgement of a way of doing things counter to the norm. A space opened up, was navigated by those who recognized it, and eventually became delineated as a new bounded area of activity. In a sense, only one small part of the *field* had to change, but its entire configuration transformed as a result.

Bourdieu published articles on Manet. He clearly admired Manet's struggle and saw that it had consequences in our modern times. In 1986, the Musée d'Orsay, a museum formed of a former railway station, was opened. The conversion itself was one of the big projects of the Giscard and Mitterrand presidencies, and thus a 'cultural event'. But for Bourdieu, a historical amnesia had occurred at the Musée d'Orsay, when this contemporary construction had overlooked the historical achievements of Manet and the Impressionists. Neither of these had really been acknowledged in the French art establishment until well into the twentieth century. In the Musée d'Orsay, they had been placed together alongside the very artists against whom they had been fighting. For Bourdieu, this was a travesty. A fellow professor at the Collège de France – Jacques Thuiller – had also written a pamphlet (see Robbins 2000: 98) in which he attempted a revisionist history of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Thuiller defended its heritage, and means of training and recruitment against contemporary criticism that it was elitist and a means of producing 'official art'. Against both events, Bourdieu argued that 'free thought must be won by a historical anamnesis capable of revealing everything in thought which is the forgotten product of historical work' (1996a/92: 312). In other words, he claimed for his method a revelation of what constituted this artistic generation, and by implication the significance of its art, against those who would pass over their achievement in order to preserve the status quo. What was at stake was not simply the reputation of an artistic movement but the power of art itself to transform our thinking. For Bourdieu, art and artists had the possibility of 'revolutionizing' our schemes of thought and perception against orthodoxy:

The right to subjective vision and the claim to the freedom to denounce and condemn, in the name of interior exigencies, the irreproachable violence of the reason of the state are one and the same. (1996a/92: 140)

and

What is effectively at stake is not only a redefinition of the functions of artistic activity, or even just the mental revolution needed to think through all the experiences excluded by the Academic order – 'emotion', 'impression', 'light', 'originality', 'spontaneity' – and 'effect', 'sketch', 'portrait', 'landscape'. It is a matter of creating the conditions of a new faith capable of giving meaning to the art of living in this inverted world that is the artistic universe. (ibid: 135)

It was Manet's achievement that he was able to effect this revolution in style and all that it represented in terms of a personal and social avant-garde, while he was *of* the establishment, coming from a bourgeois background and himself being trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. However, Bourdieu also acknowledged that 'in order to be a revolutionary, it is necessary to have a lot of capital' (2001e: 32). So, besides the growing bourgeois class of writers and artists, Manet had needed a bohemia capable of sensing his mission. His own conventional background had given him access to the means of legitimate manipulation of the consecrated goods. He was able to mobilize and accumulate *capital* – *social, cultural and economic* – in order to realize his artistic ambitions. For Bourdieu, Manet achieved for art what Flaubert had for literature, and, later in the twentieth century, Heidegger had for philosophy. These individuals were able to face up to the problems of the state of the *field*, and tried 'to reconcile irreconcilable things, and refuse absurd alternatives' (ibid.: 48). Such is the logic of the dynamic of symbolic *fields*. The interplay between the pre-existent and the yet-to-be, artistic expression offers the possibility of an articulation of personal and social revolt and refusal against established authority. Yet, the paradox seemed to be that, while an artistic avant-garde might provide a present-day cutting edge, as soon as it becomes recognized, it gets absorbed into the establishment. One thinks of all the subsequent artistic generations – post-Impressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, Expressionism, Minimalism – and considers the way radical challenges to individual thinking and social conventions of taste have ended up institutionalized in museums and art galleries. Extrapolating from Bourdieu's arguments, we see the implication of how Manet's revolution was eventually appropriated by the middle classes in their requirements for a 'pure art' form which would function as a consecration of their social positioning. In a postmodern world which separates signifier and signified, art as a signifier traditionally signifies the mysterious realm of pure aesthetics. When the latter is 'deconstructed' and the former rendered 'arbitrary', we have an anti-art revolution. 'Non-art' becomes art. What does this mean for the consumer and producer of art?

For Bourdieu, art no longer acted in a 'heroic way' in the modern world. For the consumer, of course, it had become a medium for a further conversion strategy. As previous artistic generations are superseded, a new avant-garde is required to reassert exclusivity. Symbolic value had simply been redefined. There is nothing more elitist than standing in front of a glass of water entitled *Oak Tree*. Similarly, atonal music is for a rarefied section of the *field*. The cognoscenti define themselves as elite by their engagement. At one point, Bourdieu remarked that 'modern art is more cultured than the Louvre' (2001c: 37), implying a new order of orthodox aesthetics. Art may be an arbitrary signifier but, as *Distinction* showed, it has a very non-arbitrary social and, ultimately, economic function to perform. For the art producer, this realization might lead to art which points towards the content of the arbitrary itself: art as ruse or play, where manipulation of the art field and those within it are taken into the 'production' and 'presentation' of the art work. Appropriation, site specificity, impermanence, accumulation and hybridization all feature in modern works of art which might also include personal artefacts, rubbish, human blood and animal excrement, as well as video, performances and virtual activities. Bourdieu called this relation to art simply a 'conformity of transgression' (2001c: 40). In other words, the search to shock and sensationalize becomes an end in itself. What is authentically new is replaced by novelty. Artists and writers combine the profits of transgression with the profits of membership of an avant-garde. A discourse results which plays with the notion of aesthetics, asking the consumer 'is this art?' while also drawing attention to the discourse itself (cf. 1984a/79: 497). Of course, these ambiguities are tolerated by the artistic intelligentsia as part of the games, of the interplay between form and function. However, Bourdieu argued that this position itself is a reflection of social position, since no such ambiguity is tolerated in popular culture where form is synonymous with function.

Distinction was based on data collected in the 1960s and 1970s when a traditional social class structure was still identifiable. In a late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century world, however, the situation is far more complex. In a sense, we can now be both artistic elite and populist, in as much as all forms of art are freely available in an open-access world. The artistic avant-garde and their audience are themselves active across the cultural spectrum, where irony and *hypocorrection* act as a form of aesthetic mastery, while the cultural mass media creates its own market.

In a post-postmodern world, traditional humanist values have been compromised or have collapsed. The notion of the cultural arbitrary is devastating for both low- and highbrow art. In a sense, what Bourdieu had done is replace a philosophical deconstruction of aesthetics with a sociological one. He recognized the dangers of such a position. Commenting to the art students at Nîmes,

he said: 'you want there to be something in art which is not reducible to social categorisation' (2001e: 43), concluding that if his analysis is sad for art, 'it is not sociology that is sad but the world' (ibid.).

Bourdieu made it clear that the principles of his analysis of the literary world in *The Rules of Art*, and in his commentary of Manet, apply to any artistic and cultural *field*. He recalled artists' struggles across the centuries for control of what they produce through rights of ownership. He quotes Beethoven's struggle for copyright and the fight artists have on their hands to resist having their work reduced to a simple market product:

It took nearly five centuries for painters to have the right to choose the colours they used, the way to use them, and then finally the right to choose their subject, notably, with abstract art, by making it disappear, to the great scandal of the bourgeois patrons; it's the same with cinema directors, it is necessary to have a whole social universe, of small cinemas, clubs, cinematic libraries . . . briefly, a whole social milieu in which a certain cinema has value. (1999b: 18)

If Manet's struggle, and that of all avant-garde movements, is 'heroic', it is because they succeed in creating an independent space against the given order of things implicit in the pre-existing *field*. Bourdieu argued that the pre-existing *fields* are normally infiltrated by State and establishment hierarchies which propagate the values of the status quo and their evolving interests. The question of the autonomy of the *field* is therefore paramount. Art and cultural *fields* occupy a dominant position within the *field* of power:

They are at any one time the site of a struggle between two principles of hierarchisation: the heteronomous principle which favours those who dominate the field economically and politically (for example, 'bourgeois' art), and the autonomous principle (for example, 'art for art's sake') which leads its most radical defenders to make of temporal failure a sign of election and of success a sign of compromise with the times. The state of relations of forces in this struggle depends on the autonomy which the field *globally* disposes of, meaning the degree to which its own norms and sanctions manage to impose themselves on the ensemble of producers of cultural goods and on those who . . . are the nearest to the occupants of the homologous position in the field of power, and hence most sensitive to external demands and the most heteronomous. (1996a/92: 215)

The logic of this argument is that there are two conceptual extremes: one where 'art' is completely subordinated to external demands (for example,

commercial art and much of television); and another which is produced purely 'for its own sake' and indifferent to demand requirements. Summed up, these two positions distinguish commercial art from universal art. As noted above, we live in a postmodern world of the cultural arbitrary and the deconstruction of aesthetics, where non-art becomes art and where artists' engagement with the commercial world and market (in drawing attention to this very construction of art and denouncing the claims to universal values) *is* part of the art. There are numerous examples: one thinks of Tracey Emin exhibiting her bed, the 'silent' piano piece *4' 33"* by John Cage, and the literary hybridization of Kathy Acker. In Britain, the work of the Young British Artists (YBAS) in the 1990s demonstrated the mutual complementarity of the fields of commercialism, art and politics (see Grenfell and Hardy 2003). The key figure in this movement was Charles Saatchi, who was active in politics and commerce as well as being a key gallery owner and art collector. At one point, he put together a collection of artistic work under the title 'Neurotic Realism', as if to create an avant-garde by his own say-so where none had previously existed. It is as if he is posing the question: is it really that easy to manufacture an artistic cutting edge? To which the answer, judging by the adoption of the rubric across the *field*, would seem to be 'yes'. And, in this post-postmodern world, such activity can itself be presented and considered 'ironic' or as a 'ruse' and thus an artistic act. For Bourdieu, this is why postmodernism was reactionary and dangerous; because it destroys humanist values. The logic of his analysis of cultural *fields* is that many contemporary artists merely manipulate them for their own self, and ultimately economic, interest. What is the alternative?

CULTURAL RESISTANCE

Of course, artists and cultural activists can collaborate or resist. For Bourdieu, one way to do this was for them to incorporate knowledge of the conditions of cultural production into the work itself. When interviewing the black American writer Toni Morrison (1998d), he commented on the way that 'white' discussion of 'black' literature uses exactly the same vocabulary and terms as when white writers talk about blacks – sensuality, sexuality, exoticness. For him, her attempts to use white and black characters in her fiction, with the aim of making such categories disappear was a form of resistance to linguistic subterfuge. Similarly, in his conversation with the German visual artist Hans Haake, who himself has had public art works destroyed because of their political content, Bourdieu expressed admiration for the way Haake's work 'is accompanied by a critical analysis of the art world and the very conditions of artistic production' (1995a/94: 1). In other words, it drew attention to the processes of the artistic *field* of which it was a prod-

uct. Bourdieu also passed on his 'tools of analysis' to the art students at Nîmes, in order to help them to be reflexive about what they do. Here, he declared himself against what he calls the 'höderlino-heideggerienne' tradition and the 'mystical cult of creation' (2001c: 45). He asserts that artists are of the most sensitive, and therefore, potentially most able to be reflexive as long as they know how. To sum up, Bourdieu argued that a sociologically reflexive relation to art attempts to 'construct systems of intelligible relations capable of making sense of sentient data' (1996a/92: xvi) and, in so doing, offers the possibility of escaping the rule of the social construction of pure sensation. In place of the latter, his approach seeks to understand the 'expressive impulse' in 'trans-historic' *fields* and the necessity of human creativity in them. Bourdieu wrote that such an understanding recreates the social space of the art and cultural *field*, the practical logic immanent in it and those identified with it. To be able to do this as an artistic consumer and/or producer allows access to a relation to these *fields* of human creativity which do indeed touch on the universal potential in a way which, Bourdieu concludes, 'seems to be more reassuring, more humane, than belief in the miraculous virtues of pure interest in pure form' (1993c: 188).

Earlier in this chapter, I referred to the place of art and culture in France. Clearly art and culture offer products which might act as icons, sources of education, personal development and even political expression. In a sense, the sociological humanist approach of Bourdieu in such books as *The Rules of Art* could be deemed to be perfectly congruent with the manifesto of *Peuple et Culture* and their mission to 'cultivate the common man'. But what Bourdieu described in his analysis of the art *field* and mass media is one where commercialism rules. Moreover, such commercialism destroys the potential of art to universalize. At one point, Bourdieu recalled a phrase from the art historian Ernst Gombrich: 'when the ecological conditions for art are destroyed, art and culture soon die' (1999b). Bourdieu writes:

One of the great obstacles to the constitution of forces of resistance is the fact that those dominating control the media like never before in history . . . These days, all the big French newspapers are completely controlled. Even apparently independent newspapers like *Le Monde* are in fact share companies dominated by big finance. (1995a/94: 23)

Bourdieu's increasing interventions into the public sphere and in the media during the 1990s were a major aspect of his mobilization against the colonization of intellectuals and artists by the world of commerce. For him, the more the autonomy of the art *field* was compromised, the less possible 'art' became. Bourdieu was particularly critical of the way certain artists and intellectuals were excluded by the media. He criticized the fact that TV journalists were the gatekeepers to public

exposure, and choices were made on the basis of commercial interest rather than artistic and intellectual merit. As access to the means of public communication is controlled, so is politics in the construction of consensus and orthodoxy. Bourdieu was scathing of the French tv intellectuals, his *bête noire* being Bernard-Henri Lévy, whom he described as 'doxosophes': 'technicians of reason who think themselves wise' (1998a:7). The expert political scientist was involved in a discipline that could be used *for* as well as *against* the established order. In *The Rules of Art* (p. 348), Bourdieu wrote of the distinction between having autonomy and independence and existing in an ivory tower. It was his intention to avoid the latter which no doubt prompted his interventions in the media. He stressed the need for a fight which must be collective, for criticism, watchfulness and a '*realpolitik*' of reason against corporatism' (ibid.).

The forces of the establishment interests protect the status quo. Resistance is resisted and the possibility to find a space for a radical critique of the media itself seems doomed when the media is needed to communicate this alternative voice: 'If a vehicle as powerful as television were orientated even slightly toward this kind (Manet's) of symbolic revolution, I can assure you that everyone would be rushing to put a stop to it' (1998b/96: 45). Nevertheless, Bourdieu was active in mounting just such a resistance. In 1992, he addressed a conference entitled *Reporters sans frontières* which formed part of a media reflection on the way the Gulf War had been covered by the media. He concluded:

What I am looking for here is the necessity of a 'communication of the unconscious of the communications industry' ... of a critical moment which is capable of dealing harshly and punishing – at least by ridicule – those who go beyond limits ... I would like to imagine a critical programme which brings together researchers and artists, singers, satirists, in order to submit to a test by satire and laughter all those – journalists, politicians, and media intellectuals – who fall in the most flagrant way into abuse of symbolic power. (1992c: 32)

This would perhaps be a trial of the media by the media, and Bourdieu admitted that this is probably a 'utopian' dream. His other actions on the media were more direct. In terms of the actuality of the day, following the strikes of November–December 1995 the association ACRIMED (*Action-Critique-Médias*) was formed by two of Bourdieu's associates – Patrick de Champagne and Henri Maler – with the mission of rendering the media more democratic. This group acted as a pressure group in raising issues of media and management and editorial control; for example, in the case of the film *Pas vu pas pris* by Pierre Carlos. Originally commissioned by Canal+, who subsequently deferred broadcasting it, the film dealt with the 'connivance' between television and politics.

ACRIMED was able to argue that by censoring it, television was showing the limits of its own self-criticism (see 2002c: 384). In the autumn of 1999, Bourdieu became involved with ACRIMED for the defence of the national radio station France-Culture, when its programming was totally redesigned after Jean Marie Cavada took over as the Director of Radio France, and Laure Adler was nominated head of France-Culture. With these managerial changes came a style of coverage which was imported from commercial radio, with its programming for mass appeal. For Bourdieu and ACRIMED, this policy resulted in little more than turning programmes into publicity slots for books, records and films.

Ultimately, however, as with the young art students, Bourdieu sought to make sociology available to journalists and media workers in order to make them aware and allow this awareness to infiltrate the system:

With journalists, it is always, as elsewhere, the young and women who are most affected by it. I want them to understand a little better why this is happening to them, that it is not necessarily the fault of the boss – who, obviously, is not evil, but was chosen for that reason – that it is a structure which oppresses them. This awareness can help them to put up with the violence and to organise themselves. (1995c: 10)

Elsewhere he commented that 'no one is wicked voluntarily' (1999b).

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this chapter, I recalled the special place that art and culture held in France and the way that, in the post-war period, they were seen as offering possibilities to individuals and society at large. Bourdieu's analysis casts doubt on the aesthetic experience in the way it draws attention to art and culture as a means of social distinction. His work on taste and museums demonstrates the mechanisms of this social differentiation or *prise de distance* among those involved. Distinction is also involved in the ambition of the aspiring artist, writer and musician. At the end of *Love of Art* (p. 109), Bourdieu had called on education to 'break the circle of cultural needs which allow a lasting and assiduous disposition to cultural practice to be formed'. In the modern world, the mass media and technological communications systems have taken over the means to forming such dispositions. However, they can work in either direction – on behalf of commercialism or of emancipation. We have seen how cultural producers and consumers use the field of art for their own purposes. Bourdieu never falls into a complete social deconstruction of art and culture, however,

seeing in it the potential at least for resistance and a radical critique of established orders. Through a more sociologically informed relation to cultural consumption and production, there is even the potential for social and individual transformation. Bourdieu's own work on television, along with films such as *La Sociologie est un sport de combat* demonstrate how the medium can be utilized. And, as we shall see in the next part of this book, *La Misère du monde* acted as an entire mobilization of the media and within the media on behalf of those suffering in society.

PART III

CHAPTER 5

Economics

In many respects Bourdieu's work amounts to a critique of the systems of contemporary society and, by implication, the economy which produces them. His attack on modern economics became most explicit in the 1990s, triggered by the publication of *La Misère du monde* in 1993. In this book which has sold more than 150,000 copies to date, Bourdieu sets out the 'poverty of experience' of everyday citizens based on a series of 'eyewitness' accounts. The book shows how social policies, and the economic rationale which underpins them, result in suffering for those they target. This chapter sets the context for economic policy which was implemented in France in the second half of the twentieth century and connects it with economic theory and philosophy at an international level. It offers examples of this 'poverty of experience'; in particular, the consequences of French housing policy. A number of themes are also touched on in a discussion of Bourdieu's views on the neo-liberal world.

Most of Bourdieu's work can be read as an attack on twentieth-century capitalism, however we conceive it, and whether our personal reading is positive or negative. In the previous chapters, we have seen that colonialism in general, and Algeria in particular, were events with profound economic objectives and repercussions. Education, also, needs to be understood as the prime social mechanism in the reproduction of social classes which are themselves an expression of the economic dynamics of a society. Art and media too are intimately bound up with the laws of market consumption and production. In this sense 'economics' is everywhere. For Bourdieu, the principal basis of *habitus*, that main determinant of social practice, was *capital*, specifically *symbolic capital*. The latter was operative and operating as the social and cultural medium for *fields*. However, in this theory, both *social* and *cultural capital* are ultimately reduced to *economic capital*; in other words, the final account of *field* positioning gained as a result of acquiring and mobilizing *cultural* and *social capital* is economic wealth (*capital*). There is a narrower sense of what we mean by 'economic' involving money and wealth, at an individual and national level, the forces of the financial world, and the political policy designed to steer economic activity. This chapter is about

Bourdieu's developing views on such issues. It begins by setting out the French background to his thinking on economics and economic *habitus*. There is then discussion on the effects of economic policy as described in *La Misère du monde*. The example of housing is highlighted before concluding with some thoughts on international finance and the effects of economic policy at a global level.

BACKGROUND

Previous chapters have addressed some of the social tensions created by a rapidly changing world. For France, the Second World War marked a watershed. Before the war, it can be seen as a country reluctant to enter the twentieth century, with a high proportion of the populace still living on the land in the rural lifestyle. Much of the social and political turmoil of the 1930s might be understood in terms of such economic ambiguity. The financial crises of the 1920s and 1930s, with high levels of industrial and commercial unemployment, left many Frenchmen suspicious about modern economic systems and their consequences and effectiveness. The largest international example of contemporary capitalism was, of course, the United States of America, but neither their society nor their liberal economics seemed to offer confidence to a Europe in crisis. The ambiguity over alternatives and the ambivalence towards modern capitalist economies, coupled with uncertainty about the present and the future fed reactionary forces and the inherent intransigence of both the political class and large sections of society at large.

As discussed earlier, the defeat of Nazi Germany and so, by implication, of the collaborating regime which fell in its wake, swept away the illusion that somehow the answer lay in rediscovering old ways of doing things from a 'golden past'. The victory of the allied states was also a victory for a whole way of life. Nevertheless, at the time of liberation, when faced with the task of renewal and reconstruction, France was faced with an economic structure which was predominantly nineteenth-century. There was a fierce imbalance between Paris and the rest of the country. Industrialization had got under way relatively late in France. Industrial production was mostly heavy – iron, steel, coal – and was concentrated in the North. After the construction of the railways between 1850 and 1860, the rural population fell continuously. In mid-nineteenth-century France, three-quarters of the population lived on the land. That figure was still nearly half by the outbreak of war. Within this relatively high proportion of rural population, there was a considerable geographical imbalance. France was almost three times the size of Britain, but with a smaller population, and with large parts of its land still organized along traditional lines with small local economies.

Bourdieu would have been familiar with such an environment since he was born and spent his childhood in a small village in the Béarn. Eventually, he moved from this village to a boarding school in a local town, as those who wanted to 'get on' must. For a rural area such as south-west France, there were, of course, local towns and cities – Perpignan, Montpellier, Toulouse – but these were rather more regional service points than presenting a serious alternative to Paris and the north as sites of economic opportunity. This sense of regional distance was not simply economic but cultural too. Local accents and dialects (and patois) were still prevalent. Art, music and dance looked more to the south and Catalonia than to the northern regions of France, instilling both a sense of social isolationism and cultural distinction from the way they did things up north.

MODERN ECONOMIC THEMES

The inter-war period saw the birth of modern economic theory. Until that time, governments operated a policy of economic *laissez-faire*, derived from Adam Smith's notion of the 'invisible hand' of pricing, as individuals pursued their own ends and resources were used to maximize individual advantage. Their belief was that any interference with this mechanism could only lead to a reduction in its efficiency. Under this scenario, private gain was synonymous with benefits to the welfare of the community as a whole. By the 1920s and 1930s, such non-interference was shown not to work, with financial collapse, economic crisis, high unemployment and the consequent social costs. Indeed, along with the excessive financial retributions imposed on Germany following the First World War, it was such economic instability which provided the conditions for the social and political tensions of the 1930s, and sowed the seeds of further European war. Against this backdrop, John Maynard Keynes founded a theory of macro-economic management. Famously, he argued that national economies could be managed as a whole, and that the problem was not one of non-intervention, but of not enough intervention. There was little sense in running a balanced budget if a sizeable proportion of the workforce were unemployed: mass unemployment during the 1930s was often accompanied by negative inflation. For Keynes, the answer lay in the management of demand in the economy. He argued that governments could affect such management. Employing people to dig holes in the road and fill them in meant, by their activity, that the wheels of the economy were being lubricated. Their earning powered aggregate demand which stimulated further demand, pulling others into employment. The argument went that the long-term consequences of paying men to produce nothing were less important than increasing demand, since, in the long run – we are all dead! This was not simply a glib remark, but drew attention to a pragmatic view

of economics, that it should serve the problems of today and not sacrifice the present generations to the future.

In many respects, mobilization and re-armament for the war acted in Keynesian terms to increase demand in the same way as men digging holes in the ground and filling them in. Demand within the economy was certainly stimulated. However, it was at the level of economic planning that the new approach probably had its biggest impact. The idea here was that the economy could not be allowed to take care of itself but should be steered by governments' policies.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FRENCH ECONOMY

In the years which followed the Second World War, it was common to refer to the rebirth of France as an 'economic miracle'. Starting when De Gaulle took office in 1959, France experienced economic growth of 5–6 per cent per year, rising to a 10 per cent increase in production in the Pompidou era (prior to the oil crisis of 1973). The reasons for this apparent success were many and varied. The simple vitality produced as a result of liberation played its part; especially in the sweeping away of the past and old ways. Defeat also enabled Frenchmen to redesign their political and economic administrative systems from scratch. Although France started from quite a long way back as a modern industrial country which necessitated rapid acceleration to re-establish herself as a leading world economy and power, Marshall aid in 1947 ensured that she had the resources to jump-start this modernization process. The key to this economic miracle, compared with pre-war France, was economic planning.

France was less of a stranger to economic planning than some other countries and had a tradition of State *dirigisme* which stretched back to the *ancien régime*. In the post-war context, however, France established a series of five-year Plans to guide economic activity. The Plan was founded by Jean Monnet who became the first Commissariat-Général du Plan. The principal aim of the Plan was to set targets of growth for various sectors in the economy. A key element in this was a process of '*concertation*', where the heads of large and small firms would sit down together with civil servants and, for the first time, union leaders to agree targets. To this extent, all partners of the economy were 'on board' in agreeing a series of priorities. The fact that the Plan was indicative rather than compulsory was a key aspect in explaining its success and, it must be said, many of its targets were indeed met. Although this planning was itself most important in the first decade or so following the Second World War, its influence could still be seen in the 1970s.

As well as the Plan, the French State continued to exercise central control

over much of society, including the economy. In 1957, the Treaty of Rome was signed and the Common Market founded, thus lifting trade barriers between France and key European partners and generally reducing protectionism within the economy. The expansion and acceleration needed a workforce. New housing was constructed around Paris and other large towns to provide accommodation for people from rural areas of France, or from Algeria, who were encouraged to move into cities in order to play a part in the reconstruction. Much of this housing was basic – *Habitations à Loyer Modéré* (HLMs) – which, while lacking in style and amenities, often provided modern amenities superior to those found in rural life. The imbalance between Paris and the Provinces was also addressed through an active plan for decentralization. New Towns were planned for the Parisian outskirts, and other major cities were designated *métropoles d'équilibre*, as growth points for urban development and specific industries focused there; for example, aeronautics in Toulouse, or electrical and chemical industries around the Lyons region.

BOURDIEU AND ECONOMIC HABITUS

Chapter 3 discussed Bourdieu's early concern with education as a means to provide a system which would support the construction of this new economic world – at home and abroad – and in so doing not simply reproducing existent social inequalities. His call for a 'rational pedagogy' set itself against the classical system of the past, and called for an education with contemporary relevance. Such an education was more than vocational and involved a sustained connection with society and culture, to produce a citizen who was a participator, not simply a recipient, in the socio-economic forces which surrounded them.

In his early work on Algeria and the Béarn, Bourdieu contrasted the two worlds of tradition and modernity, rural and urban, feudal and capitalist. To sum up, there was a entire revolution in lifestyle when an Algerian peasant moved from the rural village to the city. The most obvious differences lay in physical surroundings and lifestyle as village hut was replaced by urban apartment. But, whole attitudes to gifts, time and honour also changed as an economic system based on exchange was replaced by one of calculation and interest. In other words, the social was also economic and moral. In attempting to understand Algerian society and economy in transition, Bourdieu wrote of his personal struggle to break away from his own assumptions about economic activity when he moved away from village to town (2000e: 24). Kabyle peasants similarly had to perform an act of 'invention and conversion' in order to break away from their own vision of the world. This seeing beyond the 'spontaneous' world is a defining aspect of Bourdieu's work.

If Bourdieu, by definition a sociologist, was the 'outsider' on the inside, exposing what was really going on in a social process and the *misrecognitions* operating there, this potential 'seeing' was bought at the price of a kind of personal structural mismatching. Bourdieu's own academic training as a sociologist placed him apart structurally with regard to both knowledge and the material world. He was not completely submerged in the waters of the *field*, but at least partly 'free' to look beyond the empirical situation. Bourdieu saw that this freedom from the immediate confines and assumed beliefs of the *field* was in fact inherent in any cross-structural move. For example, the anomie, or alienation, so evident in the Algerian peasant relocated to the town, provided a space for them to objectify the normally taken-for-granted surroundings of everyday existence. A case example is offered by Bourdieu of this way of seeing in a later article on making the 'economic habitus' (2000e). His subject is a Kabyle cook, who ran away from his village and family when he was 13 and subsequently took up a number of jobs: delivery boy, baker, washer-up, cook, grocer. Bourdieu writes that the man had been able to adopt a viewpoint at once close-up and distant – a point in objective space at once central and yet marginal – and this had led to him seeing the world of the European from the inside. The cook's account amounts to a process of acquisition of a certain *economic habitus*, or way of seeing the way the economic world works. Bourdieu writes of the new meaning given to labour when agricultural activities are replaced by waged work and how new temporal habits are acquired. The street peddlers discussed in Chapter 2 followed an economic logic which itself seemed contradictory. Wage earning affected both gender and family relations. Economic conditions changed the system of beliefs and expectations of various social classes. Material security became all the more important in a world of insecurity and unpredictability. What followed was a change in strategic world outlook, involving matrimony, education and economic strategies, and the relative actions to acquire the right capital configurations to ensure upward mobility. What the cook saw was that:

With work, the thing that matters most is whether it is tiring or not. The least taxing work is especially the civil servants, and the professionals . . . [he] does his 8 hours and then goes home; he's got a guaranteed monthly salary, it's a secure life. Then come the shopkeepers: the bigger they are the less tired they get. Then the craftsmen who work for themselves – they are like the middle rank civil servants, skilled workers and technicians. Then come the unskilled workers. The *fellahs* are either like the biggest craftsmen who generally don't work themselves, or like agricultural labourers when they have to work themselves. But the worst-off of all are the agricultural labourers who work very hard, for long hours and earn nothing. (ibid.: 33)

This view offers a picture of the economic topography of a society and 'knowing one's place' in it. It contrasts the clash between old and new ways, what is valued, feared, aspired to and denounced. Economics is here experienced at a personal level.

In Chapter 2, I also referred to Bourdieu's concern with the effects of this clash of worlds and systems on matrimonial strategies and bachelourhood in the Béarn. As noted previously, Bourdieu was a keen photographer, and at the core of his work on the Béarn peasant is perhaps a single snapshot (reproduced on the cover of a book reprint of three key papers from this study, 2002b) of a single incident: a Christmas village ball. Bourdieu described the scene with the various village generations gathered and dancing. However, around the perimeter, were the middle-aged bachelors, watching but not dancing.

These were the men who have not been accommodated by the marriage practices of the region. Bourdieu's analyses showed how local customs involved a calculation in terms of the number of children in a family and the size of the inheritance. Custom then operated to ensure the trans-generational survival of family status within the community rather than individual needs. Such customs had been developed in order to accommodate the State Code on inheritance that all children in a family had a right to inheritance. Underpinning this work was a methodological point which Bourdieu wished to make; namely, that social practices should be considered not as *rules* but more as *strategic* calculations on the basis of pragmatic decisions about what will work best. He argued that, before 1914, marriages were in effect governed by strict formal rules. Faced with the changing world, this regulation decreased because a wider range of strategic actions was needed for success. Two principles operated: first, one which prioritized the rights of elder children; secondly, the distinction between socially ascending and descending marriages. Across these two principles, he observed sub-principles of gender, village and country, and age applying in a range of possible permutations. The classic 'celibate' of the dance floor was consequently the younger child of both large and poor families, but for different reasons. In one case, marriage would entail undesirable dowry payments, in the other, fragmentation of inheritance. The point was that both marriage and celibacy could be considered as a collective decision, albeit socially prescribed, rather than one of individual choice. The locals spoke of 'crisis in society' because of the ways their customs no longer worked.

Marriage customs had altered in response to evolving economic structures and hence changes to *economic habitus*. The crisis went beyond traditional issues of inheritance and now concerned the world outside the rural communities. The most significant of these was the increasing influence of neighbouring towns. The towns offered people independence unknown in rural communities. In town, people could act as they wished individually rather than be governed

by local pressures. They also entered the marriage 'market' on equal terms with others, not as the embodiment of social inheritance. Bourdieu showed how this difference affected the way they presented themselves. Nowhere was this more evident than in their physical appearance. In the traditional context, since their marriage hardly depended on personal attractiveness, there was no need to attend to it. Similarly, there was little impulse to 'get modern', or move away from traditional habits and customs – including dance, music, clothes, etc. In the town, however, the situation was reversed, with people adopting modern lifestyles and acting as 'free' individuals. In some cases, village partners were 'poached' away from village communities when town dwellers came to visit the country dances (ibid.: 84). Education also had a part to play; especially when children went off to study in local towns (as Bourdieu had done). Such moves amounted to a 'de-culturation', a change in lifestyle and daily rhythms: 'this new experience tended practically to "de-realise" the values transmitted by the family and to turn affective and economic investments no longer towards the reproduction of the line but towards the reproduction by the single individual of the position occupied by the line in the social structure' (p. 240). In other words, the communities were increasingly opening up.

Inflation after the First World War meant that land inheritance had lost much of its value and dowries had dwindled. Parental authority had reduced. Bourdieu quotes statistical and ethnographic detail to show how young people, especially women (p. 227), moved off to towns but then returned. He calls this acting as veritable 'Trojan horses' of urban life. They brought in urban values and with them the promises of social mobility, better housing, education, salaried jobs, all of which undermined the traditional lifestyles. The real nature of the crisis therefore was one of old and new worlds, traditional and modern economies, rural and urban lifestyles undermining the matrimonial strategies of the communities. Younger children were now just as likely to marry, as mixed-aged marriages and social provenance was more important than geographical territory in matching couples. Bourdieu writes of the internal contradictions and 'anomie' of the Béarnaise peasants, most markedly evident in their relationship with their body – thus, unable to dance. Caught between different worlds and the loss of traditional authority, it is perhaps unsurprising if those left on the land should experience life as a precarious present and an uncertain future.

Bourdieu returned to 'le bal des célibataires' on various occasions (1962b, 1972a, 1989c). Across these papers, there are three principal strands: the ethnographic and statistical account of the marriage patterns in the Béarn; theoretical questions concerning 'rules' and 'strategies' and the interplay between 'the socialized body' and the 'games' in which it is engaged; and the question of the relationship between traditional communities and urban life, specifically in terms of the impact of economic forces on individuals and the consequences.

This case of practice within the marriage market in the Béarn might seem of minor importance, but in these changes in matrimonial patterns Bourdieu saw a substitution of local rules geared to the norms and interests of local groups by 'autonomous and auto-regulated' mechanisms which spread way beyond the interests of the local context (2002b: 230). In this case, local markets, here symbolic but increasingly economic, were unified according to a single set of competitive values. In this process, quoting Engels, people 'have lost control over their social interrelations' (ibid.). A local marriage market which developed in order to provide the social reproduction of the community was destroyed by a unified value system which 'brutally devalues all the products of the mode of production and reproduction of everything that peasant families had to offer; whether this is the earth and life in the country, or the very being of the peasant, his language, clothes, manners, bearing and physique' (ibid.).

There is in these comments perhaps a certain nostalgia on Bourdieu's part for a past way of life, possibly for his own childhood. He writes in the 'Introduction' to these papers (p. 12) of suffering a certain sense of 'betrayal' in sociologically objectifying a world so close to him. As noted above, at the time of carrying out this study, France itself was experiencing rapid economic modernization which could only accentuate the trends noted by Bourdieu. In both of the cases from Algeria and the Béarn, it is probably more apposite to note a concern on Bourdieu's part for the impact and effects of the modern market economy rather than simply a nostalgia for the past.

FRENCH ECONOMY POST-1968

If planning characterized the French economy in the 1950s and 1960s, it also represented the uninhibited embracing of what it was to be a modern industrial country, with all that implied for the fabric and structure of society. However, the De Gaulle era was also marked by an increasing level of State bureaucracy which did nothing to reduce the traditional centralization of French political culture. Much of the crisis of 1968 can perhaps be put down to Frenchmen simply being fed up with the 'Papa State', and with being told what to do and how to do it. Too much control was simply inhibiting the natural vitality of society and the economy alike, resulting in a series of 'bottlenecks', so aptly summed up by Michel Crozier's 'la société bloquée' (1970). Social and education reform was one result of the events of 1968. The relaxing of State control (albeit more a gesture than reality in some cases) extended to the economy and the main players in it. In fact, the economy recovered well after taking a tumble following the 1968 crisis. There are many indicators of a successful economy – inflation, production, unemployment, balance of payments, growth, currency

value, investment – but it sometimes seems that each of these are incompatible with each other. If the De Gaulle era was marked by healthy expansion, the continuing high inflation suggested that there were underlying structural weaknesses in the French economy. The oil crisis of 1973 brought these to the surface. France weathered the first effects of the rise in fuel prices quite well, maintaining growth and an import–export balance. But, then inflation doubled, wage costs rose (partly to keep up with inflation) and the French franc grew weaker on the monetary markets. What happened next? In a word: economic liberalism.

It is one thing to macro-manage the economy in a Keynesian sense, creating sufficient demand in order to reheat it. Planning made obvious sense in a time of rebuilding and modernizing the country. But, there came a time when it was simply no longer possible to accelerate out of trouble. When he was made Prime Minister in 1976 (after a career as an economics professor) Raymond Barre's argument was that France was living beyond her means. His solution was an early expression of what became known as 'liberal economics', from which the phoenix of monetarism emerged. The immediate medicine was to implement an austerity programme to rein in excessive demand and push for more competitiveness through greater efficiency in French industry and commerce. This policy represented a major change in economic philosophy. In place of demand management and planning came liberalization in the form of the removal of State control over prices, subsidies and industrial ownership. In effect, this amounted to a return to the nineteenth-century laissez-faire approach, where only the fittest survive. Stronger versions of these policies were later adopted by Margaret Thatcher's government in Britain, and Ronald Reagan's in the USA. However, these measures did have a cost, most noticeably unemployment – especially among workers in industries considered outmoded. In France, this inevitably meant the heavy industries of the North, such as steel. By 1981, unemployment had tripled under Giscard and Barre's economic policies. When the Socialists came to power in the same year, they immediately set about reversing this policy, re-inflating the economy through stimulating growth, and undertaking State nationalization of big industries. These measures – especially promises to curb unemployment – were established during years in which the Socialists were in opposition. However, this return to prioritizing growth and social sensitivity over the laws of the market was short-lived. By 1983, the Socialists appeared to perform a volte-face themselves by turning to policies more closely associated with liberal economics when worsening economic indicators led to a run on the French franc. The moral was that there was 'no bucking the financial markets'. The route of economic liberalism has been generally the course of subsequent governments ever since – give or take nuances, accents and emphases. In Britain too, neo-

liberalism formed the basis of 'New Labour' economics. This is the context to Bourdieu's attack on neo-liberal economics.

LA MISÈRE DU MONDE

Bourdieu had flirted with the Socialists in their education policy. Modern economics was also a major concern for him because of the impact it had on traditional communities. However, it was not until the 1990s, that he mounted a sustained and explicit attack on the economic philosophy which had shaped France and the modern world. This attack included a critique of modern economic theory itself and the way it was actualized in the real world. This new major preoccupation was announced by the publication of *La Misère du monde* in 1993.

The title of this book is itself worthy of consideration. In French, there is the phrase: 'il porte la misère du monde', in the same way that in English it is said 'he carries the weight of the world on his shoulders'. 'The Weight of the World' is the English title of the book. The American translators of the book draw attention (1999a: viii) to the term *misère*, pointing out that it implies both *poverty* in an economic and spiritual sense, and the *misery* of the collectivity – their suffering, unhappiness and misfortunes. There is the sense of the impoverishment of the world in all its aspects. *La misère* also crops up in books by Marx (*La Misère de la Philosophie*), Proudhon (*La Philosophie de la misère*) and Victor Hugo (*Les Misérables*). There are therefore many allusions in the title of this book. For all these reasons, a subtitle of the book might well have been *The Poverty of Experience*, dealing as it does with what it is to live in France (and America) in the later twentieth century. In fact, it offers a full-frontal account of the effects of economic policies on a range of individuals, who themselves might be regarded as representative of much bigger groups within society. The strengths of the accounts lie in their very mundaneness – how life is experienced at an everyday level. In other words, it points to the reality behind the rhetoric of political discourse on economic imperatives. Each account is a kind of 'silent witness' to the effects of capitalist economics on 'everyman'. It is worth pausing to consider the weight of this world.

A key idea presented in it is that of systems, and how suffering is rarely associated with the world presented in modern economics. Traditional Marxist philosophy refers to the 'alienation' of individuals, disconnected from their lives and work. Durkheimian sociology referred to the 'anomie' of a world without norms to guide individual practice. For Bourdieu, it was not so much a lack of norms, as too many of them. Many offer contradictory messages which emanate from a plurality of structural positions which arise from the 'law of the

jungle . . . [and of] liberalism without limits' (1993d: 115). People are locked in 'double binds', not knowing which way to turn, whether to trust the past, present or future, creating 'internal divisions and suffering' (2000a/1997: 160). Some individuals are simply out of time and space, attempting to apply old ways of doing things and of understanding to a rapidly changing world. Unable to adapt to the modern situation, and caught in old ways, there is a 'hysteresis' or inertia of *habitus*, so that 'dispositions are out of line with the field' and with the 'collective expectations which are constitutive of its normality' (ibid.). For example, when the economic crisis had shattered the very basis of earlier ties, Bourdieu writes of the intensive work practice of modern industries, where only the fittest survive. Retirement at 50 becomes the norm. Individuals become idle leading to higher divorce and suicide rates in areas where traditional industries had been closed or downsized. A retired metalworker reports:

There is a lot of pain, a lot of suffering, mental and physical, people suffer and suffer . . . In the housing projects everything is in complete disarray, there are difficulties, people are embarrassed, they don't talk much. Even families are split because the younger generation buys the house or apartment, and they want the older generation to get out so they can fix it up to rent it out . . . Unemployment divides us and brings out the worst in us, individualism, jealousy, envy; work brings us together, fraternity, solidarity . . . I'm a little bit lost in all this . . . I've changed perhaps, or the world has changed around me. (1999a/93: 318)

The issues here are of personal relations, family, generations of workers, home environment, and individual experiences at work. For example, Sochaux Peugeot is a plant located in Eastern France, not far from Germany and Switzerland. It was part of the expansion in production of the 1960s, rapidly recruiting a large workforce. However, liberalization had led to modernization: the intensification of work practices, tighter production targets and implementation of advanced technology. This process resulted in a more diverse workforce: there are the 'old guys' recruited in the 1960s and 1970s, and the 'young', almost entirely formed of temporary workers hired between 1988 and 1989 when the plant was expanding. The 'young' are of a different generation from the 'old' (although the latter include many still in their thirties). One 'young' worker sees himself as sober, hardworking, available and committed (ibid.: 282ff.). Temporary job status deprives him of the 'political luxury' of opposition through union opposition. For him, the 'old guys' get their way. Any sense of collectivity is destroyed by such heterogeneity. For the 'old guys', the old system (until 1985/86) provided more than a stable job, but social relations and a whole way of life. Here, 'individual resistance and collective resistance, "moral" resistance and "political" resis-

tance came together, made connections, and sustained each other' (ibid.: 271). It is therefore all the more disillusioning when the new workers do not want, or are unable because of their position, to join in this way of doing things – this solidarity. Nationally, unionism had weakened. The main communist-linked CGT had lost over two-thirds of its membership between 1970 and 1990, while the more Socialist CFDT lost one third – by the 1980s the two organizations accounted for less than one in twenty salaried employees (p. 317).

These divisions within the workforce, and the distinct way they see themselves and operate had other effects. The younger workers may have fewer rights but they are better qualified, with vocational certificates and diplomas becoming the norm. Sometimes, they can learn the established workers' jobs 'in a day'. They give the impression of being 'in transit' – on their way up. However, the 'temps' are also the first to be forced out during times of economic stringency, for example, the Gulf War, when many of them were laid off (p. 260). Modern recruitment practices do little for supporting an image of working-class identity, as expressed traditionally in the labour movement. A veteran shop steward talks of his dismay at the loss of group solidarity: 'the cohesion of the group used to be against supervisors, now it's worker against other workers' (p. 324). The moral code had been destabilized and then restructured, with 'workers now buying into a logic of hierarchy against the rules of the old-style working class'. A world is created of blame and stigma. The shop steward remarks how many union members turned out to be more anti-Arab than the 'company men' (p. 323). The spectre of the National Front is never far away. Support for the far Right in France has gradually been growing in recent decades culminating in the 2002 Presidential elections when, in the second round vote, the Left were forced to support the conservative candidate Jacques Chirac in order to defeat the NF leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen. Bourdieu writes of the way popular opinion about rights and access to national wealth and advantages was mobilized by the Right around the question of citizenship in a way which 'lets the dominated "nationals" take sides with dominant "nationals" against the "immigrants"'.

Being 'out of sync' with the world does not just affect the factory worker. There is the case of the 65-year-old wine dealer (pp. 392ff.), who is going bankrupt for not keeping up with the times. He will not 'buy in bulk' because this would result in him losing his name on bottles, and refuses to be involved in supermarket distribution deals which are, according to him, financially amoral. Political beliefs are not far behind, and are no less reactionary than those of the factory workers: for the wine dealer, De Gaulle was a deserter and Pétain a grandfatherly figure (ibid.).

The 'land' is also affected. There is the case of the farmers of the Béarn (pp. 381ff.) who hold onto their farms, work to make them bigger, and are then left with few liquid assets, leaving them with a salary scarcely higher than that of an

unskilled worker. These experiences of life are felt at the most deeply personal level. When the farmer's son decides he does not wish to inherit the farm as a working business, the farmer is devastated: 'to say the land is finished is to say "I am dead"' (p. 384).

Intergenerational discord is rife. As well as a wish to preserve the rural heritage, parents are ambitious for their children. This sometimes places the children between two possible contradictory futures; like the provincial town primary schoolteacher whose parents remained in agriculture pulling her in two directions – irreconcilable worlds: 'for the moment I'm not succeeding in situating myself in either one or the other. And, at the same time, I can't be pulled toward the one without rejecting the other, and I do not feel comfortable in either' (p. 532). Parental expectations, in line with their assessment of the job market, push children academically. The son of a Moroccan immigrant of Spanish extraction, who later in life becomes a political journalist, talks of his father's 'misplaced ambitions' for him academically. After years of struggle in an elitist lycée, he was in effect 'expelled' when, in line with educational policy, he was 're-orientated' towards a vocational school. He describes school as being 'hell' in the same way that Bourdieu talked about his own schooling. The journalist claims that even entering a school now brings him 'out in a cold sweat' (pp. 516ff.). It is unsurprising therefore if this leaves him with an ambivalent relationship to authority. He describes himself as a 'libertarian-environmental-leftist-anarchist', but disavows membership of any political party or labour movement.

Parental authority is an issue. For example, there is the case of the affluent, suburban engineer from Paris who is active in the Socialist Party. When his son joins the youth wing of the National Front (p. 536), there is a sense of him attacking his parental expectations.

It is not simply the petite bourgeoisie who are squeezed by the socio-economic actuality. Cheap housing, mainly apartments, put up in the 1950s and 1960s to accommodate immigrant workers and those moving off the land, become vast urban sprawls with few amenities. The situation is exacerbated in times of industrial decline and economic crisis. Vandalism and petty crime are an everyday part of life. Ghettos are formed when all of the most deprived families are housed in one area. Similarly, North African immigrants are situated together. Large families make parental control difficult (p. 80). Monsieur Amezziane is a case in point (pp. 10ff.). He came to France from Algeria in 1960. Initially, he worked in several firms, but in 1962 was employed by the Longwy company, where he stayed for 22 years. In 1984, he was sacked without a pension, since when he has been unemployed or working in temporary part-time jobs. Living in an HLM (public-sector housing), itself part of a ZUP (*Zone d'Urbanisme Prioritaire*), he resorts to claiming free meals. His situation amounts to a total disenchantment with life and the system surrounding him.

His eldest sons, like children before them, realize that at 'school whether you work hard or not, the result is the same . . . you find nothing, zero'. Behind the internationalist and anti-racist rhetoric, cohabitation with French natives pushes tolerance to the limit when cultural differences (food, music, size of families, religious festivals and daily habits) barely integrate. In austere times, underlying tensions increase and come to the surface. This puts a strain on traditional values and beliefs; like the old militant socialist woman who feels chained to a building whose noise and smells are unbearable. This reaction and displacement of social tolerance itself provokes feelings of guilt, like the old communist campaigner couple who move for the same reasons, their hearts heavy with guilt at not living up to their convictions.

Under economic policies which target the financial health of a country at the expense of its social conditions, it is the most fragile who suffer. The death of a husband sends one woman back to her parents' home, where she has to find a job as a supermarket checkout worker (p. 354). Another Portuguese couple were successful in becoming society members, building their own house and having a group of upstanding friends, until illness when their economic stability is shattered (p. 361). Suddenly, their 'friends' do not want to know them, and they find they have few entitlements under French law as 'foreigners'. Sacrifices are made to gain enough money to support a family and their education, but housing becomes a top priority. Position of housing is everything, but this encourages many to take risks, borrowing beyond their means for houses they cannot afford. One woman buys a house but then cannot afford to live in it when she is laid off (pp. 370ff.). The bank 'persecutes' her, and the overly bureaucratic welfare agencies are 'hopeless'. She gets caught in a cycle of promises and rejection from 'ruthless and unscrupulous employers' who take advantage of the lack of jobs by offering poor salaries and precarious part-time work. Another woman loses her job simply for making the boss's wife feel inadequate (p. 417). Clearly, the economic conjuncture impacts directly on the job market and the social fabric of the world of work, and has deeply personal and psychological consequences for all those involved. It is not simply a phenomenon which affects the poorest in society. One management employee (p. 408) finds that he is 'executive' in name only when he is made redundant. For the next ten years, at 51, he is unemployed. In these times, 'youth' is privileged over 'veterans', even if the latter become 'old' before their time.

This very brief account of a book of well over six hundred pages offers a few slices of what it was to live life in France in the last decade of the twentieth century. Are the vignettes typical? Bourdieu certainly offered them as representative, suggesting that if the particularities alter across the population, the generating structures, both personal and collective do not. They show the multiple connections and repercussions of social, psychological, political, personal,

collective aspects of everyday life and their sensitivity to economic forces. A significant dimension of this world situation is the way 'social suffering' can exist in local contexts – *microcosms* – where an independent 'underspace' is created. In other words, the global economic philosophy of 'everyone for themselves' can often be experienced in a transmuted, highly individualized way, all while obeying the same logic: 'each has its own hierarchies, of those who dominate and those who are dominated. One can belong to a prestigious universe, but occupy only an obscure position in it' (1993d: 113).

Loïc Wacquant contributes a piece on American urban life (p. 130) which represents a nightmare scenario for Bourdieu. He describes a world of urban abandonment, violent crime, environmental neglect and withdrawal of welfare support. He writes of 'Third World-ization' and 'organizational desert-ization', including frequent occurrence of drug problems, prostitution, money laundering, selling of blood and organs. This is what happens when a 'predatory economy' leads to the withdrawal of private money, the drying up of investment, the erosion of fiscal and administrative incentives and the withering of public services. He concludes:

If owing to their technocratic myopia and fascinated fixation on short-term financial performance, France's ruling elites of both the Left and Right persist with the neo-conservative policy of 'downsizing' the public sector and rampant commodification of social relations they have pursued since the mid-seventies, then one cannot rule out that what is still today a distant and frightful myopia might one day turn into an all too close and familiar reality. (p. 138)

It is a nightmare Bourdieu shares, seeing the urban situation as the 'breeding ground of civil war' (ibid.: 114).

NEO-LIBERAL ECONOMICS

Bourdieu's concern was for the effects of modern commercial and industrial planning and neo-liberal economic policy. His critique was mounted in terms of the political culture which surrounded him. He was highly critical of modern economic theory and the impact subsequent policies had on the way people were forced to act in order to procure themselves a job and somewhere to live:

The policies we have seen at work over the last twenty years show a remarkable continuity. Begun in the 1970s, at the time when the neo-liberal vision was starting to be taught at Sciences-Po [*a Paris-based Grande Ecole dedicated*

to the training of those destined for careers in politics], the process of the retreat of the state then affirmed itself beautifully. By joining up, around 1983–1984, with the cult of private industry and profit, the Socialist leaders orchestrated a serious change in the collective mind which led to a generalised triumph of marketing... they [*French intellectuals*] worked to show that economic liberalism is the necessary and sufficient condition of political liberty... They took a lot of trouble to establish that any attempt aimed at fighting inequalities – which they judged inevitable – is firstly ineffective and next that it can only be pursued at the cost of freedom. (1993d: 112 my italics)

Bourdieu argued that neo-liberal economics were presented in the language of mathematics to give them the sense of natural laws, that the economic policies decided upon conform to a 'natural law' (1998e: 23). In this sense, he saw economics as an extreme form of 'conservative sociodicy', a reaction going back to the 1960s against the State's support for social welfare. He saw this as a reactionary ideology apparent in such diverse arguments as Thatcher's – 'there is no society' – and postmodern philosophy which announced 'the end of history' and 'the end of ideologies' – among which we might count 'the Welfare State', and Socialist principles of economic equality and fairness in employment. The paradox at the heart of neo-liberalism, of course, is that while it is conservative, it actually presents itself as progressive: 'the restoration of a past sometimes including most archaic forms of economic relation, regressions and retrocessions are passed through in the name of reform and revolution' (2001b: 38). In this paradoxical world that is turned upside down, 'one ends up defending things that, in normal times, one would wish to change' (ibid.: 39). The neo-liberal revolution is therefore symbolic as well as economic and social. Its arguments are presented in terms of 'common sense', as well as principles of liberation, shared responsibility and inevitable logic. Bourdieu lists common statements, 'common norms' or unproven notions which pass into the public discourse as evident truths, but which need to be questioned: 'the economy is global, therefore we have to become global'; 'things change quickly, therefore we have to change'; 'it is by creating wealth that we create employment'. Other founding principles are often cited without proof: 'The Welfare State and Social Security are a thing of the past'; 'how is it still possible to defend the principle of public service?'; 'more market, more equality'; 'equality condemns thousands of people to misery'. The language of modern economics is scrutinized for its own vocabulary which sets the terms of *doxa*, of what is 'thinkable and unthinkable', thus rendering a certain rhetoric possible and excluding alternatives: deregulation, voluntary redundancy, free exchange rates, free circulation of capital, competitiveness, creativity, technological revolution, economic growth, fight inflation, reduce the State debt, lower labour costs (ibid.: 90).

The inevitability of economic policies is therefore asserted by the very language that is used to justify them. Bourdieu quotes from Mr Tietmeyer, the President of the German Bundesbank, adding his own interpretation of what is said:

'The crucial issue today is to create the conditions favourable to lasting growth, and the confidence of investors. It is therefore necessary to restrain public spending.' In other words . . . to bury as quickly as possible the welfare state and its expensive social and cultural policies, so as to reassure investors, who would prefer to take charge of their own cultural investments . . . 'restrain public spending and reduce taxation to a level acceptable in the long term'. By which he means: reduce the taxation of investors to a level acceptable in the long term to these same investors, lest they be discouraged and driven to take their investments elsewhere. Next: 'reform the social welfare system'. In other words, bury the welfare state and its policies of social protection which undermine the confidence of investors . . . because they are convinced that their economic entitlements . . . I mean their capital, are not compatible with the social entitlements of the workers. (1998a: 46)

This juxtaposition of 'official' language, how it represents itself and what it means in reality is central to Bourdieu's idea of *misrecognition*. In other words, language obscures reality. For example, in *La Misère du monde* some of the worst suburban conditions are in tenement blocks called La Roseraie (The Rose Garden); others stories of warring neighbours take place in la rue des Jonquilles (Daffodil Road); and the harshness of the real-world environment hidden by upbeat names such as Urban Priority Zones (ZUPs) or Public Sector Housing (HLMs). For Bourdieu, such euphemisms are a way of suggesting one thing and masking another. He notes similar strategies behind Tietmeyer's language. Thus: 'a new phase of growth will only be attained if *we* make an effort towards flexibility in the labour market' (ibid.: 47). Behind a common-sense term such as 'flexibility' lies what Bourdieu sees as a new way of working – *flexploitation* (ibid.): casualization, night work, weekend work, irregular shifts and reduction in minimum wage leading to increased pressure and stress. High levels of unemployment and weaker employment laws only heighten a sense of insecurity among the workforce. In traditional Marxist terminology, the creation of a 'reserve army' of workers through deliberate intensification of work practices, together with an over-production of graduates, lead to collective demoralization and loss of militancy, itself a source of individualism which is exactly attuned to the spirit of competitiveness inherent in neo-liberalism (p. 84). Bourdieu argued that the fact that this is presented as an economic inevitability rather than a political intention is part of the *misrecognition* – when the 'horizon of expectation' fabricated within the political culture, and represented in the

media, forms a match between workers' expectations and what is demanded from them. Workers consequently behave in similar ways to the Algerian peasant who was uprooted from his livelihood: 'in order to conceive a revolutionary project . . . a reasoned ambition to transform the present by reference to a projected future, one needs some grasp on the present' (p. 83). Bourdieu argued that in insecure times, with little by way of safety nets, workers simply are too fearful or too exhausted to imagine how it might be different. This situation no doubt fed the economy but at the expense of human labour. Bourdieu sums up Tietmeyer's words again adding his own comments: "if we make an effort", the workers alone are expected to make this effort . . . to spell it out: Abandon your benefits today, so as not to destroy the confidence of investors . . . This logic is well known to the workers concerned, who, to sum up the policy of "participation" offered to them by Gaullism in times gone by would say "You give me your watch and I'll give you the time of day" (p. 48).

In classical sociological theory, there is much discussion about the origins of capitalism. The Marxist analysis amounts to seeing the move from feudal to capitalist society as implicit in a development away from an exchange economy to one involving the creation of capital value – particularly incarnated in money and land wealth. This model was subsequently complemented by Max Weber who saw in the Protestant work ethic of 'worldliness' and ascetic lifestyle the perfect spirit to promote a capitalist mode of production and capital accumulation. In a similar manner, Bourdieu saw much in neo-liberalism as an expression of the social conditions in the USA: for example, the relative weakness of the State; the greater freedom given to individuals to express themselves violently as a matter of principle (liberal gun laws, for example), thus ensuring a less tight monopoly on State violence itself; the State's withdrawal from public services, converting public goods (health, housing, education and culture) into private goods; its decentralized political culture giving power to regions in the name of self-help and self-determination (2001b: 28). All these aspects are themselves perfectly congruent with a spirit of later-capitalism which stresses the 'duty' of individuals to work and the attitude of calculation that it encourages. Behind these notions, is the idea of the individual entering the market to sell his human capital. This idea takes us to the heart of economic theory.

There is a sense in which economics can be understood as an offshoot of sociology and political science with a twist of mathematics. Rousseau's 'noble savage' is in fact a figure interacting and transforming his environment in a way which has to be considered 'economic', through targeting his well-being and development and making choices to bring about the best outcome for himself. Arguably, for Karl Marx too, what was social *was* economic, in the sense that all actions had economic antecedents and repercussions. As noted above, Adam Smith, possibly the founding father of modern economics, posited a view of

men as motivated by self-interest in free competition with each other. However, Bourdieu's main argument was that such a concept, *homo oeconomicus*, had become a monster in modern times. It presupposed an attitude to economic decision-making which was rational and calculated to maximize profits, and which also extended to all other decisions that an individual makes in life. He quotes (2000c: 256) from Gary Becker (*A Treatise on the Family*, 1981: ix), professor of economics at Chicago who won the Nobel Prize in 1992:

The economic approach . . . now assumes that individuals maximise their utility from basic preferences that do not change rapidly over time and that the behaviour of different individuals is co-ordinated by explicit or implicit markets . . . The economic approach is not restricted to material goods and wants or to markets with monetary transactions and conceptually does not distinguish between major or minor decisions or between 'emotional' and other decisions. Indeed . . . the economic approach provides a framework applicable to all human behaviour – to all types of decisions and to persons for all walks of life.

Given that Bourdieu himself often employed economic metaphors in his own social theory – capital, market, investment, etc. – it is perhaps unsurprising that he was associated with Becker. Both of them, it has been claimed, shared the concept of human beings as motivated by 'selfish' choice, calculated on the basis of rational decisions and choices. Both had in fact written papers on the cost of having children (Bourdieu 1966b). However, for Bourdieu there was a fundamental difference between them. The sort of economic actor as envisaged by Becker was, for Bourdieu, an excellent example of the 'scholastic fallacy'; in other words, a case where 'the logic of things is confused with the things of logic'. Becker is associated with the idea of the 'free market' and the 'rational actor' and a current across the social sciences which comes under the rubric of Rational Action Theory or Rational Choice Theory. Here, individuals are reduced to an idealized type who can be understood as acting in accordance with clear alternatives with predictable outcomes. For Bourdieu, this was nothing other than an intellectualist projection, endemic in the subjectivist philosophical tradition, from Descartes to Sartre. The *sujet savant* (knowing subject – social scientist) slips their imaginary projection onto the *sujet agissant* (acting subject – object of research (cf. Bourdieu and Wacquant 1989d)). The problem with this reification, for Bourdieu, was that it produces a reduction whereas his own theoretical approach is inherently dynamic. So, where Becker's perspective would seem to imply obedience to norms and rules, Bourdieu argued (for example in the case of the Béarn farmers) for *interests* and *strategies* and a system where the economic act is not mechanical but an actualization within a social context

(*habitus* and *field*) with its own inherent particularities (cf. 2000c: 211). To take the example of investment in education. For Bourdieu: 'economists deserve credit for explicitly raising the question of the relationship between the profits ensured by educational investment and those ensured by economic investment' (1996b/89: 275). However, he objected to their 'economism' which he saw as being incapable of calculating profits and costs in terms other than financial factors; while considerable cultural and *social capital* is also involved. As discussed in Chapter 3, Bourdieu saw 'domestic transfer of cultural capital' as being the best hidden and most socially important factor in educational investment. Thus, he criticized Becker for not recognizing that social reproduction is involved in educational investment; in other words, it is not simply a question of individual monetary yield and the social rate of return in terms of national productivity. Rather, different forms of *capital* – *social* and *cultural* – also form part of the calculation on educational investment. Moreover, and consequently therefore, such a calculation is not open to all in the same terms. For holders of *capital*, the quantity they hold and their position in the social space means that the chances of profit are differentiated. Calculations are based on differences of opportunity and therefore profit, and on the amount of investment for the same return. This picture is perhaps the nub of Bourdieu's criticism of Becker and neo-liberalism, in the way it links theory, politics, education, social philosophy and economic policies in a unified and self-fulfilling justification for a whole political culture:

The ruling class probably owes its extraordinary arrogance to the fact that, possessing a great deal of cultural capital, both scholastic and, obviously, non-scholastic, it feels perfectly justified in existing as it exists . . . The certificate is not only a title of scholastic 'noblesse', it is seen like a guarantee of natural intelligence, a gift . . . The new economy can therefore appear as an *economy of intelligence* . . . The sociodicy here takes the form of a *racism of intelligence*. From now on . . . the poor are stupid, intellectually incapable, idiots. Briefly, they only have what they deserve. Certain economists, like Gary Becker, can find in neo-Darwinism, which makes of the rationality postulated by economic theory the product of natural selection, the unstoppable justification of the reign of 'the best and the brightest'. The knot is tied when economics demands from mathematics the most indisputable epistemological justification for the established order. (2001b: 50ff.)

As noted above, for Bourdieu, modern economics cloaked itself in mathematics in order to give itself an air of scientific credibility, as well as the power to argue for the inevitability of its analyses and solutions. Interestingly, he saw this fatalism as much a part of Marxist economic philosophy, with its mystique

of Hegelian determinism, as it was of neo-liberalism (1998e: 23). Its effects, however, are very different. If modern economic theory is a 'fiction', it is no less powerful for that. It is also a fiction which generates its own fictional characters. Besides, the words and metaphors listed above we can add 'globalization' which Bourdieu argued was a 'myth' or an '*idée force*' (1998a: 34) used to justify neo-liberal economic policy and 'the extension of the hold of a small number of nations over the whole set of financial markets' (ibid.: 34). It is a world where companies are exposed to the constant threat of 'losing the confidence of the market' (ibid.: 97) and where flexible working conditions lead to 'downsizing' and the creation of individual 'profit centres' within a company. Autonomy and competition are the name of the game: individual appraisal interviews, personal increments, bonuses, fast-track career paths, incentives and rewards. But, this view of open competition and freedom of opportunity 'brackets off' the social and economic conditions within which individuals operate, and ignores the fact that 'rational' action towards economic goals is limited to and by the economic *habitus* of individuals; in other words, the power to decide and act which are themselves a product of the socio-economic conditions through which they have passed.

Clearly, social life is made up of a whole range of particularized micro-contexts as well as trans-global forces. In place of a unifying economic philosophy – one of the universal laws based on market competition – Bourdieu set his *field* theory. Here, social life is conceptualized as a series of interlocking *fields*, each with their own *interests*, or *illusio* (1988b): 'each field calls forth and gives life to a specific form of interest, a specific *illusio*, as tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the game and of practical mastery of its rules' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992a: 117). However, it is also clear that the 'interest' of the field, the logic according to which it is constructed, does not go uncontested. We saw this in Chapter 4 with regard to the *field* of artistic production. What Bourdieu argued is that, while all *fields* must be analysed in terms of their configuration of *capital*, *capital* itself was liable to control, definition and valorization by agents active within the *field*. What is particularly true of the economic *field* is the degree to which the State had intervened in controlling its mechanisms and structures. Bourdieu offered the example of the effects of State intervention into the *field* of housing (1990e).

HOUSING

Nothing perhaps says more about an individual than where they live. In Algeria, Bourdieu had shown how the house was designed to reflect an entire symbolic microcosm of the culture and world-view of the Kabyle peasant. Here, the con-

struction of the house was a collective act of integrating the family within the community. The house was an incarnation of heritage, history and lineage. Similarly, for Bourdieu, the role that the house played in Western society needed to be understood both as an economic investment and as a base for biological reproduction. There is an 'enchanted' view of a house as connecting the individual with their past and their future. The demand for housing therefore is a natural social fact. But, for Bourdieu, procuring a house depended on the volume and structure of *capital* within the housing *field*, and, in particular, on the relation between the *capital* held by a single individual, and the structure of the *field* itself at any one time. To this extent the demand and supply of housing needed to be understood as a social construction rather than the result of simple market forces.

Buying or renting a house depends on individuals' *economic capital* and *cultural capital* with respect to the *field* in terms of the structure and composition of physical capital available (actual bricks and mortar). It might be assumed that *economic capital* is the main determinant in housing, and Bourdieu showed (2000c: 43ff.) that, up until the 1950s, this was the case. In other words, in France at least only the rich could afford to purchase an individual house, the rest rented and/or lived in apartments. However, Bourdieu argued that since then there has been a marked increase in the percentage of house owners who are from professional backgrounds. These individuals were strong in *cultural* rather than *economic capital*; for example, middle-class jobs in management, technology, commerce as well as skilled manual work. This development needed to be understood in terms of accessibility to the housing market and therefore the *field* conditions of the market. In a world where traditional housing is the ideal, building companies presented themselves as traditional. Bourdieu quoted the example of Maison Bouygues which had become the leading housing construction company in France in the ten years following its creation in 1979. Their publicity made use of a whole series of designs (ibid.: 72ff.) to draw on images of the artisan practices of builders. Bourdieu showed a world where factory prefabrication is apparently devalued, even when large companies are forced to utilize such methods to meet their production and sales targets according to set profit margins.

Everything is constructed not only to meet demand, at a price, but to create demand for their housing. Bourdieu quotes from the 'scripts' of salespeople (ibid.: 212ff.) which demonstrate the strategies they use – accessibility, linguistic register, ambiguity, conversational dynamics, rhetorical devices – to 'capture' their client. Moreover, he shows (p. 204) that the desire to 'buy a house' is actually transformed into an act of 'buying credit', and this transformation is based on two distinct positions for the salesman and buyer. For the salesman, they have to weigh up the impetus to sell, and at a maximum price, with the ability

of the buyer to pay. For the buyer, an entire 'psychological trip' has to be taken to balance aspirations and ambitions with the prospect of paying the credit. The sale occurs at the point where these two meet in 'mutual confidence'. Of course, the contract presupposes a legal commitment which itself brings with it judicial law. In this way, for Bourdieu, the State is 'in the head of the salesman, in the form of its common schemes of thought' (p. 199).

The State had also been powerful in constituting the structure of the *field* in terms of housing supply. Until the 1970s, and in response to the post-war need for urban housing, the State instituted a policy of 'aid to construction'. Here, State money was provided to finance the construction of housing to meet public needs. However, during the 1970s, under Jacques Barrot, the Secretary of State for Housing in Giscard's government, the policy changed to one of 'aid to the people' (1999a/93: 182). In effect, this was again part of a process of liberalization which, in a rhetoric of liberating individuals from State control, privatized building construction (no longer under State control and thus accountability) and gave individuals the responsibility of claiming housing and family benefit when they needed it. For Bourdieu, this measure alone caused much suffering: 'it led to social segregation, with, on the one hand, the sub-proletariat, made up to a large extent of immigrants, remaining on the large estates, and, on the other hand, the secure workers with a regular wage and the petite bourgeoisie, leaving to live in small detached houses which they bought with crippling loans' (1998a: 31ff.).

For Bourdieu, there was a distinction to be made between the different sectors controlling the public and private sectors: owners, managers and civil servants. The individuals involved could be studied in terms of their background and the volume and structure of *capital* this conferred on them. Dominant among these backgrounds in France, were those individuals coming from the École Normale d'Administration (ENA), École Polytechnique (X), the Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques (Sciences-Po) and the École des Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC). He identified a new economic philosophical avant-garde in the team developing housing policy in France: Robert Lion (ENA, Sciences-Po), Pierre Durif (X, Sciences-Po) – members of commissions led by Raymond Barre and Simon Nora; Pierre Richard (X, Sciences-Po); Georges Crepay (Sciences-Po); Pierre Consigny (ENA). Many also had in common the fact of having spent time in the USA. The state of the housing *field* in France was the result of many such factors. There was the influence of American economic philosophy, imported by this new generation of State bureaucrats, who themselves needed to be understood in terms of the historical development of French bureaucracy in post-war France. Bourdieu was scathing of the former 'revolutionaries' from 1968 who were now neo-liberal bureaucrats:

The reaction of retrospective panic provoked by the crisis of 1968, a symbolic revolution which alarmed all the small holders of cultural capital (subsequently reinforced by the unforeseen collapse of the Soviet-style regimes), created conditions favourable to a cultural restoration, the outcome of which has been that 'Sciences-po' thought has replaced the 'thought of Chairman Mao'. (1998a: 7)

La Misère du monde describes a world where economic liberalism had taken hold. If many of the accounts relate to the poorest in society, Bourdieu also describes 'the bases of petit-bourgeois suffering' (2000c: 223ff.) when the 'dream house' turns out to be a nightmare. There is the disillusionment of unsatisfied aspirations when people are led to 'live beyond their means' (p. 224). Expenses prove to be greater than envisaged. Lifestyle too can be a problem, with long daily journeys to work, noisy neighbours and services left unprovided. The individual house therefore seems like a trap and a mirage. These negative experiences are what happens when a policy is followed which is aimed at producing a market for construction companies by creating house owners rather than attending to human needs. Bourdieu argued that this 'mirage' is itself part and parcel of a domestic image, and an entire culture, aimed at celebrating a way of life which is designed to feed the consumer market as a whole:

Centred around the education of children seen as individual accession, the family group is now the place of a sort of collective egoism which finds its legitimation in the cult of domestic life permanently celebrated by all those who live, directly or indirectly from the production and circulation of domestic objects. (ibid.: 230)

In other words, economic liberalism in the housing market does not stop at the point of property purchase, but simply provides further opportunities for consumer spending on things for the house. For Bourdieu, this world-view was equally present in TV games shows, with their 'fictive conviviality' and 'kitsch culture' which is aimed at ensnaring the suburban homeowners in an entire universe of values and norms. Here, the media is again central to the generation of consumer demand in the name of freedom and individual rights and responsibilities, but at the cost of the customer and the financial profit of the supplier. As if to stress the collusion of industry and the media, Bourdieu notes that TF1 (France's number one TV channel) was bought in 1987 by Francis Bouygues (of the Bouygues construction company), offering opportunities to publicize housing as well as all the domestic goods which might be needed once the house is purchased.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS

Bourdieu argued that in the modern economy more and more is owned by fewer and fewer. If the economic *field* can be understood as a site of struggle and conflict, in the modern world this struggle needs to be seen as taking place at an international level. For him, what characterized the modern economy was loss of local control, the growth of large international companies, and the preponderance of financial objectives over manufacturing. Bourdieu argued that this process of '*detritorialization*' is a result of the detachment of industries previously linked to the Nation-State or region. What replaces this latter arrangement are large 'network corporations' organized at an international scale, linking various services and activities – communication, sales, expertise and training – which themselves are spread across distant places:

By facilitating or organising the mobility of capital and 'de-localisation' towards the countries with the lowest wages, neo-liberal policies have helped to extend competition among workers to a global level. The national (and perhaps nationalised) company, whose field of competition was more or less strictly limited to national territory, and which went out to win markets abroad, has given way to the multinational corporation which places workers in competition no longer just with their compatriots or even, as the demagogues claim, with the foreigners installed on the national territory, who are in fact clearly the first victims of loss of security, but with workers on the other side of the world, who are forced to accept poverty-line wages. (1998a: 85)

Bourdieu noted (2000c: 246) that this process of concentration began as early as 1830, slowly reducing the number of firms in the economy over the next 130 years, and has intensified still further in modern times. It is no longer a question of 'free competition' in a market which includes numerous companies, but one where a smaller number of organizations are able to shape the market itself to their own advantage; one thinks of Microsoft, or EMI, General Motors and News International.

Deregulation and liberalization, together with the explosion in modern systems of communication, have created a world economic market which is organized around finance. The capacity to disengage capital, and to move it around from area to area and from nation to nation, only encouraged the reduction in the power of countries and their political systems to resist the world financial trends which are themselves increasingly dictated by a small number of companies and international agencies, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is a world of semi-autonomous pension funds, insurance companies and investment funds, managed at an international level by organizations and

world banks which transcend the Nation-States. Bourdieu saw in this phenomenon, the shift of political power from the State, and its ability to make independent decisions for the nation and its people, to global financial institutions who operate in their own terms for their own financial benefits. Speculation had increased as many of the financial regulations put in place following the economic crises of the 1930s were removed. Such deregulation was undertaken in France in 1985/86. Bourdieu concludes: 'In these conditions, it finally only remains to States, and to the politicians, dispossessed of the possibilities of regulation and control (between inflation and unemployment most notably) from another time, to watch the fluctuations of the stock exchange' (2000c: 277).

For Bourdieu, the source of this economic philosophy was the USA and its companies. They dominate the economic discourse and set the rules, but these are designed ultimately to serve their own ends despite the rhetoric of the inevitability of natural economic laws. Bourdieu argued that American economic superiority was more the result of its structural advantages than the effectiveness of its economic policy. The dominance was economic, political and social, but its effect was to strip other countries, and regions within countries, of international protection and of their own way of doing things (2000c: 278). Poorer countries are forced to pursue economic policies which directly damage their own development – for example, excessive loans leading to deficits followed by stringent measures to repay debts incurred through high credit rates, together with deregulation in the name of liberalization – while the USA itself continues with a subtle form of protectionism through limiting import quotas, controlling prices, trade agreements, reducing exports and even calling on social rights to justify avoidance of certain goods and services.

CONCLUSION

Bourdieu covered a lot of ground in his consideration of economics in society; from ethnographic descriptions of farmers in the Béarn and Algerian peasants, to analyses of America as a superpower and the causes and effects of neo-liberalism. The common factor here is a concern for economic activity as a social activity, and therefore with the ways of the world. These ways are shaped by specific influences, between the individual and their context, and larger spheres – regional, national and international. Bourdieu analysed a certain economic philosophy, neo-liberalism, and the effects it had on the lives of ordinary men and women. He showed how this philosophy worked, activates and is activated, in a particular area of the economy such as housing – an aspect of life which touches the heart of the modern world. He attacked this economic philosophy in its own terms, as a given theory of practice, as well as the way it had imposed

itself (and by whom) in the contemporary world. Behind these arguments is an implicit assertion that it does not have to be this way, and that there is an alternative. The next chapter looks at the way Bourdieu set about organizing his own resistance to the 'taken for granted ways' of the modern world. Increasingly, politics are involved since Bourdieu addressed specific events and policies. However, he also offered alternatives.

CHAPTER 6

Acts of Resistance

As his public prominence grew, Bourdieu became more involved in actual political events. Such interventions were necessary as attempts to resist the predominant social, political and economic trends of the day. As well as highlighting the social suffering many in France were experiencing, Bourdieu attacked the political culture which had allowed neo-liberal economics to rule policy. There were also direct critiques of responses to events in Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries. This chapter looks at the nature of Bourdieu's understanding of the political and at the 'acts of resistance' he mounted. It considers the form and range of this resistance. It also discusses the role of the intellectual in politics from the perspective of Bourdieu's own actions.

With the publication of *La Misère du monde*, Bourdieu's criticism of socio-political systems became more overt as he increasingly turned his attention to neo-liberal economics and their effects. He had often disparaged sociologists who harboured fantasies of changing the world. Intellectuals generally were seen as a 'dominated fraction of the dominant class' (1993a/80: 43) and therefore suspect in terms of whose interests they served, and 'for speaking with authority far beyond the limits of their technical competence, especially in the area of politics' (ibid.: 45). Nevertheless, by the end of the century, his mood had obviously changed. He acknowledged that this growing imperative to act was both public and private. He believed that at a certain point in his career he had acquired sufficient personal authority, together with the results of his work, to be heard in the world. Also, 'western societies were in great peril' (2000f: 46).

It is necessary to be circumspect. Clearly, a 'sociogenetic' reading of Bourdieu's work needs to place each piece in its socio-historic context. The different chapters of this book have already shown that Bourdieu's writing always did have political implications. On education, Algeria, and media and culture, his analyses aimed to show up the *misrecognitions* of modern social systems and the effect they had on everyday men and women. In an interview recorded shortly before his death, Bourdieu makes the point that parts included in books as far back as: *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* could have just as easily

found a place in *La Misère du monde* . . . [and] people who wanted to, could take *Travail et travailleurs* or *Les Héritiers* as political books' (Deslaut and Rivière 2002: 237). Clearly, the question here is one of explicitness. This chapter considers the political involvement of Pierre Bourdieu from four distinct perspectives. The first two deal with the political implications of his sociology, and in particular, his understanding of the operations of political *fields*. The third discusses his early political engagement, most noticeably in the 1980s. Finally, the chapter turns to the explicit political action of the 1990s. Central to the latter two perspectives is the appropriateness and nature of any intellectual action and, by implication, Bourdieu's own political interventions. The chapter therefore considers the forms of resistance Bourdieu's work offers and what they led to in his own political action.

SOCIOLOGY AND POLITICS

Sociology by nature is radical and critical. Any philosophy or method which purports to uncover the intrinsic patterns or forces of social life risks by definition revealing things that are concealed for a purpose. At the heart of Bourdieu's sociology is the notion that much in the social world occurs in a misrecognized form; in other words, appearances deceive and what is at stake is often occluded. Social forces would not be potent and effective otherwise. Clearly, there are opposing views of the world: was the original invasion of Algeria by the French simply a move to protect and support the population or a callous act to exploit a poorer and less powerful country? Is democratic schooling a genuine attempt to create a more egalitarian society, or simply a ruse to divert protests and opposition to elitist access to the most lucrative rungs on the social ladder? Such interpretations always exist in the world of opinion, but what Bourdieu claimed to offer was scientific evidence for his own understanding of the world. It is not always a welcome message – no one thanks anyone for pointing out *misrecognitions* when it is at their cost. It is, therefore, in their interest to maintain the illusions (created by all that is not recognized) and to oppose the claims and evidence of those who would, so to say, 'blow the whistle' on what is going on.

Bourdieu's vision of education and Algeria in the 1950s and 1960s does set itself against others. Whose was the correct interpretation is now a distant question. However, there remains an epistemological issue concerning what we do know and how we know it. Such a theme is deeply philosophical and preoccupied Bourdieu in his early studies as he attempted to synthesize structuralism and phenomenology into sociology (see Bourdieu 1968, 1977b/72). As noted in Chapter 1, what was literally 'thinkable and unthinkable' (Bourdieu 1971b) was constituted by a social construction involving 'an externalization of internality

and internalization of externality': this phrase Bourdieu shared with Berger and Luckmann (1967). Such a dialectic does not occur in a vacuum but takes place in a pre-existent, if dynamically evolving, context. However, because it is shaped in terms of a pre-given, it necessarily exists to express ongoing *interests*. Such *interests* are differentially distributed across social groups. Differential access to and expressions of what is 'thinkable' are, therefore, the very basis of *misrecognition*. Some are 'in the know', some are not, and some *misrecognize* what they know. For Bourdieu, the relation between the individual (*habitus*) and the context (*field*) is at the heart of this theory of knowledge, and it is a perspective which has specific implications when considered in the light of the political *field*.

First, political opinions are fashioned by the position individuals occupy in a social *space* or *field*: political opinion itself (Bourdieu 1977c) is the result of an implied competence to have opinions on a range of views as they are represented in politics. Secondly, by extension, as we have seen, for Bourdieu 'public opinion does not exist' (Bourdieu 1971c); rather, there is 'mobilised opinion, formulated opinion, pressure groups mobilised around a system of explicitly formulated *interests* . . . and there are dispositions [which] cannot be formulated in discourse' (1993a/80: 157). By this definition, a simple statistical aggregate of opinions would be seen as 'an artefact'. Thirdly, political opinion is intricately linked to 'culture' and social standing (see 1993a/80, 1984c); in other words, education and social position, as well as money wealth (the three forms of *capital*), provide the symbolic framework within which political judgements are formed and conclusions drawn. Bourdieu summed up:

the political field in fact produces an effect of censorship by limiting the universe of political discourse, and thus what is politically thinkable, to the finite space of discourses capable of being produced or reproduced within the limits of the political problematic . . . The boundary between what is politically sayable or unsayable, thinkable or unthinkable, for a class of non-professionals is determined by the relation between the expressive interests of that class and . . . a capacity which is secured by its position in the relations of cultural and thus political production . . . A political intention can be constituted only in one's relation to a given state of the political game and, more precisely, of the universe of the techniques of action and expression it offers at any given moment. (1991a: 172ff.)

In a sense, these early thoughts of politics as a *field* are a logical extension of Bourdieu's developing *field* theory and of applications of this approach in other social contexts. Bourdieu commented on a range of aspects of politics: for example, what constituted political action (1981a, 1981b); political representation (1991a) and delegation (1984d); and how to make change through changing

political representation. These issues form a backdrop to Bourdieu's growing political activism.

EARLY POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

Bourdieu was clearly politically engaged from the very beginning of his academic career. His work on education, Algeria, and art and culture implied political action, and in 1968 he was, as an established academic, involved in the events. He spoke at many of the faculties. However, if there was one year that marked a watershed in Bourdieu's involvement in politics it was 1981. Besides taking up the Chair in Sociology at the Collège de France, this was the year the Socialists came to power for the first time in the Fifth Republic. Bourdieu's thinking about politics and political institutions appeared in a string of articles around that time. Of course, he was to become an active participant in the governmental committee on education set up by Mitterrand. However, in the presidential elections which brought Mitterrand to power, Bourdieu had in fact supported the candidature of the French clown Coluche. Why? On reflecting on his support, Bourdieu expressed his concern at the way the political *field* (as was logical for all *fields*) had changed as it became more and more professional and autonomous. It now looked after its own interests rather than those of the people it claimed to represent (see 2000b: 55ff.). Moreover, he drew a comparison between the world of politics and religion; both strongly guarding entry or access to positions which confer 'blessings' and thus consecration from the *field* through, quoting Max Weber, 'a monopoly on legitimate manipulation' of symbolic goods. This power is exercised through a process of exclusion and inclusion; in short, of giving and withholding *recognition*. The attraction of Coluche's candidature for Bourdieu was, therefore, the way it showed up this attitude of monopolization among all the politicians and commentators who denounced both him and the people who supported him as 'irresponsible':

One of the virtues of those who are irresponsible – of whom I am one – is to show up the tacit presuppositions in the political order . . . I remember that Coluche was not really a candidate but he said that he was a candidate in order to remind everyone that anyone can be a candidate. All the political-media field became mobilised to condemn this radical barbarity which consisted in questioning the fundamental presupposition, that it is only politicians who can talk about politics. (ibid.: 56)

If Bourdieu's support of Coluche was a 'ruse', it was perhaps no more than a logical extension of his theoretical approach applied to the world of politics.

What was at stake was not only 'the struggles for the monopoly of the legitimate principle of vision and division of the social world' (ibid.: 64) which itself represented an opposition between people holding unequal amounts of power, but the means for those excluded or dictated to by their political masters to be heard and have their interests recognized. A perhaps more critical opportunity to express these sentiments came at the end of the same year.

During the night of 12 December 1981, the Polish army, led by General Jaruzelski and supported by the Soviet Union, moved against the Solidarity Trade Union, which had been increasingly active in calling for political reform and representation. Union leaders were arrested in a general crackdown on activities. Faced with apparent non-reaction on the part of the French government, Bourdieu mobilized a number of personalities – actors, writers, intellectuals – against what was happening in Poland. A petition was signed (Bourdieu *et al.* 1981c) making reference to other historic acts of inaction – the military putsch in Spain in 1936 and the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956. The petition implied that the refusal of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs – Claude Cheysson – to speak out against the military dictatorship had more to do with the then need to maintain good relations with the French Communist Party (who at this time still gained a substantial portion of the popular vote) than any political principle.

The petition and the effects it had on the eventual events in Poland are probably now less significant in this context than the issues this action gave rise to and the change in tone and explicitness of Bourdieu's political activism. In an interview entitled 'To re-find the Liberty Tradition of the Left' (1981e) Bourdieu talked of an alliance between 'intellectual critique and union action' being the only effective opposition against the ruling powers, thus appealing to the radical tradition of the French labour movement. In the event, it was only the socialist-minded CFDT union who came out in direct support of the petition in a world where everyone else was watching their backs. Bourdieu attributed the response to the particular sensitivity the CFDT union held as the result of its symbolic domination in the *field*. Indeed, a union's action was directly attributable to its position in the political *field*. The anti-institutional stance of the CFDT was a combination of being fired up by the events of 1968, as well as the embracing of feminism, ecology, anti-centralism. During this period, the means and the acts of resistance available against political decisions, and their effects on those excluded from active involvement in politics, began to take new forms. Bourdieu stated that his concern was to give social force to intellectual ideas; in other words, to make intellectual ideas effective. This concern implied questions of how the intellectual should act, to what ends, and the means at their disposal. The answers to these questions were to form the basis of Bourdieu's work and his socio-political involvement for the next twenty years.

Bourdieu was aware of the public profile of the Collège de France, and understood, as we saw in Chapter 3, that his status as professor there gave him opportunities to draw attention to aspects of socio-political life and to show what was going on in the name of liberal democracy. This strategy was apparent in his involvement in the 1980s through the various ministerial committees aimed at making proposals for educational reform. The major publications of this decade had also dealt with education. However, this strategy and positioning implicitly raised questions of the role or relationship of intellectuals in the socio-political world. Reflecting a few years later on his initial call to Michel Foucault on the day after the military take-over in Poland, Bourdieu recalled that what he had in mind was more than the role of 'party intellectual' as 'fellow traveller on the road' (1985c: 93) of the labour movement. Rather, he saw intellectuals as a distinct group, with a distinct voice, able to offer clear views on what was happening: 'The intellectuals *and* the CFDT. The intellectuals *of* the CFDT. Everything is in the difference' (ibid.). For Bourdieu, long years in opposition had sharpened the intellectual weight of the Socialist cause. It was therefore particularly important at a time when they were finally able to act on their ideas, that the intellectual voice be clear and definite. Drawing a distinction between the 'intellectual of universality' – of whom Sartre was the perfect example – Bourdieu argued that: 'They [intellectuals] are not the spokesmen of the universal, still less a "universal class", but they find, for historical reasons, that often they have an *interest in the universal*' (ibid.: 94). By intellectual, he intended not simply academic writers and philosophers, but a veritable 'international' of artists and scientists able to offer recommendations and reflections on and to the political powers that be.

In a sense, Bourdieu had already begun this project with the appearance in 1975 of the journal he directed for the rest of his life: *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*. Bourdieu made the point that *Actes* appeared at a period which saw the first shocks of the energy crisis. The journal set itself the mission of dealing with both finished texts and 'work in progress' on a range of topical issues and events. The first edition contained a declaration:

One can only really access knowledge of things which are often invested with all the values of what is sacred, by handing over arms of sacrilege . . . one can only break with the spell of belief by confronting symbolic violence with symbolic violence and by putting, when necessary, the weapons of polemic at the service of truths gained from the polemic of scientific reason. (1975a: 1)

Later, Bourdieu commented (Deslaur and Rivière 2002: 237ff.) that he had been surprised when the Left won in 1981, and their victory had given him the sense that it was necessary to do something. In a meeting with the CFDT union

and the more communist-inspired CGT, he had distributed an article from the *Actes* entitled 'The Production of the Dominant Ideology' (1976). The thrust of this work was that, in France, the political elite of the Fifth Republic shared commonalities of background and training which resulted in a shared vocabulary and discourse. The modern technocratic State, even among those who opposed each other, revolved around an axis of agreed, legitimate terms and issues. Their training mostly took place in ENA, Polytechnique and the Institut d'Études Politiques. The background for many of the older generation included involvement in movements directly or indirectly stemming from the 'non-conformists' of the 1930s. Although these movements differed in their views on events of their day, Bourdieu argued, they were instrumental in forming a style of political philosophy which favoured the modern technocrat over the intellectual. Together they shared common 'schemes of perception' and affinities which resonated across the political spectrum. This ideology was the basis of the modern French State and its economic policies (as was discussed in the last chapter); for example, the 'Plan'.

Bourdieu describes how he offered this article to union members as 'an instrument of combat', only for them to say that they 'did not read this type of review and, even, if they did, they would not know what to do with it' (Deslaur and Rivière *op. cit.*: 238). These experiences, together with the frustrations of seeing proposed reforms in education watered down and amended to the point of rendering them ineffective, accentuated for Bourdieu the question of how to link what had been discovered in sociology with broader intellectual action and intervention in the world of politics:

Everything occurs as if . . . researchers, in order to merit the title of scholar, have to kill politics in themselves, and abandon at the same time the *utopian function* to the least scrupulous and least competent among them, as well as politicians and journalists. I believe that nothing justifies this scientific abdication which ruins political conviction, and the moment has come when scholars must intervene in politics, with all their competence, in order to establish utopias in truth and reason. (2000f: 104ff.)

Apparently eschewing his earlier political neutrality and scientific reserve, Bourdieu later developed this theme, arguing for 'a scholarship with commitment'; in particular, 'to give a visible and sensible form to the consequences, still invisible, but scientifically foreseeable, of the political measures inspired by neo-liberal philosophies' (2000g: 211). In this short sentence, we again have this sense of different versions of the world, their symbolic content, and the way sociology can render seen what goes unseen. The most significant example of Bourdieu's attempt to undertake this mission to show up the causes and

consequences of neo-liberalism appeared with the publication of *La Misère du monde* in 1993.

To add further comment on the title of the book itself, it was attributed to Michel Rocard (2002c: 231), whom Bourdieu had earlier praised for his position over New Caledonia during the military suppression of the independence fighters at the time of elections there. For Bourdieu, his action constituted an example of 'civil virtue': 'to put oneself at the service of problems' (1988c: 2) rather than exploit them for one's own political ends (see also 1985b, 2001d: 41). Bourdieu concluded that civil virtue can work. He publicly supported the education reform of Prime Minister Rocard and Education Minister Lionel Jospin. However, by the beginning of the new decade, his flirtation with the Socialist government had ended, together with optimism about existing political systems. In 1990, Michel Rocard had stated that 'France cannot carry the weight of the world' ('La France ne peut accueillir la misère du monde') with reference to the 'immigration issue' in France; thus, courting those sympathetic to the anti-immigration stance of the National Front. *La Misère du monde* appeared in 1993. The book, by the very nature of its content, needs to be understood as a strategic intervention into society and politics and therefore as an act of resistance in itself.

It was a phenomenon – some of the text was even incorporated into drama as a kind of *théâtre vérité*. Beyond the life histories and the critique of liberal economics described in previous chapters lay a further radical analysis of political institutions in general and the State in particular. Bourdieu's critique is both structural, in terms of the changing relationship between those who govern and are governed (or perhaps, in more contemporary business language, those who 'manage' and those who 'are managed'), and ideological, in terms of the principles represented by such changes, and their claims to legitimacy and justification. For example, Chapter 5 referred to the shift in State support for housing, from aid to the community to individual support. On the surface, such a move seems perfectly valid since it targets financial aid to those who most need it rather than distributing it across society. However, beyond this common-sense explanation, Bourdieu saw a shift in language which represented a radical rupture from the established relationships between State, the community and the individual:

we move from a governmental policy directed at the very structures of distribution to a policy that simply wants to correct the effects of the unequal distribution of resources in economic and cultural capital. The end result is a *state charity* which is destined, just as in the good old days of religious philanthropy, for the 'deserving poor'. In this way, along with the weakening of trade unionism and organizing groups, the new forms of state activities help turn a (potentially) mobilized *people* into a heterogeneous aggregate of frag-

mented, isolated *poor*, the *disadvantaged* as official discourse puts it, who are taken note of mostly (if not exclusively) when they 'create problems' or else to remind others who are 'well off' of the privilege conferred by permanent employment. (1999a/93: 184)

These relational changes therefore constitute an entire fabrication of the socio-political space. The better-off are grateful for their privilege, the poor know their place. As we have seen, behind these attitudes and beliefs, there lies the question of individuals' relation to time, as in the case of the Algerian peasant. An entire relationship to the future, and how it affects (or not) present action, is implicated. Bourdieu argued that within the retreat of the State, the socio-political space was reconfigured and social segregation delineated. The community was undermined and individualism fostered. This world of private ownership was set up in the name of freedom and choice. However, although the State retreated from its traditional function (what Bourdieu referred to as an 'abdication'), the systems of surveillance and coercion increased through mechanisms of accountability and control. These systems and mechanisms are represented by bureaucracies which exist as semi-autonomous bodies (*microcosms*), which, even if they share a common global philosophy, each struggle (internally and externally) for power and representation (see 1992a: 111ff.). Bourdieu was quite specific in his critique of State bureaucracies:

the fundamental law of bureaucratic apparatuses is that the apparatus gives everything (including power over the apparatus) to those who give it everything and expect everything from it because they themselves have nothing or are nothing outside it . . . the apparatus depends most on those who most depend on it because they are the ones it holds most tightly in its clutches. (1991a: 216ff.)

Also, at stake here are two defining principles of politics; namely, delegation and representation. Bourdieu argued that mass representation can only happen by delegation and, by definition, those who delegate are dispossessed of their own interests. In other words, any political party, or bureaucracy, acts to preserve their own power by dispossessing others of theirs. The medium of this dispossession is the political discourse. Language gets colonized: what was once signified becomes re-signified with neo-liberal signifiers in a way which redefines what was signified – questions of equalities are replaced by individual rights, legal rights are replaced by duties and responsibilities, native and immigrant are opposed in place of dominant and dominating. Thus, the socio-political discourse is re-founded. Bourdieu concludes that the retreat of the State itself is passed off as a 'liberation', such is the power of language to re-define.

Paradoxically, this liberation becomes a domination. Bourdieu's political engagement then seems like an attempt to show what is happening and to offer arguments and approaches to resist it:

the priorities of priorities seem to me to raise the critical consciousness of the mechanisms of symbolic violence which acts in politics and through politics; and by doing so broadly discloses the symbolic arms which are capable of ensuring that all citizens have the means to defend themselves against symbolic violence and, if needs be, to liberate themselves from their 'liberators'. (1992d: 70)

This is why Bourdieu argued that the 'final political revolution' against what he called the 'political clericalism', and its 'usurpation' in delegation, had yet to be carried out (1991a/82: 219).

If the State centre retreats, Bourdieu argued, its representatives are left to pick up the pieces or maintain a minimum of cohesion – at a personal cost. He referred to the 'left and the right hand of the State' (1998a: 1ff.): the right hand is the banks, treasury and bureaucrats; the left hand are public-sector workers, established in the past – social workers, family counsellors, youth leaders, magistrates, teachers. The right hand does not know (and at least does not want to know) what the left hand is doing and, if it does, it certainly does not want to pay for it (p. 2). *La Misère du monde* includes examples of public-sector workers and their daily lives. Their lives are full of the contradictions created by systems that can no longer adapt to the rate of reform. For example, the judge (pp. 203ff.), caught between conflicting regulations which create more problems than they solve and colleagues whose structural position mean they fail to recognize social problems; or the social worker enmeshed in a sea of departmental agencies (pp. 189ff.). On the one hand, there is the intent to 'liquidate the gains of the welfare state' (1998a: 3); on the other is a sea of bureaucracy aimed at managing without recognition of social responsibility. For Bourdieu, the latter represented a kind of, 'institutional bad faith for the constant propensity of governmental institutions, in a sort of collective double game and double consciousness, to reject or challenge the measures or acts that really conform with the official vocation of government' (1999a/93: 205). In other words, subjugation has led to a kind of collective acquiescence. The irony, of course, is that it is precisely the 'old order', and the buffering effect they provide (individuals working at personal cost to partly protect their charges from the full blast of neo-liberal philosophy) which prevents the 'social order from collapsing into chaos' (1998a: 203) when neo-liberalism runs rampant. Bourdieu also quotes the example of health. Here, intensification of work conditions, and withdrawal of welfare, had resulted in higher rates of illness – especially, mental illness and

conditions associated with stress. At the same time, medical resources were reduced, and hospitals privatized or forced to work for profit (2001b: 52).

In sum, the State, and what it had come to offer and to represent, was for Bourdieu, something which had taken centuries to invent: 'an asset of humanity, at the same level as art and science (but also) a fragile conquest, still threatened by regression and disappearance. And it is all that which they wish to consider outmoded and send back to the past' (1993d: 112). How can one resist?

THE INTELLECTUAL IN POLITICS

During the 1980s and throughout the 1990s, Bourdieu had worked to develop a definition of intellectual involvement in politics. The issue was complex and fraught with ambiguities. The logic of his *field* theory meant that he was suspicious of the final effectiveness of intellectuals in the political world. As noted earlier, Bourdieu believed they could be counted on to serve their own rather than others' interests. He had also argued that intellectuals traditionally had produced their work 'not so much with reference to their audience but to competitors' (1993a/80: 165). They always fought to defend their position when threatened – even someone like Zola (for example, with respect to the Paris Commune), whom Bourdieu often refers to approvingly as a model of intellectual commitment in politics (see for example, 2000f: 105). However, for Bourdieu, the most important point about Zola, and Sartre after him, was that they offered examples of how a particular *field* could in fact establish its own autonomy which individuals within it could then use. In other words, their position in the *field* made 'intellectual products' (arguments, techniques, approaches) available to them which could be used in interventions in politics (1990d/87: 145). There remained questions concerning the type of intellectual and how they should act.

Bourdieu had criticized the 'prophetic' or 'total' intellectual, for their declarations on universal truths, and for so to say pretending to speak on behalf of the people. He had also criticized the 'party intellectual', such as Sartre, for believing they could use the party apparatus: 'to establish himself as the founding conscience of the party' (1996a/92: 212). But, society had changed, and, with this evolution, the place and function of the intellectual had moved on. Foucault, who had strongly sponsored Bourdieu's election to the Collège de France, had written (1980) that the intellectual as 'spokesman of the universal' had been replaced by the 'specific intellectual' or professional specialist who took part and advised in their particular location of 'power knowledge'. In other words, there was a change in the *relationship* between intellectuals, their work and the socio-political apparatus. Bourdieu took up this distinction. For him, there was a

new-style intellectual, who, as discussed in Chapter 5, had imposed the fictive 'science of economics' as destiny. The market had produced them, and they consequently worked within it. Moreover, they were not alone. The same intellectual attitudes could be found among international stars, media intellectuals and politicians, and postmodernists who treat culture as the *bricolage* or 'ruse' of a pick-and-mix society (1998a: 76ff.). Again, as seen in previous chapters, the mass media and global communications represented the market and perpetuated its philosophy in the name of freedom and access.

As discussed in Chapter 4, Bourdieu was scathing about the new breed of media-intellectuals. The so-called 'doxosophes' (1972b), intellectuals engaged in the production of the dominant discourse, were bad enough, but when these combined with the power of the media, the effects were to support the socio-political culture rather than challenge it. Associates of Bourdieu (Duval *et al.* 1998: 96ff.) pointed out oppositions between areas of the media – quality newspapers and TV – and the public profile of French intellectuals (i.e. their presence in newspapers and on TV) compared to their academic reputation (measured by their score in the international citation index). Their conclusion was that there was an inverse relation between intellectual weight and media presence. For Bourdieu, media intellectuals were more interested in their public image and media careers than being rigorous, informed and critical when faced with the burning issues of the day. Halami (1997), another associate of Bourdieu, looks at the case of Bernard-Henri Lévy in detail (pp. 81ff.). Bourdieu admits that 'BHL' was his 'favourite whipping boy' and claims that 'no sociologist worthy of his name talks about Bernard-Henri Lévy' (1998b/96: 54). Lévy was one of the notorious 'nouveaux philosophes' who had come to media attention in the 1970s when they offered conservative revisionist views in contrast to the left-wing sympathies of most prominent French intellectuals in the post-Second World War era. Lévy was good-looking, articulate and charismatic, and had established a presence for himself as a 'journalist-philosopher'; although he also wrote plays and directed films. Often, he was referred to as BHL. Halami examined the way Lévy called on his media 'friends' in order to mobilize them in support of his latest work, through appearances on TV and radio – for example, four separate programmes on 16 May 1994, and other newspaper coverage. Recalling Bourdieu's own sense of injustice at his mistreatment at the hands of TV interviewers in January and March 1996 (1996c: 25), personal bitterness is perhaps unsurprising, but these exchanges draw attention to the intense sense of rivalry which characterizes French intellectuals. It is perhaps worth offering a comparative British example.

Bourdieu put Tony Blair next to the French and German leaders Jospin and Schröder, as 'the troika of neo-liberalism' (1998f). He also argued that in Britain, Anthony Giddens had been described as Tony Blair's 'favourite sociologist'.

Himself a 'grand theorist', Giddens has, in latter years become an advocate of so-called 'third way' politics (Giddens 1998, 2000). This phrase is itself reminiscent of the *Ni gauche, ni droite* rallying call of French intellectuals in the 1930s. Acknowledging the 'death of socialism', at least as an economic system, Giddens attempts to move beyond traditional dichotomies – the Left and Right; the individual and society; the State and democracy; old Labour and Thatcherism – concluding with a hypothetical synthesis of a 'third' middle way. The Third Way programme is itemized: the radical centre; the new democratic State (the State without enemies); active civil society; the democratic family; the new mixed economy; equality as inclusion; positive welfare; the social investment State; the cosmopolitan nation; cosmopolitan democracy (1998: 70). If these key ideas are offered in the style of a political manifesto, it is no mistake. Although this is not the language in which it chooses to express itself, the principles underpinning these ideas also form the basis of New Labour policies: modernization, restructuring, duty and responsibility, national and international discipline, reduction of the public sector, private-sector involvement in the Welfare State, reformed capitalism, the market economy. Bourdieu attacked the 'neo-liberal reasoning' which underpinned such a programme (2000h: 7). For him, Blair and Giddens had acted as a 'twin-headed Trojan horse' in importing these ideas from America to Europe. He quotes phrases from the 'Frequently Asked Questions' page of Giddens' own website to state his principles: 'to adopt a positive attitude to globalisation'; 'to try to react to new forms of inequality'; 'the poor of today are not similar to those of yesteryear (and, similarly, the rich are no longer the same as they were before)'; 'to accept the idea that the existing systems of social security and the whole structure of the state are the source of problems, and not just the solution to solving them'; 'to underline the fact that social and economic policies are linked'; 'social spending must be evaluated in terms of their consequences for the economy as a whole', etc. (ibid.). Of course, such redefining of a socio-political programme would be anathema for Bourdieu, because it precisely reshaped the discourse in favour of the dominant (the State) and undermined what he considered was the legitimate voice and claims of the dominated. Even equality, by a linguistic sleight of hand, gets redefined as equality of access rather than the means of access.

In Britain, there is no tradition of intellectual stars of the prominence of Sartre or Lévy. In a sense, British politicians have usurped the role of the media intellectual. Giddens's third way is unlikely to be familiar to a general public, other than among the political fraternity and the so-called 'chattering classes'. Few buy his books, his TV appearances are relatively rare. Nevertheless, Giddens has been a frequent visitor to Downing Street, and thus can be considered to be influential, also conducting seminars for politicians and bureaucrats in Britain and the USA. Bourdieu needed a different way to act in France. He sought to define a different type of intellectual and a distinct form of political intervention.

After *Actes de la recherche*, Bourdieu founded the review *Liber* in 1989. It was aimed at bringing together writers and artists at the European level. This ambition was partly realized through the inclusion of contributions from across the continent, in a range of national languages, and as a supplement in leading heavyweight newspapers: *El País*, *Le Monde*, *Allgemeine Zeitung*, the *Times Literary Supplement*, and *L'Indice*. Five editions appeared by the end of 1990 when it became a supplement of *Actes*. At a time which saw the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet regime, Bourdieu argued for intellectuals to engage in a 'politics of truth', a 'rigorous use of reason'. He claimed his target to be the 'false alternatives' of Stalin and Thatcher, socialism and liberalism, Marx and Friedman, Moscow and Chicago, State or Market, planning and laissez-faire, behind which words were hidden the fantasies of those incapable of thinking more openly (see 1989e: 3).

Bourdieu took forward the theme of the international networking of writers and artists calling for an *International of Intellectuals* (1992e). Citing the example of Zola, he argued that commitment and the 'purity' of knowledge can come together in an effective marriage – 'a politics of purity' in opposition to State rationality. More specifically, such an International must defend the independence of the intellectual from State, media interference, and cultural consumerism which would make their work a simple product for mass consumption. In Strasbourg in 1993, such a group of intellectuals met, including Bourdieu, Derrida, Edouard Glissant, Toni Morrison, Susan Sontag and Salman Rushdie. The following year Rushdie was named President of the fifty-strong so-called *International Parliament of Writers*. For Bourdieu, this grouping had two founding principles: first, independence with regard to political, economic and media power; secondly, knowledge and recognition of diversity in separate historic traditions (1994c). The International also sought to define new forms of militant protests. Its list of concerns read like a manifesto: collective organization to defend the freedom to think and create; defence of the conditions of creativity; against overt influence over forms of criticism; against the manipulation of minds, and political and religious propaganda; development of links between politics, economics and culture; critique of the political use to which science is put; raise the profile of international trouble spots – Timor, Algeria, Rwanda, Haiti; development of a working network of contacts for information exchange; establish a series of towns where exiled writers and artists can take refuge. A further target was the media and its attempts 'to introduce the logic of show-business' into every public space in general, and, into intellectual life in particular. Bourdieu argued that both the form and the content of such actions were distinct from the traditional positions of the intellectual, who often remained detached and above practical action in socio-political events. What he had in mind was the figure of the "collective intellectual" who might be capable of

making a discourse of freedom heard' (1996a/92: 340), who could envisage a 'corporatism of the universal'. His chance to test the strength of such a collectivity came very soon.

DIRECT POLITICAL ACTION

If 1981 had marked a watershed in Bourdieu's explicit involvement in the world of politics, it was the events of 1995 which propelled him into the public limelight. His participation in proposing educational reform, as well as the economic volte-face of the Socialist government, clearly led to a deep sense of disappointment and concern for the effects of modern politics on the world. *La Misère du monde* was one result of this sense of deception, if not betrayal, of the Socialist vision. By 1995, however, there was a change of regime. The Right had already taken over Parliament (since 1993), when Jacques Chirac gained the presidency in May 1995. What happened next had all the hallmarks of a classic French political crisis. Echoing the events of May 1968, student protests broke out in early November calling for more resources to support teaching and support staff. The government, however, was moving in an opposite direction, putting together an austerity plan as a vehicle for the modernization and restructuring of the French economy. The announcement of this plan on 15 November by Prime Minister Alain Juppé immediately sparked off unrest among whole sections of the French working population. The main point of contention was the proposed reforms to the public sector. Health spending was to be limited, medical insurance reorganized and social security reformed. New taxes were also to be introduced and the retirement age raised. A series of strikes followed.

France has a tradition of situations where the choice between two courses of action have been starkly posed, between two opposing views of the world; for example, in the 1930s and 1940s – Spain, Germany, Munich, the Popular Front, Vichy. The necessity to choose can also be found in the dilemmas in which it found itself over successive republics, Algeria, political leadership and 1968. For Bourdieu, the 1995 events brought together his preoccupations: neo-liberal economics and the effects on individuals, the voice of intellectuals and the role of the media. It also offered an opportunity to test out the means to resist.

French intellectuals were divided. The *Esprit* review, with which Bourdieu had maintained a tense and problematic relationship over the years (remember it had referred to *La Reproduction* as 'une sociologie stérile' (Prost 1980) and *La Misère du monde* had not fared much better (see Monod 1995)), was now edited by Olivier Mongin. Demonstrations divided the French labour movement. The old Socialist–Communist divide had reasserted itself, with the CFDT (Socialist) supporting the plan, while the CGT (Communist) opposed it. Mongin and his

team interpreted opposition to the policy as reactionary and contrary to economic progress – the famous ‘forces of conservatism’ of the Left. Therefore, when he published a position article in *Le Monde* (‘Pour une réforme de fond de la Sécurité Sociale’, 4 December 1995), signed by him and other associate intellectuals (Touraine, Julliard, Finkelkraut, Ricoeur, etc.), supporting the plan, it acted as a red rag to a bull for Bourdieu. He immediately (15 December 1995) launched a ‘call to intellectuals to support the strikers’. A ‘manifesto’ was signed by hundreds of intellectuals including those on the far Left, activists, economists, sociologists and other writers (for example, Derrida, Krivine, Debray and Balibar). As in previous times, French intellectuals were offered a stark choice by the nation. The enemy this time was within – neo-liberalism – but had been exported from abroad. Bourdieu and his associates believed the country was under siege from an economic philosophy and that the battleground against it was the public sector. On 12 December 1995, in what was probably his most public act to date, Bourdieu appeared alongside strikers gathered at the Gare de Lyon, Paris. Bourdieu declared himself there ‘to express support for all those who had been fighting for the last three weeks against the destruction of a civilization’ (1998a: 24ff.). Bourdieu continued with themes he had been developing for some years: criticizing ‘the State nobility’ which was preaching the withering away of the State; the so-called ‘inevitability’ of economic policy; economics as a pseudo-science; the iron laws of the financial markets; the myth of globalization; job insecurity; true democracy against technocracy. However, he reserved his most potent venom for the ‘new governors of the Right’ (ministers, employers and ‘experts’) who sought ‘a monopoly of reason and modernity’, and thus change. These people, argued Bourdieu, accused ‘the people’, trade unions and critical intellectuals of ‘unreason, archaism, inertia and conservatism’. He scorned Juppé for claiming to want France to be a ‘serious and happy country’ and the *énarques* who pretended to ‘know where the people’s happiness lies’. Finally, he called for an alliance between intellectuals, writers, artists, scientists and others to ‘reinvent’ public services by combining rigorous analyses with inventive proposals.

The individual events and aftermath of 1995–6 are long and complex. Duval *et al.* (1998) published an account of them and the various positions of the intellectuals involved – *Le Décembre des intellectuels français* – in which they argued that there existed a coherence of, and collusion between, the vision of the *Esprit* group and other Centre-right pressure groups such as the *Fondation Saint-Simon*, neo-liberalism, economic policy and the media. These groups were the constitutive parties, apparatuses and individuals of the production of ‘dominant ideology’ which had been analysed by Bourdieu and others in *Actes de la recherche* (1976). For *Esprit*, (Mongin and Roman 1998), Bourdieu was guilty of courting public approval, of a sociology of domination, of seeking intellectual domination, and,

thus, of using the events for his own ambitions. For *Esprit*, Bourdieu never addressed a word on the substantive issue of affordable social services in France and the apparent need for their reform. Here is not the place to tease out the pros and cons of these different positions. What was at stake, perhaps more than the actuality and the issues of the day, was resistance – the form it should take and the role of the intellectuals in these processes.

With the publication of *La Misère du monde*, the events of 1995, his public interventions at strikes and meetings, and his media appearances, Bourdieu had become a prominent voice in the socio-political arena, both at home in France and on the international stage. The publishing outlet *Raisons d'Agir* was created by Bourdieu and his team in 1996 precisely as another intervention in the world of politics. The series they published aimed at a non-specialist audience, each book selling for around 30 francs. These books were intended to solve the problem referred to earlier that *Actes de la recherche* had too specialist a readership:

Therefore, I came to ask myself, from a certain moment, if there was any sense, when it was a question of important subjects like journalism, to continue to write for a small closed world that does nothing with it . . . one gives a signal of accessibility . . . given everything that is happening in the world today which is so serious, is it possible, when one is paid to attend to the social world . . . to keep quiet, and not to try to say to everyone a little bit about what one believes oneself to have learnt . . . about the world. (Deslaur and Rivière *op. cit.*: 237–9)

The aim was to keep each book small, to keep down costs and prices, and to generate enough income to support further publications. Scholars from both a French and international background were to be included, and all titles were to have a direct socio-political relevance. The first appeared in 1996 – *Sur la télévision* – and dealt directly with the pernicious influence, as Bourdieu saw it, of the media, especially television. Other titles soon followed on French intellectuals and the media (Halami 1997), the events of 1995 (Duval *et al.* 1998) and the impact of neo-liberalism in Great Britain (Dixon 1998). Not all the books were written by Bourdieu but their appearance in the series suggests he shared the authors’ views. Bourdieu’s other two books in the series were entitled *Contre-feux*. The first of these was translated in the year of its publication (1998) under the title *Acts of Resistance* which reflected its subtitle – ‘words to serve in resistance against the neo-liberal invasion’. However, the spirit of these collected speeches, interviews and articles might better be rendered by more literal translations: ‘Firing Back’, ‘Counter-Attack’, ‘Return Fire’. The second volume of *Contre-feux* was subtitled ‘for a European Social Movement’, and, increasingly, Bourdieu turned his attention to political mobilization at an international level.

As previously noted, what Bourdieu had in mind was a kind of 'collective intellectual'; in other words, cultural producers who worked to defend their own interests while asserting themselves as 'an international power of criticism and watchfulness, or even proposals, in the face of the technocrats' (1996a/92: 348). Most of the rest of Bourdieu's professional life was spent in establishing the structures and mechanisms for such action and defence. After the 1995 events, Bourdieu called for the formation of a vast 'States General', ready to address the issues and problems of contemporary society. He listed these as: 'work – unemployment, exclusion, full employment, reduction of the working week; public services as the guarantee of equality and support for people; and a Europe which is democratic, ecological and social' (2002c: 341, 2000h). Against the logic of neo-liberal economics and politics, Bourdieu imagined a social movement concerned with equal rights in all aspects of life for both men and women, national and immigrants, town and country.

Following regional elections in 1998, Bourdieu co-authored a text for *Le Monde* (see 2002c: 361) which charged the political establishment with moral bankruptcy. The authors asked how it was that the Left had squandered the dynamics of its electoral victories? Why were people so disappointed with them? Why did so many people now vote for groups outside of the main political sphere? Why were the Socialists carrying out plans which the previous Conservative government could only dream of? For Bourdieu and his co-authors, the official Left struggled to rid itself of the Mitterrand legacy, for which we can read the neo-liberalism of the Left. This philosophy had been enthusiastically embraced by other Socialist governments across Europe.

Given this emphasis on international collaboration, it is perhaps unsurprising that Bourdieu should be actively involved outside of France. His concern to go beyond French frontiers can be traced back to his work in Algeria and education. *Actes de la recherche* and *Liber* were also founded with the intention of including work from international scholars which they frequently did. The changing thematic focus of editions addressed events in specific countries – Poland, Brazil, Afghanistan, New Caledonia, etc. – and hence gave Bourdieu the opportunity to develop a number of the issues which preoccupied him in other contexts. In the case of Yugoslavia (1993d), he argued that silence on the part of intellectuals, not speaking out, partly led to the atrocities of ethnic cleansing. He saw that when overbearing State apparatuses break up, traditional loyalties reappeared and, with them, rivalries. Without naming names, he claimed that some intellectuals were also ready to turn academic wars into real wars, with the cost in flesh and blood. In this scenario, words could literally be a question of life or death, since they could be translated into slogans which inspired action. Words and arguments could therefore also oppose with real consequences. But, fear of the personal cost of speaking out led to desperation and to a sort of 'social

autism'; for example, the cases of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay in the 1970s (1994d). State terror was used as a means of imposing a political will by sapping people of their energy to resist. Simply surviving became more important than quality of life. As in certain urban environments, people under stress closed in on themselves, social groups broke up. Crudely put, it is simply easier to look the other way, become preoccupied with one's own wants and needs, and avoid conflict. Bourdieu commented that it is enough to set off 'innumerable, infinitesimal acts of cowardice in order to make large and small abuses of power possible' (ibid.: 23). Here, he argued that the answer lay not in individual heroic action but in the collective power of the group.

There are complex questions here about when to act and when not to, and when external help is needed due to the fact that the internal situation in a country is too dangerous for direct opposition. Chapter 1 set out some of Bourdieu's response to the extreme state of near civil war in Algeria in the 1990s. What he said and what he was able to do clearly came from desperation to do something, no matter how pessimistic the outlook. When NATO entered the war in former Yugoslavia, Bourdieu joined others in opposing the bombing of key strategic sites in Serbia and Kosovo (see 2002c: 432). For Bourdieu and his co-authors, such action was unwarranted and undeclared within the international community, and could only add to the fragility of surrounding States and the entrenchment of the Yugoslavians around their leader Slobodan Milošević. The key issue in offering an alternative was the involvement of the United Nations. Of course, this question continues to have contemporary relevance: the 2003 war in Iraq was undertaken without the support of the UN. The strength of international co-operation is at stake together with alternative measures to military intervention: for example, sanctions, economic aid linked to human rights and a commitment to legal proceedings against politicians and army officers in aggressor states, and a real and dignified policy for political asylum.

We might conclude that Bourdieu intervened in political events only when the situations were extreme. However, he saw neo-liberalism as the possible harbinger of further violent conflicts. For example, in 2000 Austria elected a party of the extreme Right which sent shock waves across Europe. As noted in the last chapter, the second round play-off between Jacques Chirac and the National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen in 2002 had forced many Socialist electors to vote for the centre-Right in order to keep out the extreme Right. In the case of Austria, Bourdieu argued that commentators needed to be careful about the language they used to describe what was going on there. He wrote that reference to Nazism and comparisons with Hitler were not simply hysterical in their over-reaction, but dangerous since it obscured the real causes of the rise of the extreme Right in many European countries (2002c: 437); namely, neoliberalism. This economic philosophy, argued Bourdieu, had created a mass of people who are

both 'disorientated and demoralized ... [and] ready, in desperation to give themselves to the first demagogue who goes by' (ibid.). The phenomenon was all the more powerful for its links to the national mystification created through the media. Bourdieu drew a line, not so much from Hitler, but from Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair for their populist appeal, construction of image and exploitation of reactionary sentiments. At one point, he accused Blair of being more reactionary than the Right-wing President of France (ibid.). He called for a European level of resistance to such politics.

By the end of the millennium, Bourdieu again promoted the idea of a 'States General' with a manifesto published symbolically for 1 May 2000 in *Le Monde* (2000h). He called again for 'collective work' at a national and international level which was also interdisciplinary and aimed at developing an alternative to neo-liberalism. His list of concerns was reaffirmed: social inequalities, unemployment, job insecurity, casual labour, poverty and the power of multinational companies. He looked to establish institutional and organizational links. The stress was again on action at a European level. The *Raisons d'Agir* website was offered as a place where those wishing to join in this project could register their interest as a first step to offering suggestions and propositions to be taken up in future public meetings. Bourdieu also wrote on the then current situation as one of a 'politics of depolitization' (2001b: 57ff.). He argued that modern politics was such that the most profound changes were operated by 'invisible hands' (ibid.: 43ff.). The real aim of a particular policy, or multinational company, was hidden:

The power of agents and mechanisms which today dominate the social and economic world, rests on an extraordinary concentration of all forms of capital, economic, political, military, cultural, scientific, technological [which represents the] foundation of a symbolic domination without precedent. (ibid.: 58)

He stressed the common routes and shared problems of European social movements, calling for a European Unionism and further coordinated action between artists and militants. By these actions, he was looking to breathe new life into the concept of trade unions and, indeed, the European vision itself:

These collective actions carried out thanks to the co-ordination of collectivities must, by supporting themselves on theoretical work aimed at formulating social and political objectives for a true social Europe ... work to bring about a credible counter power, that is a European social movement ('unified' and 'co-ordinated') capable of bringing about, by its own existence, a European political space which, at the present time, does not exist. (ibid.: 72)

Given these sentiments, it is unsurprising that Bourdieu should address diverse meetings and demonstrations. In public statements, for example in Zurich 2001, he continued to urge unions, protest groups, and demonstrators to coordinate their actions for a 'great European confederation' against dominant economic powers (see 2002c: 457). He stressed the same theme in an address to the *Sommet des peuples* in Quebec April 2001 (see 2002c: 460), as well as warning against attacks on human social defence mechanisms in the name of removing 'commercial obstacles' (ibid.: 462). Elsewhere, for example in *Spiegel* 2001, he referred to neo-liberalism as like AIDS – 'it seizes on the immune system of its victims'. He also declared himself to be 'pessimistic ... possibly it is too late'. When there are protests, as in Seattle and Geneva, 'the general public sees only anarchists, hooligans, and red extremists' (ibid.).

CONCLUSION

Of course, these are polemical statements intended to motivate political action. Over the last two decades, Bourdieu had developed a number of means not only to address the political and economic situation, but to impact on it. Besides *Actes de la recherche* there were publications aimed at a broader public: for example, *Raisons d'Agir* (which formed itself as an association 'loi 1901' in April 1998), dealing with topics of immediate contemporary relevance and *La Misère du monde*. Bourdieu disagreed with large parts of the media about how they dealt with information, and took them on, by criticizing them in publications (e.g. *Sur la télévision*), appearing on tv and radio to state his case, and by engaging with media associations looking for reform. He was also the subject of a cinematic film in 2000 – *La Sociologie est un sport de combat* – which offered a documentary of his life over a year and showed the range of his experience and activities. In these ways, having criticized the media, it was as if he sought to beat them at their own game, or at least to use their own means of mass communication for his own ends. His personal engagement also included a number of other national and international political pressure groups – concerning artists, gender groups, youth associations and events in such countries as Algeria, Iraq and Yugoslavia. As well as the group activities noted in previous chapters, there was involvement with Attac (founded in 1998), an association for a tax on financial transactions to support citizens, Agir ensemble contre le chômage ACI, formed in 1993, and the Club Merleau-Ponty, began in 1995 as a group who opposed liberalism and 'single thinking'. He also built up a vast network of personal contacts, many of whom were like-minded and ready to act in support of his ideas and activities, or to apply them to their own local contexts. At one point, Bourdieu writes that there is a need to put 'new forms of resistance in place' (2002c: 438).

In Bourdieu's later political writings, the language is often engaging and inspiring, intended to capture the imagination of those involved and to connect with the public at large. Even so, and no matter how attractive the words sounded, there is the question of the substance behind such emotive phrases as a 'realist utopia', 'a parliament of writers', 'an international of intellectuals', and 'an economics of happiness'? Certainly, his public profile increased. In 1998, the cover of one weekly magazine (*L'Événement* du jeudi 27 September) featured a photo of him over the heading: 'Bourdieu: The most powerful intellectual in France?' Such attention led to charges that he was simply undertaking political activity in order to make himself popular and famous (Mongin and Roman *op. cit.*). One book-length critique accused him of 'sociological terrorism' (Verdès-Leroux 1998).

The theoretical positions on politics Bourdieu had developed in the 1970s and 1980s offered a pessimistic view of political representation and the possibility of delegation. He had also stressed the need to 'think politics without thinking politically' (1988d: 2). Clearly, this was a fine line to walk and some might feel that Bourdieu crossed it into active partisan politics. Yet, there is a justifying logic stemming from his *field* theory when applied to the socio-political sphere. The theory calls for statements in terms of the *field* that make it up, the practical logic on which they are based, their effects on those who inhabit it, and, ultimately, the scope there is for change. Should Bourdieu's many critical commentaries on politics and the neo-liberal world be taken, both generally and in particular, in the same light as his academic or scientific works? His bibliographer, Yvette Deslaur, in an interview with Bourdieu, states that she almost left out his publications in the *Raisons d'Agir* series because of their polemical character which contrast so sharply with a scientific sociological enquiry (2002: 234). Bourdieu recognized that the aims of these writings were different, and should be seen rather as 'arms for political combat' than academic texts, but denied any transgression of analysis, and, indeed, argued that many of them were based firmly on analyses involving his established thinking tools – *habitus*, *field*, *capital*, etc.

The title of this chapter is 'Acts of Resistance'. I chose this title since *acts* has many resonant meanings. An act is an action, an intervention with intention and purpose. It also has practical consequences. Both seem to me to draw attention to the contextual aspect of any social event and, within a Bourdieusian perspective, this must involve a framing with details of *habitus*, *field* and *capital*, etc. Real contemporary events, and the *fields* in which Bourdieu operated, provoked acts of resistance in real terms. These are particularities and, ultimately, the worth of Bourdieu's work might be judged on its applicability to other circumstances; in other words, what is it 'to be', 'to know' and 'to do' from a Bourdieusian world-view? Also, what is its significance for those who hold it?

At various points in his writing, Bourdieu writes on the universality of aspects of knowledge and calls for 'work to universalise the social and economic conditions to the universal' (2000b: 107). Moreover, this universality is to be underpinned by a '*realpolitik of reason*' (1996a/92: 348). The next chapter considers what this universality, this reason, might look like for those who possess it.

CHAPTER 7

Raison d'Être

Previous chapters of this book have discussed Bourdieu's analysis of a range of social issues, as well as his critical engagement against contemporary economics and politics. Behind his view of the world, and the changes he called for, lies a philosophy of practice. Some of the terms of his approach – *habitus*, *field*, *capital* – have been used in various parts of the book to show what their employment provides in terms of explanatory power. The present chapter considers the philosophical perspective underlying this theory of practice. The focus of the discussion is the philosophical dimensions of language and knowledge fields which produce alternative versions of reality. The objective of the chapter is to explore what it is to *know* and *understand* from this viewpoint and, perhaps ultimately more importantly, what it is to *be* and to *act* from this position. The chapter links Bourdieu's discussion of Heidegger ('L'ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger': 1975, 1919c/88) and the philosophical field more generally (*Méditations pascaliennes*, 1997) with issues of social identity, understanding and resistance to dominant discourses. It considers the question of the socio-political positions adopted by gender movements – feminism and the gay movements (*La Domination masculine*, 1998) – and in what ways their experiences can act as a guide for a social emancipation in the name of universality. It also discusses the extent to which Bourdieu's sociological way of knowing implies a way of 'being' that is available to everyday men and women. In other words, how to operationalize this theory of practice in practice.

Bourdieu's work is often taken to be primarily concerned with a sociological approach to a range of social topics. And, to an extent, it is just that. However, it is also clear that his response was both radical and critical. His earlier work called for an alternative view of the world, where certain misreadings could be 'corrected'. Later, he engaged more directly and overtly with socio-political events, issues and trends which shaped the contemporary world as it developed in the second half of the twentieth century. Both of these ways of engagement were part of a personal and professional *habitus* and the working out of its trajectory.

This chapter considers the philosophical dimensions to *field* and *habitus*. Previous chapters have highlighted Bourdieu's own philosophical training and the intellectual climate in which this occurred. His synthesis of sociology and anthropology was realized through a philosophy which was both empirical and phenomenological. His description of his method as 'structural constructivism' employed this term to emphasize the space-time relationship of social practice (structure) and its dialectical nature (constructivist). Early works in Algeria, education and on art and culture were the product of this method which was summed up in his account of the 'craft of sociology' (1991b/1968). This discussion was heavily infused with the work of various philosophers – Bachelard, Wittgenstein, Canguilhem – and, in articles published around the same time (1967, 1968), Bourdieu set out how the sociology he was advocating was ultimately an 'epistemology of practice'. In 1975, he met philosophy head on with an article on the 'political ontology of Martin Heidegger' (1975b), later published as a book. However, it was not until 1997 that Bourdieu addressed the 'problem' of philosophy explicitly, with *Pascalian Meditations* (2000a/1997). A course at the Collège de France then covered further questions of 'scientific knowledge', later published as *Science de la science et réflexivité* (2001c). This preoccupation with philosophy was therefore active throughout Bourdieu's career. In many ways, Bourdieu was critical of philosophy and philosophical method, and sought to establish sociology as a more credible alternative. This aim was not simply for theoretical reasons, since he took exception to many of the tenets of philosophical discourse and the relationship to knowledge they implied. Rather, his stance is better understood in terms of the practical implications he saw in his brand of 'philosophical sociology'.

In particular, Bourdieu's theory of knowledge targeted the exact philosophical relationship between the individual and the social reality which surrounds them. At stake, are issues of autonomy, hegemony and ideology; although these latter terms are rarely used by Bourdieu himself. He was more eager to see the tensions between individuals and collective groups as structural and moral; in particular, for example, as we have seen in cases such as '*hysteresis*' and '*double bind*' where individuals find that they do not synchronize with their surroundings, their demands, impositions and mixed messages. Since this discussion is already couched in terms of the different language used to represent the social world and the experiences of those in it, the chapter begins with some thoughts on the 'philosophy of language'. This is in order to show the pernicious and damaging effects it can have on the way individuals – philosophers and scientists as well as the man in the street – think and act. Bourdieu employed an alternative vocabulary to everyday discourses and their terminology. The epistemology underlying terms such as *habitus* and *field*, and phrases such as '*universalising the conditions of universality*' and '*establishing a realpolitik of*

reason, will be discussed. The chapter addresses what it is *to know* in this philosophy, as a precursor to what is it *to be* in it. It is the *raison d'être* of academia and scholarship to proffer alternative views, narratives and explanations; both in the social and physical sciences. The chapter also discusses Bourdieu's own 'science of science' and what this looks like in practice. Increasingly, Bourdieu sought to show how what he was arguing for was also available to those outside the scientific community. The chapter therefore considers what Bourdieu's theory of practice might imply for the experiences of everyday men and women in their everyday lives. In other words: What is this knowledge? How do you acquire it? What are its implications for both the specialist and non-specialist? Bourdieu was always the radical dissenter. The chapter includes examples of what the application of his theoretical outlook looks like in terms of a social issue such as gender, as well as discussion of its implications for social action and resistance to its common trends and orthodoxies.

LANGUAGE AND ACTUALITY

Various parts of this book have drawn attention to language and its effects in representing the world. One crucial aspect of these effects is the legitimacy it gives to particular social mechanisms by the way it expresses and acts as a medium for the operation of orthodox knowledge and orthodox ways of doing things. Language can be explicit and objective in what it signifies, or ambiguous – not everything is expressed or expressible in language. Much of social discourse is implicit, unconscious or simply unexpressed. Nevertheless, language retains a hold on social representation. In his critique of neo-liberalism, Bourdieu is constantly drawing attention to the way language is used by economists, politicians and financiers to pass off as necessities deliberate choices of policy, and the social consequences in which they result. The language of individual rights and freedoms is evoked by way of justification. It is by these means that 'schemes of thought' are constructed; ways of viewing the world which hide their provenance, the values they represent, and the interests they ultimately serve. For example, contrasting the 'market' (the power of which is central to neo-liberal economics) with the State (the *bête noire* of neo-liberals for its claimed impedance of natural economic laws), Bourdieu noted how, in official discourse, the former 'market' is often given positive descriptors, while the State is associated with a negative character: 'Market – freedom, open, flexible, dynamic, moving, future, new, growth, individual, individualism, diversity, authenticity, democracy; State – constraint, closed, rigid, fixed, past, passed, archaic, group, collective, uniform, artificial, autocratic, totalitarian' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2000i: 7). What is potent about such oppositions is that they are

both pervasive and pernicious, as they enter into the human consciousness and unconscious as a kind of 'mental colonization' of thinking. In this sense, the terms of any debate are already constructed in ways which establish and attribute positive and negative values to respective elements within it.

Bourdieu's own principal discussions of language (1977d, 1982b, 1991a) sought to break with modern linguistics; most noticeably the Chomskyan concepts of the 'ideal speaker-listener', 'homogeneous speech communities', and 'perfect competence' (Chomsky 1965: 3). In place of linguistic technical terms, Bourdieu substitutes his own concepts to signify the social construction of language and the values it represents: grammaticality → acceptability; language → legitimate language; relations of communication → relations of power; meaning of speech → value and power of speech; competence → symbolic capital (see Bourdieu 1977d: 646). For Bourdieu, a word was not simply a neutral signifier with an assigned function, but a packed matrix of the socially constructed and signified *capital*, derived from and employable in, *field* contexts (1991a: 39). Words are the things to think with and to express ideas, but they do not do so in an ideal platonic realm of free expression. Rather, they are constructed around 'schemes of perception' which are themselves based on opposing adjectival pairs – high/low, spiritual/material, fine/gross, etc., and associated attributes (see 1984a/79: 546). Moreover, the relationship between *habitus* and *field* is such that nothing can be said in a *field* context without a process of sanction and censure going on in terms of what is acceptable (orthodox) and unacceptable, and recognized and unrecognized (intelligible) for those who occupy positions within it.

This view of language is particularly pertinent in a world of mass communication, virtual realities and global media networks where the word is taken as real. The way language is used to influence and condition national and international politics, education, and the mass media is also at issue here. However, language, and our concept of its nature go beyond direct communication and representation. In fact, it shapes the way the world itself can be understood.

LANGUAGE AND PHILOSOPHICAL THINKING

In the twentieth century, the philosophy of man *was* a philosophy of language. The linguistic turn was announced by Wittgenstein with his view that philosophy was about meaning as a 'language game'. Before him, de Saussure argued that what signifies meaning (the *signifier*) is relative, and thus, unstable. One consequence of these philosophies was that language became a metaphor for human behaviour; of discourse and *non-sense*. Postmodernist philosophy subsequently was generally characterized by a de-centring of the subject and an

avoidance of mimetic revelation. These positions have political implications.

In the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, Bourdieu found a perfect example of how philosophy can use language in a way that is inherently political. Since Heidegger was probably *the* philosopher of *being*, it is particularly relevant that Bourdieu should single him out for individual discussion. For Bourdieu, Heidegger's philosophy was constructed so as to defend a conservative revolution to the advantage of an elite and at the expense of the welfare of the whole. By employing the term 'conservative revolution' Bourdieu was contrasting those who 'destroy to re-establish the past' with others who 'destroy by retaining what has been gained from the past' (2001c: 126). For Bourdieu, Heidegger also seems to have embodied a number of strands of his own philosophical thinking: for example, the intellectual-philosopher who, seemingly without recognizing it, reproduces his own *habitus* in philosophy; the way the philosophical *field* cuts itself off from other academic disciplines; the way that specific social class interests are served by particular ideas. Heidegger was a pivotal figure because in his case we see philosophy use language in a way that transforms the content of thinking itself – what is signified and the political implications of this signification. Heidegger's own philosophy was apparently symbiotic with Nazism, complementing and justifying a particular way of being in the world. How did this come about?

True to his approach to *field* analysis, Bourdieu could not separate out Heidegger's work and his life. Born to a small family of craftsmen in a little village in the Black Forest, Heidegger pursued an academic career in an intellectual climate which was *völkisch* and post-romantic. The expansion of universities had swollen the ranks of academics, although many of these were forced to teach below their level of qualification because of the scarcity of professorial chairs. Inspired by the work of such writers as Ernst Jünger (the 'conservative anarchist') and Oswald Spengler, Bourdieu demonstrates how Heidegger was literally 'taken in' by the spirit of the times. This attitude denounced the modern world with all its rationalism and bourgeois desires, itself undermined by economic crisis, and turned instead to nature ('the search for the forest') and spiritual transcendence. It was secular transcendence, based on the 'phantasy' of nationhood, extolling war and seeing in 'total mobilization' a search for an authentic conception of freedom (1991c/88: 13). Bourdieu argued that dichotomies were set up which opposed what was glorified with what was abhorred. On the one hand, Culture, German, the refined, Community, Country/forest, peasant, hero, organic life, the total, integration, ontology/science; on the other hand, Civilization, France, the people/mass, parliament, town, factory, machinery, the partial/disconnected, fragmentation, godless rationality. But the modern industrial world was a reality, and Bourdieu showed how a reconciliation was sought between the two worlds. He noted that

one of the prophets of this 'revolutionary conservatism', Möller van de Bruch, first entitled the book which proposed the 'mystical reunion' of the Germanic past and future, as the 'Third way' before later changing it to *The Third Reich* (ibid.: 28) – remember the intellectuals of the 1930s and Giddens? Jünger wrote of 'a new breed of worker . . . in whom individual values, but also the values of the masses, will be overcome' (p. 30). Bourdieu comments:

In short, the solution here consists in curing illness with illness, in seeking in technology and in that pure product of technology, the Worker made one with himself through the totalitarian State, the means to overcome technology. On the one hand, the totally technical space will allow total domination, on the other hand, only such a domination will totally dispose of the technical. The solution to this antinomy is obtained by pushing it to an extreme: as in mystical thought, tension pushed to its extreme is resolved by a complete reversal of the thesis into the antithesis. It is the same mystical logic of the marriage of opposites which leads this extremist fringe of the conservative revolutionaries to think up the concept of the Führer which articulates an extreme case of the paradox that it is supposed to resolve, by fusing the cult of the hero with a mass movement. (ibid.: 31)

Bourdieu argued that the horror of the 'worker', faced with modern uniformity and anonymity, was overcome by the short step to military mobilization. In effect, freedom from alienation was subsumed into the Führer and Reich. Here, faced with existential angst, death itself was redefined as an authentic experience of freedom – to die for the Führer and his vision.

For Bourdieu, such conceptual changes were both symptomatic of changes in the structure of the *field* and activated in the *habitus* of the various actors within it who generated its structures. Bourdieu referred to these changes as a 'philosophical alchemy' and, referring to Pascal, 'a metanoia, a change of social space which supposes a change in mental space' (p. 36). The point is that such alchemy is, in Heidegger's work, expressed in a language which proves particularly dangerous. It is dangerous firstly because of the *misrecognitions* it includes and their consequences. However, what makes it more pernicious is that the medium for such misrecognitions is a language which is everyday. Words such as 'being', 'care' and 'time' are re-conceptualized in ways which tear them out of their normal usage. This action both asserts new definitions, with ontological and political consequences, and legitimates the rejection of established forms. Bourdieu gives the example of 'Social Welfare' (p. 76) in Germany in the 1930s which, by being transformed and transfigured, lost its identity. The 'Welfare State' and 'Social Security' were anathema to such writers as Jünger and Schmitt. Philosophical distortion by association degraded the very concept of State aid

to such an extent that its terms 'haunt' legitimate discourse 'but in such a form that they do not seem to do so'. Here, one thinks of the cases where common-sense language is re-conceptualized, reconfigured in order to pass off political decisions as 'naturally right'. It is as if language itself is by implication colonized by a different meaning and thus misrecognized: 'the imposition of form is at once transformation and transubstantiation: the substance signified *is* the significant form in which it is realized' (ibid.: 78).

Bourdieu stressed that this work of 'euphemization and sublimation' was a product of a particular *field* in time; with all its constraints which define what can be spoken through a state of censorship recognized by those who inhabit it. He also argued that Heidegger's philosophy allowed him to disguise both his modest origins and assert a view of the world which separated out the mass from the elite. Bourdieu saw that this philosophy itself was symptomatic of the position in which Heidegger's intellectual generation found themselves:

Placed in an uncomfortable situation in the dominant class, as an illegitimate bourgeois, stripped of his bourgeois rights and of the possibility of even claiming them (an objective situation which finds an almost transparent translation in the theme of the 'bastard'), the intellectual can only define himself in opposition to the rest of the social world, categorised as 'dirty bastards', that is, as 'bourgeois', but in Flaubert's rather than Marx's sense, meaning all those who feel at ease with themselves and secure in their rights because they have the luck and the misfortune not to think. If we agree to recognise in the 'bourgeois' and the 'intellectual' the existential realisation of what will later become, in Sartre's philosophically euphemised system, the *en-soi* (self-sufficient being) and the *pour-soi* (self-conscious being), we will better understand the sense of the 'nostalgia to be God', that is, the reconciliation of the bourgeois and the intellectual ('living like a bourgeois and thinking like a demigod', as Flaubert said), of thoughtless power and powerless thought. (ibid.: 98)

In other words, thought itself is conditioned by intellectuals' position within the relevant *fields* and strata of society. The examples of Sartre and Heidegger are compared by Bourdieu. Both needed to be understood in terms of their respective *fields*. Bourdieu argued that while Sartre was the 'born intellectual' who ended up perfectly integrated into the intellectual world, but in a false position in the dominant class, Heidegger was the 'first-born' intellectual, placed in a 'false position' in the world as well (p. 130). For Bourdieu, intellectuals are more the object of their thoughts than the subjects of it, and it was for this reason that Heidegger was never able to admit to the unconscious social forms which dictated his thinking; since such an admission would have undermined the suggested omnipotence of his thought.

This discussion of Heidegger draws attention to ways of knowing which show up the *illusio* of philosophical thought. It does so by considering the way the philosophical *habitus* is an expression of *field* conditions, both material and ideological, and of the language through which these discourses are expressed. What is at stake is what is 'known' and its status. The question for Bourdieu was: can philosophy provide the foundations of a practical theory of knowledge?

FIELDS OF PHILOSOPHICAL KNOWLEDGE

Pascalian Meditations (2000a/1997) begins with the words: 'If I have resolved to ask some questions that I would rather have left to philosophy, it is because it seemed to me that philosophy, for all its questioning, did not ask them' (p. 1). Bourdieu claims that philosophy seemed to him to ask questions which are not essential, while ignoring those which were. What questions? In effect, what are the causes of their questioning? Bourdieu had examples to hand from within his own experience. On the one hand, he was against orthodox philosophy for the way those involved in it were unable to 'tear themselves away . . . from the enchanted circle of pure reading of texts purified of any historical attachment' (1996a/92: 308). On the other hand, he was against developments in philosophy since the 1970s; most noticeably, postmodernism and, by implication, those who purport to engage in a philosophy of the history of philosophy. Once again, true to his theory of *field* analysis, Bourdieu saw changes in the philosophical *field* in France as symptomatic of particular socio-historical conditions. For example, the fact that philosophy was still taught in French high schools meant that it was particularly prone to 'subversion' in the post-1968 period with its 'anti-institutional' mood. In this sense, the centralization of the French scholastic system offered ripe conditions for a focused anti-institutional attack. However, Bourdieu argued that this spirit of revolt was combined by the new philosophers of the 1970s with a 'conservative reaction' against the menace posed by the growth in social sciences; especially linguistics and anthropology (2001c: 201ff.). In the Preface to the English edition of *Homo Academicus* (1988a/84), Bourdieu described this *field* background as the context for his study of the shifting sands of French academic generations. He makes the point, as an aside, that once he had to explain to a young American visitor that all their intellectual heroes – Althusser, Barthes, Deleuze, Derrida and Foucault – were marginal within the French university system, and even disqualified from officially directing research as they themselves did not hold a doctorate (p. xviii). As in the case of Heidegger, Bourdieu saw in this the effects of institutional instability on a generation of philosophers who sought to assert their authority: for Heidegger, 'the ontologising of historicism', for the young philosophers of

the 1970s, 'a historicist critique of truth (and the sciences)' (ibid.). Bourdieu saw this evolution in the 1970s as the overturning of the dominant philosophical trends. Formal logic based on mathematics, analytical empiricism and phenomenology were sidelined in such a way that 'attachment to formal and universal truths appeared old fashioned and even a little reactionary compared with the analysis of the cultural historic situation' (2001c: 204). Bourdieu cites the example of Foucault's *Power/Knowledge*, but makes it clear he is targeting philosophers such as Derrida and Deleuze and those postmodernists who use social sciences to 'reduce and destroy them' (p. 205).

Behind these arguments lie questions not simply about the representation and provenance of knowledge but of knowledge itself; apparently the very stuff of philosophy. What is 'true' for Bourdieu and what significance does it have?

Twentieth-century theories of scientific knowledge were heavily influenced by the philosophy of Karl Popper. Popper denounced 'historicism' and argued for the founding of 'objectivity' based on falsification in the pursuit of so-called 'objective knowledge without a knowing subject'. Paradoxically, Bourdieu noted, the same trend to pronounce the death of the 'subject' was discernible in the Marxist structuralism of Althusser and his 'subjectless processes' (1984a/79: 228), as well as in later postmodernist philosophies. However, for Popper, a key notion in this foundation of 'objective knowledge' was the 'critical community': those with the specialist knowledge to test and subject to falsification claims to objectivity held within the discipline. For Durkheim too, the subject of science was a product of an 'integrated collective'. In many ways, this notion implies the systems of censure, authentication and specification that Bourdieu himself saw as central to the operations of scientific groups. However, Bourdieu sought to overwrite such notions with his more general concept of *field*. *Field* brings with it a whole set of operational consequences. For example, it follows that by applying *field* theory to a scientific *field*, those within it need to be understood as acting according to their own norms (*nomos*) which define what is 'thinkable and unthinkable', and thus also articulated or not. This process operates through knowledge (*connaissance*) and recognition (*reconnaissance*). Those who know the rules (regularities) can use them and, at the limit, are allowed to invent new ones. All those active within the *field* share a resonant *habitus*; in fact, the *field* chooses the *habitus* as much as the *habitus* chooses the *field*. Bourdieu summed up: 'Science (knowledge) is an immense apparatus of collective construction, collectively organised' (2001c: 139). He also makes the point (p. 36) that this perspective on science, knowledge and scientific groups is not dissimilar to that of Thomas Kuhn, who, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), argued that such communities need to be understood in terms of the *paradigm* which governed them. Paradigms expressed knowledge in a commonly agreed language and clearly defined limits of discourse. However,

although Bourdieu shared Kuhn's view of change as coming through breaks and revolutions from within and without the paradigm, he argued that it was too attached to the Durkheimian view of a community governed by a 'central norm' and did not explain the nature of change. Change, for Bourdieu was defined by the nature of *fields* themselves in that they are made up of individuals and groups competing for the dominant positions within the *field* and, in fact, between *fields*. Everything else follows from this principle.

Scientific *fields*, Bourdieu argued, operate with two types of resources: scientific and financial (2001c: 115). Scientific resources amount to the knowledge base of the *field*. *Microcosms* within it possess varying forms and quantities according to the esteem, etc., endowed on them by the scientific community. Financial resources are simply money *capital*. In fact, these two notions relate closely to Bourdieu's theory of symbolic *capital*, and can be expressed in terms of the configurations of cultural, economic and social *capital*. These forms are never independent and, within and across disciplines, scientific activity is more or less dependent on economic resources. This dependency is, according to Bourdieu, weak in areas such as History and Maths, but strong in Physics and Sociology. Moreover, these different forms of resource are cut across by other structures within disciplines: scientific and temporal. The latter refer to institutional principles of differentiation and thus organization. There is the risk that scientific knowledge is subordinated to temporal principles and economic resources. In fact, Bourdieu argued that in much discipline knowledge, it is precisely such misrecognitions which are hidden; in other words, knowledge based on a particular financial and organizational structure of the academic *field* in place and time rather than on 'truth' itself. The logical extension of this argument is that scientific (knowledge) *fields* need to be as independent as possible (p. 114). Paradoxically, and consequently, Bourdieu was critical of areas such as philosophy. For him, these did have autonomy but they then misused it by cutting themselves off and operating according to their own internal logic of self-interests.

Bourdieu was not the first to notice the apparent relativity of knowledge, and that philosophy itself was based on a search for stable epistemological foundations. This quest lies at the base of Popper's philosophy. An extreme form of postmodernism which would see all articulations in the name of real truth or knowledge as fictions, was only the other side of the same illusory coin. Certainly, Bourdieu had little time for those who would argue that any search for an external objectivity was a 'fabrication' and fictive (for example, Latour and Woolgar), or for so-called semiotic ethnographers (for example, Marcus and Geertz) who see reality to be read as a 'text' (ibid.: 57 and 59). Yet, Bourdieu was also arguing that because knowledge is a social construction, and that it is so heavily influenced by its *field* context, it literally cannot be trusted. In such a world, progress and change are the result of competition between and within

social groups in terms of their own self-interests rather than in the pursuit of 'truth' itself. The logic of this perspective is that shared *field* knowledge, common knowledge and the mission to found an epistemological orthodoxy might be nothing more than a collective act of self-deception or *mauvaise foi*. What Bourdieu offered as an alternative was to 'objectify the transcendental unconscious of the knowing subject' which leads to 'a scientific objectivation of the subject of objectification' (ibid.: 153), resulting in 'reflexive objectivity'. Why so and how? The answer to these questions takes us back to Bourdieu's theory of practice and its underlying epistemology.

OBJECTIVATION: EPISTEMOLOGICAL BREAKS

Bourdieu's theory of practice was presented in terms of a series of philosophical 'breaks' from the ruling paradigms of his day. It was necessary to break from empirically practical knowledge itself, *lived experience*, with all its *misrecognitions*. Such a break produced theoretical knowledge about the social world. This theoretical knowledge could be of two principal types: subjectivist (phenomenological) and objectivist (1977b/72: 3). The mode of knowledge referred to as *phenomenological* involved a process which 'sets out to make explicit the truth of primary experience'. While the objectivist mode 'constructs the objective relations . . . which structure practice and the representations of practice' (ibid.: 3), Bourdieu refers to the division between objectivism and subjectivism as 'the most fundamental [and] the most ruinous' of oppositions in the social sciences (1990c/80: 25). It was therefore also necessary to break from each of these oppositions and the opposition itself in order: 'to make possible a science of the *dialectical* relations between the objective structures to which the objectivist mode of knowledge gives access and the structured dispositions within which those structures are articulated and which tend to reproduce them' (1977b/72: 3). His own approach offered a synthesis of these two modes and aimed to go beyond them. It is constituted on the 'ontological complicity' (1982a: 47) of his *thinking tools: field and habitus*. The basis of this theory of practice is a dynamic understanding of *structure*, as generating both in terms of social forces and individual *dispositions* ('structured and structuring'). Bourdieu was at his most phenomenological when he wrote of the individual as a body situated in *fields*. Individual acts of perception (*noesis*) are made against a background of existing categories of thought (*noemata*) – after Husserl – incorporated in the body – after Merleau-Ponty. For Bourdieu, this view of knowledge could lead to a 'mentalism', a self-referential mechanism of thinking, or 'transcendental consciousness' (2000a/1997: 132 and 142) and so needed to be avoided. 'The body is in the world' he wrote, 'but the social world is in the body . . . the very structures

of the world are present in the structures that agents implement in order to understand it' (ibid.: 152). This statement echoes Pascal's own effort to move beyond subjectivism and objectivism: 'By space the universe comprehends and swallows me up like an atom; by thought I comprehend the world' (ibid.: 130).

Bourdieu reasoned that material inclusion in space and time involved the incorporation of dispositional structures – anticipations, expectations, assumptions – as a means of self and other control within this space. He anticipated criticism: 'The questioning of objectivism is liable to be understood at first as a rehabilitation of subjectivism and to be merged with the critique that naive humanism levels at scientific objectification in the name of "lived experience" and the rights of "subjectivity"' (1977b/72: 4). However, it is absolutely essential if we are to free ourselves of the mistakes of the past and 'to escape from the ritual either/or choice between objectivism and subjectivism' (ibid.). Bourdieu's way of doing this was expressed in terms of a playing back and forth between *habitus* and *field*.

Nevertheless, for Bourdieu any theoretical view of the world, by the specialist or non-specialist, involved a symbolic assertion of truth in the struggle for *legitimation*; that is for recognition of authenticity. Any theory of knowledge was therefore both ontological and political, since it represented a particular worldview or, *raison d'être*, and the latent *interests* present there. What Bourdieu's theory of practice is attempting to do is to look at the logic of these 'points of view' in terms of the epistemological complementarity of objective structures and cognitive structures, but to do so in a way which applied the same epistemological approach to the researcher/philosopher as to the researched/theory of knowledge. It is one thing to make sense of practical action and knowledge in this way, it is another to make sense of *this* making of sense:

One has to look into the object constructed by science (the social space or the *field*) to find the social conditions of possibility of the subject (*researcher*) and of his work in constructing the object (including *skholé* and the whole heritage of problems, concepts, methods, etc.) and so to bring to light the social limits of his act of objectivism . . . By turning the instruments of knowledge that they produce against themselves, and especially against the social universes in which they produce them, they equip themselves with the means of at least partially escaping from the economic and social determinisms that they reveal. (2000a/1997: 120–1)

In other words, it was necessary to take the social conditions of objectifying thought into account in order to have the possibility of gaining freedom from them. The way to do this is through *reflexivity* which had a particular character for Bourdieu. It was not, for example, a simple awareness of socio-historical context,

as encouraged in most ethnographic research (ibid.: 183). Nor was it the self-referential and self-conscious habit of reflecting on the constructs used in referring to a topic (2001c: 176). He argued that this was pushed to an extreme in certain postmodernist approaches where the researcher becomes the object of the research rather than the thing itself (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1989d: 35).

In order to free our thinking of the implicit, it is not sufficient to perform the return of thought onto itself that is commonly associated with the idea of reflexivity; and only the illusion of the omnipotence of thought could lead one to believe that the most radical doubt is capable of suspending the presuppositions, linked to our various affiliations, memberships, implications, that we engage in our thoughts . . . the most effective reflection is the one that consists in objectifying the subject of objectification. I mean by that, the one that dispossesses the knowing subject of the privilege it normally grants itself [and] to bring to light the presuppositions it owes to its inclusion in the order of knowledge. (2000a/1997: 10)

For Bourdieu, objectivist or scholastic knowledge was formed in *field* contexts which shaped and influenced what it could express and how to express this. Indeed, it was a fallacy to believe otherwise; to take '*field* knowledge' as the 'truth'. This bias had three principal forms: the position of those in the social space; the orthodoxies of the field; and the simple fact of having 'free time, liberated from the exigencies to act in the world' (ibid.: 10). The only way of limiting the effects of what was a fallacy in its extreme form, was to apply an epistemological critique to this knowledge in the same terms as those which gave rise to this knowledge in the first place: 'I cannot comprehend this practical comprehension unless I comprehend both what distinctively defines it, as opposed to conscious, intellectual comprehension, and also the conditions (linked to the positions in social space) of these two forms of comprehension' (p. 130). And, in case this should again suggest an extreme state of personal self-referential introspection, the same applies to attempts to grasp the practical knowledge of others: the need to understand the conditions of those attempts which actually sets the limits on what is 'thinkable and unthinkable'.

For scholarly or academic knowledge, the way to avoid such a fallacy was first to operate an *objectivation* of the object of study: why it was chosen and what brought it about. This objectification was particularly important where State sponsorship of research funding influenced outcomes. Secondly, there was the need to position the particular terms of the discipline used in the research; how the object of research was constructed and the limits of the terms employed. This objectification also implied an 'epistemological reading' of research. Rather than 'crush one's rivals' through an alternative paradigmatic position, there was

the need to read it in its own terms or contest those terms with alternatives. In other words, the responsibility rested with the reader as much as the writer to objectify the processes of objectification and in so doing objectify themselves. Finally, as above, there was the recognition of *skholé*, or leisure, inherent in scholastic *fields*, and its effect in terms of separating out practical from theoretical knowledge. Only, the latter is produced in the academic space which infuses it with the symbolic values and, thus, structures and dispositions dominant within that space. This further leads to a *misrecognition* of such knowledge and its functional role.

Reflexivity, on the other hand, involves the use of *habitus* and *field* in the process of academic discourse. It amounts to the use of *habitus* and *field*, not only in analysing a particular context, but in analysing the construction of the analysis as it is occurs. Bourdieu's approach, and the language represented by it, are themselves products of a certain position in the academic space which needs to be understood in terms of the socio-historical structure of his academic field at a particular time. This awareness permeates Bourdieu's work. However, he formulated it explicitly in his references to a search for a 'realist third way' (2001c: 200). As referred to above, this way was characterized by opposition to philosophy; both in its traditional, 'aristocratic' form with the imperial grip it held on the academic world, and, in its postmodern offshoots. He admitted to a certain resentment when Althusser referred to the 'so-called social sciences', and Foucault put social sciences down as a 'lower-order knowledge' (p. 201). Bourdieu claimed that his way attempted to integrate the 'objectivity' of statistics within a European tradition of 'subjectivity'; most noticeably in recombining Weber and Durkheim, purged of their appropriation by American sociologists, as well as their reinterpretations by the likes of Parsons, Aron, Schutz and phenomenology. Perhaps most importantly, this 'third way' sought to reinstate a Marxist philosophy of action, freed of nineteenth-century political rhetoric and the ideological propaganda of communism – with which many intellectuals conspired. What this approach represented, in effect, was a philosophical sociology which itself contributed a sociology of philosophy in order to take that discipline beyond its institutional limits.

Bourdieu's 'third way' might be seen as going beyond theory and practice because it is a theory *of* practice. It attempts to synthesize subjectivity and objectivity because it uses reflexivity as a way of purging the 'objectified' of subjective dispositions, constituted within *fields*, by applying the same phenomenological structuralism to both the process of knowledge formation and its product. It is clear that Bourdieu was constantly trying to keep this dynamic in the language of his theory of practice. Terms such as *habitus* and *field* are used as the instruments of analysis which stabilize language, recognizing its relativity, while using it to ground objectifiable statements but preserve the potential for generalizability.

The worst misunderstanding to make of these terms would be to see them as rule-driven or reducible to static features of practical action. In contrast, Bourdieu wrote that: 'the perfect coincidence of practical schemes and objective structures is only possible in the particular case in which the schemes applied to the world are the product of the world' (2000a/1997: 147). Mostly, the interplay between *habitus* and *field* is not perfect. Individual *habitus* acts according to the practical 'immanent necessity', or logic, of the *fields* in which it finds itself: '*habitus* as a system of dispositions to be and to do is potentiality, a desire *to be* which, in a certain way, seeks to create the conditions of its fulfilment, and therefore most favourable to what it is' (ibid.: 150). Similarly, *fields* are constantly changing and evolving, so that how individuals and groups act within them always remains at the level of 'probability' rather than perfect fit. This statement itself suggests an expectation of hard objectivity, or relative subjectivity which risks losing the sense of Bourdieu's '*reflexive objectivity*'. So, what is the status of such knowledge? Clearly, it is not 'science', as open to Popperian falsification. Neither is it post-modern. What it does offer is a way of seeing the world, of explanation, and self-explanation *up to a limit* but with an awareness of that limit.

EVERYONE'S PHILOSOPHY

This chapter so far has discussed Bourdieu's theory of knowledge and how it grew out of a critique of philosophy while seeking a philosophical approach to a science of knowledge and practice. The resultant approach was constructivist, but social and philosophical. Here, the social is taken as philosophical. His main argument against philosophy was that its practitioners did not take it philosophically enough. While this position is pertinent to those within academic *fields*, it is clear that Bourdieu, throughout his life but especially in the last couple of decades, increasingly argued that his work and its implications were available to the public at large. Indeed, it could provide tools which might act as 'arms in resistance' to the nefarious effects of the world around them. The next section of the chapter explores this dimension of his work: a perspective on the world which could be a kind of philosophical *raison d'être* for every one.

In Bourdieu's work, at least conceptually, the same theory of knowledge is applicable to knowledge *fields* (science) as to everyday knowledge, since both are constituted through an epistemology which is based around the 'ontological complicity' between *field* and *habitus*. However, clearly, the ramifications for those involved are very different. Underpinning every type of knowledge is an economism. Even if symbolically expressed, the ultimate source of power relations is economic, at least in terms of the structuring of late capitalism. Bourdieu always eschewed a purely Marxist approach, but much of his work was

predicated on class-based distinctions and gradations. If his later political interventions were in the name of resistance to the neo-liberal world, he was addressing all those who suffered as a result of the conditions imposed by structures in this world. Such structures literally put people 'in their place'. He wrote of *hysteresis* (1978: 8) which we have seen is the structural displacements of individuals when *habitus conatus* (generative cognitive structures, schemes of thought, etc.) is out of step with *field nomos* (the ruling logic of practice). Much of *La Misère du monde* can be read as a portfolio of *hysteresis*, of life experiences which show up the way individuals' aspirations, expectations, actions and beliefs are often somehow out of line with the socio-structural environment, both public and private, which surrounds them. Chapter 5 discussed the way specific economic policies had led to the organization and administration of commercial and industrial practices which radically redefined work. New types of worker were created, with their own characteristic beliefs in the way things were and should be. New work practices, and the individuals operating in them, marginalized traditional operational norms and rendered certain attitudes obsolete. Similar discontinuities were present in education, the media, between ethnic groups, gender, age and geographical region. In many cases, these categories were embodied by single individuals. The implicit message would seem to be that, although the accounts in *La Misère du monde* are very diverse, they all represent aspects of the same practical logic rife in contemporary society. In this respect, each particular story is one facet of the actualization of a global economic philosophy, its socio-political ramifications, and the resultant *hysteresis* for everyday men and women.

Bourdieu argued that his own theory of practice – based on *habitus* and *field* – was equally applicable at the personal level, in terms of individual psychology, as it was in socio-economic contexts (2000a/1997: 160). For example, in *La Misère du monde* (pp. 507ff.) he quotes the example of the father-son relationship. In this case, *hysteresis* is expressed in the 'matrix of contradictions' experienced at an affective level by the son with respect to the relationship between school and his family. In effect, he is caught in a series of 'double binds', that is, called upon to satisfy contradictory demands. For Bourdieu, the more the son succeeds, the more he surpasses his father and, in effect, 'kills' him. He is thus guilty of betrayal if he succeeds. However, if he does not succeed, he is guilty of disappointing his father. In this case, the *habitus* is divided against itself. No wonder therefore that one way out is by rebelling, as a form of self-realization, for example when the son of the Socialist supporter joins the National Front, partly in an attempt to find reconciliation in an imaginary other unified group. In these cases, an implicit economism is present in the way individuals respond. Indeed, even such family occurrences as marriages, children leaving home, divorces and births take place at specific points in the social structure

which focus particular oppositional forces. Individuals have to know the logic and means of their situations in order to survive. It is no surprise, therefore, if some who occupy these positions are able to articulate the contradictions of their condition in a form of self-analysis which expresses them.

One cannot read these examples, and Bourdieu's theoretical explanations, without thinking of his own relationship with his parents. His father came from a very modest background and attained a modest professional position compared with the starry heights of Bourdieu-the-son. Bourdieu could almost be describing himself when he writes that structural misfits have a way of seeing the logic of the positions in which they find themselves. One thinks of Bourdieu's troubled relationship with school, and indeed, the academic world. In a way, the *nomos, illusio*, possibilities and impossibilities of a particular structural context, can be made manifest in a kind of sociology of the genesis of the dispositions which constitute *habitus*. The conclusion would seem to be that we all exist at a threshold between *recognition* and *misrecognition* of our structural lot: seeing *misrecognition* – *mauvaise foi* – in all that is present but that we do not know, in juxtaposition to *recognition* which is what we know and can know. In both cases, what we know or do not know is placed on a continuum between the highly personal and the highly collective. Bourdieu sums up:

Producing awareness of these mechanisms that make life painful, even unliveable, does not neutralise them; bringing contradictions to light does not resolve them. But, as sceptical as one may be about social efficacy of the sociological message, one has to acknowledge the effect it can have in allowing those who suffer to find out that their suffering can be imputed to social causes and thus to feel exonerated; and in making generally known the social origin, collectively hidden, of unhappiness in all its forms, including the most intimate, the most secret. (1999a/93: 629)

At one point, Bourdieu made the point that his sociology has a clinical function as a form of psychoanalysis (2000j: 19). He quotes the example of a woman teacher who features in *La Misère du monde*. 'I don't say she is cured, but she was very happy after the interviews . . . she had the feeling of having mastered what had happened to her'. He argued that his interview techniques might then be used in a form of 'socioanalysis' to help in schools, hospitals and companies in order to support people 'to make discoveries about themselves'. By extension, the bachelor peasant farmers in the Béarn in the 1950s might have been helped if they were able to understand the disjunction between their public and private situation, and how this was expressed in matrimonial strategies. Similarly, sons might better understand their fathers and fathers their sons if they could apprehend the structural forces acting on them and making them feel the way they

do towards each other. Indeed, one might even argue that Bourdieu began to apply the method more and more on himself, for example in his very last writings – *Esquisse pour une auto-analyse* (2004).

THEORIZING GENDER

This balance between the individual and society, and the extent to which the former can objectify their position, is nowhere more accented than in Bourdieu's discussion of *Masculine Domination* (2001a/1998). For Bourdieu, the 'androcentric' point of view which dominates in the world, was the product of a concordance between objective structures (*fields*) and cognitive structures (*habitus*). Everything follows from this understanding. Gender-based dispositions, physical appearance, even love itself are seen as social constructions. Therefore, there is the possibility to liberate oneself, if not transcend them. The means to this liberation, Bourdieu suggested, was his brand of sociology.

Specifically on gender, he argued that collective expectations impose subjective expectations, but androcentric dominance is maintained by the very manner by which these expectations are defined and actualized, in such a way that only one characterizing form is recognized:

To succeed completely in holding a position a woman would need to possess not only what is explicitly demanded by the job description but also a whole set of properties which male occupants normally bring to the job – physical stature, a voice, or dispositions such as aggressiveness, self-assurance, role distance, what is called natural authority, for which men have been tacitly trained and prepared for as men. (ibid.: 62)

Bourdieu writes that it is 'manly' dispositions and expectations which allow leaders in dictatorships to assassinate people, and then comments that the same violence is expressed symbolically when hatchet-men sack individuals in modern companies. He also argues that women's bodies are 'doubly determined': they are a personal physical object constructed according to androcentric demands, and then perceived and judged in these terms. The sexual 'gaze' is thus also a form of *symbolic violence*. Even love is defined as 'love of social destiny'. However, Bourdieu builds his case that masculine domination is partly advanced by the way women have imbibed androcentric values; in short, women's point of view is a product of masculine schemes of thought. The argument follows that in certain cases, because differentiated socialization disposes men to love the games of power, and women to love the men who play them, masculine domination is partly the charm of power, the seduction that possession of power exerts, as such,

on bodies whose drives and desires are themselves politically socialized. Masculine domination finds one of its strongest supports in the *misrecognition* which results from the application to the dominant of the categories engendered in the very relationship of the dominated. This can lead to an extreme form of *amor fati* for a woman: love of the dominant and his domination, a *libido dominantis* (desire for the dominant) which implies renunciation of a personal exercise of *libido dominandi* (the desire to dominate). Clearly, Bourdieu is here calling on Freudian concepts to explore the way sexual impulses may be socially determined but impact on affective choices. Women are implicated in their domination through a combination of social and affective forces leading to specific action and outcomes.

Bourdieu was therefore sceptical about change coming about through the feminist language of liberation, since it is often constructed in terms derived from a (linguistic) world of masculine domination, and therefore infused with it. Similarly, women who assert a universal form of feminism, or female distinction, were also criticized by Bourdieu for remaining in a form of essentialism (albeit gentle) (p. 62) because they ignore the 'historical relation of domination' which now goes beyond conscious control. This relation has been embedded in human consciousness by a collective process supported by social institutions such as the family, State, Education and Church. Such *symbolic violence* is resistant to conscious control because it is now automatic and deeply connected with individuals' dispositions – the way we act and the rationality we use to justify such actions. Women's liberation in terms of the 'raising of consciousness' is described by Bourdieu as an 'intellectualist' (recalling the above discussion on scientific *fields*) or 'scholastic fallacy', since it forgets 'the opacity and inertia that stem from the embedding of social structures in bodies' (p. 40). In effect, he argued that the traditional feminist struggles for parity within socio-political institutions did not go far enough: 'the best political movements produce bad science . . . and bad politics' (p. 114). What he called for instead was political action which took account of the effects of domination on both men and women, and the complicity between social and cognitive structures which maintained this domination. To free women, is to free men as well. He argued from a similar rationale as that offered to scientific *fields* in pursuit of 'universal truths', that 'an anamnesis' was required, a recalling to mind, in a way which was more than the examination of the constitution of individuals' unconscious. Rather: 'It applies to the phylogeny and ontogeny of an unconscious that is both collective and individual, the embodied mark of a collective history and an individual history which imposes on all agents, both men and women, a system of imperative presuppositions – of which ethnography constructs the potentially liberatory axiomatics' (p. 55). For Bourdieu, this alternative involved a 'radical transformation of social conditions, of production of the dispositions' (ibid.).

In other words, to develop durable changes, it was necessary to alter the pre-scient schemes of thought, not by themselves but by transforming the very conditions which produced them in the first place.

What is clear is that such a transformation, for Bourdieu, must be group-based. This was one of the generating principles behind Bourdieu's calls for a 'Social Movement States General', an 'Intellectual International' and 'European Unionism', as well as the many socio-political pressure groups with which he became involved. For Bourdieu, both the scientific *field* and social *fields* needed to be treated in terms of the same theory of knowledge construction. The implication is that both have the potential to establish 'universal truths' within them; except that for science that universality was epistemological, while for social *fields* it was more ethical and political. Nonetheless, both have an interest in the universal. The issue is then how to create the foundations of such 'universalism'.

Bourdieu argued that minority groups themselves are in a privileged position with respect to universalism. Simply by demanding the universal rights they were denied, they were in the service of the universal (p. 123). For example, he called for the recognition of homosexuals, with all that implied in terms of legal rights to support and status (1996d). Indeed, Bourdieu argued that homosexuals possessed perspectives from which everyone could gain (2001a/1998: 124). By extension of this argument, other social groups have perspectives on the world which might be used in establishing universal values. For example, in *La Misère de monde*, we encounter social categories which bare the brunt of neo-liberal economics. It is as if Bourdieu is arguing that, by being the focus of the contradictions in the actualization of this economic philosophy, its victims have a special insight and knowledge which can be mobilized in resistance to it and in the articulation of alternative universal values. This argument runs parallel to the Marxist notion of the revolutionary potential of workers in their *prise de conscience* of the actuality of their conditions and of action necessary to overthrow the systems which oppress them.

There is a danger here. Bourdieu was against what he sees as the hypocritical universalism of the State which he saw as a misrecognized form of *symbolic violence* employed to advantage the inequitable structure of society. He was calling for a 'labour of destruction and reconstruction' of its ethos and actions. However, he was concerned that one form of hypocritical universalism should not be simply substituted by universalizing another particular; in other words, replacing one set of privileges with another. This might be the socio-political fallacy which runs parallel to the scholastic fallacy of scientific *fields* in Bourdieu's epistemology. As noted earlier Bourdieu was in effect suspicious of universality, and the privileges it granted to those who argued in its terms (1998c/94: 135). At the same time, he saw that interest in the universal was a dynamic of progress, and a shared advantage in establishing the universal was a

motor for promoting it (ibid.: 59). Briefly, Bourdieu was looking to establish universal truths, values and knowledge without privilege, and to do this by opening up social categories which contribute to its foundation by making the necessary legal and epistemological resources available to them: 'working to universalize the conditions of access to universality' (ibid.: 137). But how to bring this about?

THE LANGUAGE OF THE UNIVERSAL

The answer to the question returns us to issues of language. On several occasions, when Bourdieu wrote or spoke about the universal, he drew attention to the language by which it is represented. For example, he argued that political *competence* (perhaps, alluding to the notions of Chomskyan linguistic *competence*, deep structures and generative grammar) might be measured in terms of the capacity to speak of the particular in universal terms. On socio-economic issues, this meant unemployment, redundancy, injustice, etc. For Bourdieu, words had political content, as demonstrated by Heidegger's philosophical language. Bourdieu had argued from this perspective much earlier in his career, for example, in interviews in *Le Monde* in 1977 (1977e). Words for him became a forum for combat, a site of contested knowledge, for seeking the rigour and truth which they hold. However, language was also hazardous for the misrecognitions it hid. 'What is the University, Church and State?' he asked (1982c), knowing that how anyone defines these can assert all sorts of consequent actions, since what was once only imagined had become real. Reason itself which Bourdieu saw as being a product of history, a gain which can be employed in the service of society, had been hijacked by those who act to assert and protect their interests:

those who shout with indignation against fanatical violence should return their rational critique against the imperialism of the universal and the fanaticism of reason, whose violence is just as implacable and impeccable (that of the quite formal rationality of the dominant economy, for example). (1995c: 2)

The language of this irrational rationality was clearly apparent in the modern economy: 'globalization', 'flexibility', 'governance', 'employability', 'underclass', 'exclusion', 'new economy', 'zero tolerance', 'communitarism', 'multiculturalism' (2000i: 6). Each of these terms slips into everyday language, but in a way which occludes the *symbolic violence* they imply in terms of the withdrawal of State support and the imposition of a culture of surveillance, accountability and consequent conformity. For Bourdieu, the State, and the State system it had erected,

should be understood as one of the great triumphs of human progress. Moreover, it is something that had been fought for and won. This belief explains Bourdieu's passionate resistance to those who would dismantle it in the name of neo-liberalism. The battle was fought in language terms. Bourdieu wished to oppose all these slippery uses of words with his own conceptual terms. In other words, *habitus* and *field*, and associate concepts, offered an alternative world-view because of the epistemology, and ultimately, the political ontology they implied.

When Bourdieu wrote of the scholastic *field*, he argued that 'universal objectivity' was established the more an individual could objectify their position in the social space which produced it and them (2001c: 174). The way for philosophers to do this was to bring the concepts of *habitus* and *field* to bear on themselves and their work as part of a process of reflexivity. Bourdieu implied that these same concepts could be used by individuals across society to objectify their position within the socio-political culture. By doing so, they would be able to articulate the reality of their position, purged of particularities, and, in so doing, contribute to the founding of universal values which might guide political action. However, such reflexivity was not simply a bolt-on, or an exercise of self-awareness undertaken at some stage. *Habitus* and *field* were not simply two analytical concepts, or thinking tools, brought to a particular topic, but are epistemological matrices lying at the generative root of the action of knowledge formation itself. Their use is dispositional and constitutive. In other words, they are ever-present in the process of scientific enquiry: 'sociologists need to convert reflexivity into a constitutive disposition of their *habitus*' (ibid.: 174). Bourdieu's theory of practice, as represented by its conceptual terms, was internalized to form a kind of mordant between *habitus* and *field* in a way in which neither individual cognitive structures and resultant dispositions, nor contextual forces, could act as determinants of thought and action. The suggestion would seem to be that just such a process is available to everyone, and that acquiring this world-view was exactly gaining access to universality. In this respect, Bourdieu's lifelong socio-political engagement, especially in the last couple of decades, could be understood precisely to be providing the tools for those who engage with him to gain access to 'reflexive objectivity' and 'universal truths'. Bourdieu's work, and his activity in disseminating, both within the scholastic world and in society at large, was precisely working to create the conditions for such an access. This is why he deemed it essential to offer these tools to the art students at Nîmes, so that they could go beyond the contingencies of the art market to define an 'objective' art, somehow liberated from *field* determinants, no matter how unorthodox. This call and these actions, and the epistemology that generated them, were the founding of a *realpolitik of reason* (1998c/94:139). At the same time, Bourdieu asserted that this exercise in promoting and defending the social conditions for such rational discourse could only occur in contexts in

which it was hotly contested. The struggle for sociological rationality, as defined by Bourdieu's approach, is therefore ultimately political as it offered (and still does offer) an alternative view of society in the name of the liberation of victims of *symbolic violence* present in our deepest dispositions, as well as in the *field* contexts which we enter and/or occupy.

It is almost as if Bourdieu is arguing that it is enough to use these terms, *habitus* and *field*, in order to engage in an emancipated way with the socio-political issues of the day. In confronting the very many problems of the modern world, Bourdieu often confessed that he saw catastrophe and disaster lurking behind each successive crisis, and in each of the areas covered in this book! It may appear that nothing can be done. Clearly, Bourdieu did act explicitly at a national and international level to argue the case for and against particular policies and the rationale on which they were based. He also argued that it is sometimes better to do a lot of little things 'because those little things generate changes that generate changes' (2000j: 19). He consequently urged that France, at least, should abandon notions of sweeping reforms – for example, of education – in favour of cultivating a culture of change. Gigantic changes often create more problems than they solve and can lead to reactionary backlashes. The alternative culture of change comes about through more people – academics, politicians and the public – understanding society and the way it works; in other words, adopting his sociology as a guiding discipline in effecting change. The implication is that the theoretical tools he provided would allow for considerable insight which could well impact directly on national and global policy. However, it is perhaps at the level of the individual that world-vision and *raison d'être* had the most potential to be fashioned by Bourdieu's epistemology. The implication is that if enough people do this within a particular *field* (or several), then the structure of the *field* changes and with it the subsequent constituent *habitus*.

RAISON D'ÊTRE

What is the practical rationale of this way of being? Bourdieu's philosophy is an attempt to found knowledge in a way of being, based on a theory of practice. This theory allows one to see beyond the *misrecognitions*, *hysteresis* and *symbolic violence* of the modern world. Yet, it does not do so by constituting a philosophy of transcendence, as in the case of Heidegger, nor a science of infinite relativity, as in the case of postmodernism. Bourdieu was sceptical (in a true Pascalian way) of any notion of individual liberation, whether through notions of existential choice or personal reflexivity on the content of consciousness. He was also suspicious of language and the ways it can be used both to edify concepts, which he recognized in Marxist politics, and to render them vacuous, as for example, in

postmodern discourse. Here, we might group together such unlikely individuals as Margaret Thatcher ('There is no such thing as society' – a precursor to dismantling the notion of the 'Welfare State'), Karl Popper (a philosophy of falsification can lead to argumentation through linguistic assertion) and all those philosophers who argue for the 'de-centring' of the subject and the recursive deferral of meaning. This 'postmodern' mood was seen as highly dangerous by Bourdieu, as it destroyed many of the rational gains of the modern world. For him, such notions of *rationality*, *truth*, *universal values*, as well as social institutions such as the *State*, *Social Security* and *individual rights* were hard won through the progress of the contemporary world. He therefore reacted strongly when he saw them under threat through the formation of a culture based on accountability, intimidation and the withdrawal of collective support for the individual. He saw that individual rights and the protection of individuals had been undermined by the withdrawal of group identities. Such rights and protection had contributed to the advancement of the universal, their removal lead to the creation of an obedient, subjugated mass. This is why he insisted that reflexivity must be rooted in communal group life, as ultimately what was objective, true and universal was the product of relativity, of a consensus, generalized and sanctioned within the collectivity. The way to avoid such knowledge formation falling into bad faith was the use of the reflexive sociology he was advocating through application of his theory of practice and associated tools.

Bourdieu was aware that we pass most of our lives acting on impulses according to particular points of view. Such impulses are, of course, complex and ultimately include our individual psychological features. He made the point (2001d: 53) that it was not his business to examine the stuff of psychology but rather how the 'social world channels, orientates, manipulates, constitutes and institutes these impulses, working them and transforming them'. These impulses – *libidos* – are socially formed and therefore the product of personal and public historical contexts. Moreover, he wrote of their various forms and how one relates to another. For example, he saw the masculine disposition as the product of upbringing and the 'collective expectations' exerted on the male child (2001a/1998: 56). In this way, he argued that boys and men form a *libido dominandi*, a predisposition to have to dominate in social situations. Bourdieu also argued that even scientific knowledge is itself often the product of this disposition to compete and win which 'may find sublimated expression in the "purest" forms of the social libido, such as *libido sciendi*' (ibid.). In this case, sociology is very close to psychology, and can act in a process of self-analysis in a therapeutic way. Bourdieu's own life is a case in point.

He wrote that his theory of practice often allowed him to refine his professional tools and insight. For example, before writing *Homo academicus*, he stated that he held philosophy to be sovereign (2001d: 40). Having 'objectified' this

attitude, he was able to see if it affected his scientific practice: 'that allowed me to convert an impulse, a pleasure, a *libido*, because there are *social libidos* . . . into a scientific impulse' (ibid.).

For Bourdieu, there were (at least) two personal generative dispositions: first, the 'empirical' subject, product of social upbringing and trajectories (empirical *habitus*); secondly, the 'scientific' subject, constituted in the process of professional development. Both subjects still need to be understood in terms of *habitus*, as structured and structuring principles generative of thought and action. However, one is naive and prone to spontaneous reaction according to background, while the other has means at its disposal to objectify personal impulses in terms of their social provenance and, in so doing, render them less reactive. In this way, the professional (sociological) subject can break free of their own social formation:

The scientific *habitus* can be autonomous in relation to the *habitus*. When I go to a meeting, I am like everyone; I am nervous, I am angry, etc. . . . like everyone. When I analyse that, I put in place a *habitus* which objectifies all that which understands why the empirical Bourdieu is angry. In life, one again becomes the empirical subject. But, it is possible to create a sort of subject torn away from social forces. (1995b: 29)

As noted above, for Bourdieu, the way to do this was collective. If the work itself is personal and individual, it is carried out in terms established by the collectivity, in this case sociology:

It is possible by work, by collective checking. In fact, this subject is a collective subject; not an individual subject. The subject has so much more chance of being autonomous the more they are collective, that is they accumulate what has been acquired by the *field*, techniques, methods, concepts. The more they are collective and reflexive, the more they are separated from the empirical subject. (ibid.)

If Bourdieu argued that there was a need to root his approach in collective work, it is because he wished to avoid a politics of social assertion. Nevertheless, towards the end of his life, he returned again to this notion of the individual being a source of 'objective' knowledge which contributes to the universal. For example, he had argued in the case of homosexuals that they could put at the service of the universal that which distinguished them from other stigmatized groups (2001a/1998: 124). In addressing academic researchers, he spoke counter to the orthodox view that some sort of 'trans-historical, objective knowledge' was available, access to which was only available if those involved in scientific enquiry were

as neutral as possible (2000l: 7). On the contrary, he argued that the researcher must mobilize their own experience, as: 'one knows the world better and better as one knows oneself better, scientific knowledge and knowledge of oneself and one's own social unconscious advance hand in hand, and that primary experience transformed by scientific practice transforms scientific practice and vice versa' (ibid.: 9). Bourdieu finally quotes from his own research in Algeria and the Béarn as examples where he was able to use a combination of sociology and ethnography – theory and practice – to objectify worlds in which he saw not only *symbolic violence* but the violence of his own ambivalent relationship to them (ibid.: 12) – which itself was a product of his upbringing, of being torn away from his provincial roots and thrust into the world of the academic high flyer. He wrote how this did not happen in a day – he took up his Béarn fieldwork on three separate occasions – but it was what lay behind his own 're-appropriation' of the practical relationship to the world which was so distinct from the then current trends of objectivist (structural) and subjectivist (phenomenological) thinking. We have seen how he claimed that the resultant third way amounted to a 'conversion of the whole person' which involved a process of self-analysis.

Bourdieu once again spoke in terms of the notion of 'auto-socio-analysis' in his final retirement lecture given at the Collège de France in February 2001, and the posthumous book – *Outline for Self-analysis* (2004). Here, he asserts that his sociology should be understood as an objectification, in sociological terms, of forces acting on an individual leading to an articulation of objective processes which concern everyone. The resultant knowledge is distinct from that of his philosophical generation – Derrida, Deleuze, Foucault – from the extreme relativity of historicism and so-called 'popular postmodernism'. Bourdieu rather argued that his approach represented an attachment to rationalism, and that he was someone 'dedicated to the proof' (Weill 2001). The political consequences of this positioning were not lost on Bourdieu, and the balance he sought to strike between 'aristocratism' (inherent in his elite position within the intellectual, academic field) and 'populism' (with reference to his increasingly vocal appeal for collective action in the world). In an earlier interview (1992a: 235ff.), Bourdieu had spoken of the 'radical doubt' which characterizes his approach to knowing. On the one hand, he was suspicious of the appearances of necessity and objectivity so apparent in the social and physical sciences. At the same time, he was sceptical about the language used to assert truths without acknowledging the social constructions inherent in their very terms. On the other hand, he argued for a reflexive mode which is both the product and process of a way of being. To term this position 'radical doubt' is to emphasize the contingent, rather than the tentative character of what it is *to know* in this way and how it is *to be*. Clearly, this was a *raison d'être* in which, he argued, we could all share, but its equally radical nature underlined the political implications and consequences, both public

and private, of this stance. No surprise, therefore, if it has not always been welcomed! Nonetheless, Bourdieu lived and argued for this *raison d'être* politically and philosophically:

Science can have nothing to do with the totalising excess of a dogmatic rationality, at one extreme, or with the aesthete's resignation to nihilistic irrationality, at the other. It is content with partial and temporary truths that can conquer against the common perception and the intellectual *doxa*, truths able to secure the only rational means for using the margin of manoeuvre left to liberty, that is political action. (1999a/93: 629)

Conclusion

PIERRE BOURDIEU – AGENT PROVOCATEUR

I wrote in the Introduction that the subtitle of this book refers to the way Bourdieu and his work set out to incite people to act. Of course, there is no sense of misdoing or illegality in such action; although possible punishment, symbolic and actual, is implied. The term *Agent Provocateur* is an excellent expression for a particular stance on the world. For Bourdieu, that world was personal and empirical. However, it was also academic and public. Lying behind these dimensions was a philosophy, a developing theory which sought to capture something of the dynamic of the practical aspects of living life in the second half of the twentieth century.

There is a spirit in Bourdieu's work, and his personality infuses everything he wrote. The texts and the language are often dense and detailed. Individual sentences can be extremely long, contain many sub-clauses and allusions *en passant*. Sometimes, there are literary and philosophical analogies, or references and asides which might be targeting the Parisian intellectuals to whom they were primarily addressed. Statistical and ethnographic detail is also integrated throughout many of the texts. For a time, Bourdieu employed photographs and diagrams to support and illustrate his analyses. Complementary texts are also set aside in shaded boxes, the whole creating what he called a 'discursive montage'. Simply reading these texts is therefore a challenge. And, of course, the ideas were evolving all the time. It would be a mistake to take them as canonical texts 'set in stone'. Rather, they are best understood as 'work-in-progress'. Some of his ideas were clearly more advanced than others, some more empirically researched. He addressed different audiences which necessitated different narrative styles – some popular, some more intensely academic. The mood that permeates the range of this work, however, possesses a common spirit. At one point in this book, I described Bourdieu as a 'radical dissenter', and certainly there is a sentiment of outrage and refusal in much of his work: of the school verdict, of partisan theory, of media operations, of political inevitability and of the way the State mistreated its citizens. It is perhaps this spirit that finally communicated itself most strongly

to a general public, in France at least. At the time of his death in 2002, one daily newspaper announced that 'Bourdieu was dead' but then added the comment that 'it was not certain that he had recognized the fact yet!' In this black humour, there is something profound about his fierce independence and determination not to be ruled by social conventions and definitions. In May 2003, when public-sector strikes again gripped France, mass demonstrations converged on the Bastille, that symbolic centre of the French revolutionary spirit. Among the many demonstrators holding placards, one perched on the corner of the Bastille monument declared 'Remember Pierre Bourdieu'. This is a rather more touching tribute to and recognition of a man who had finally entered into the French collective mind as a political combatant on the side of the repressed, dominated and 'put-upon' in society. But, what does his heritage amount to?

Pierre Bourdieu was born at a pivotal point in the twentieth century. He was too young to be an existentialist, and the intellectual fervour of the 1930s could only have affected him in retrospect. We can only guess what war meant for an adolescent in the south-west corner of France. Adult life began for him when many of his generation were keen to put the past behind them and enter into the reconstruction both of France and Europe as a whole. In a sense, post-war Europe represented a new world. Bourdieu benefited from this spirit of renewal and progress. The expansion of education offered him opportunity of which he took advantage. Intellectual heavyweights around him – Sartre, Althusser, Lévi-Strauss, Aron – provided him with models to assimilate and kick against. Others inspired him. Yet, his own response to this intellectual ferment remains both original and fiercely independent. In the end, it is not unreasonable to speak of Bourdieu in the same breath as these others, as he did finally attain both the prestige and public recognition of his elder generation. However, in a way, Bourdieu also represented the last of this generation, a family son dying without an heir. After Bourdieu's retirement and death, the Chair of Sociology at the Collège de France was not filled. Sociology itself has moved on and no longer constitutes itself in the terms central to Bourdieu's own academic training. Modern academics and intellectuals simply do not think and act in that way. It is difficult to imagine a twenty-first-century intellectual figurehead not making full use of media and Internet networks. Appeals through the published page and by direct intervention are most probably a thing of the past. In this sense, with Bourdieu's death, a whole intellectual generation came to an end. It was, literally, 'the end of the world' as we then knew it.

A sense of the 'war of worlds', or at least clashing of cultures, permeates Bourdieu's work. Chapter 2 showed how the early work on Algeria might best be understood as the study of a society in transition. This transition was not benign and passive, but actively resulted in the displacement of individuals in time and space. External intervention, for its own ends, had overturned trad-

itional social structures. This disruption was physical, as local rural economies were destroyed and those pushed off the land drifted to the town, where they sought to redefine their social identities and their lives. However, it was also psychological. The very values and beliefs of one world were displaced by those from another. The resultant anomie, *hysteresis*, was experienced by many at a deeply personal level as part of the struggle to survive in a harsh new world. The postcolonial politics of Algeria are, of course, depressing, as they are in many African countries. One conclusion of Bourdieu's early analyses would suggest that the eventual outcomes of war were largely inevitable given the social forces unleashed by colonization.

The same clash of worlds can be seen in Bourdieu's study of his own home environment in the Béarn. There is an intense pity for the loneliness of the unmarried bachelors of the rural enclaves. It is as if the world has passed them by in the replacement of the old with the new. It is the point where old practice and strategies no longer work. In these circumstances, only those who catch on and move fast survive. For the rest, they are caught in a kind of state of suspended animation, frozen out and waiting for extinction. What was happening there was inevitable but raises questions about what could be done to help the transformation of lifestyles.

Both the Algerian and Béarn studies led to the conclusion that a more educated individual would be able to cope better with transferring personal and public positioning. The spirit of the times also suggested the need for a new kind of citizen, and that education could provide them. Chapter 3 addressed the two principal goals of education: the personal and the public. If the 'personal' was all about developing the individual personalities of citizens and their capacity to experience the quality of life as well as the richness of social life, the 'public' was more concerned with providing the skills and knowledge the economy needed. The former was a direct descendant of an educational philosophy of man which can be traced back to Rousseau and beyond and came to a head in the personalism of the 1930s and 1940s. The latter connected more directly with the French republican tradition of planning, given an extra spin by post-war economic regeneration. However, the same concerns applied to all countries at that time and were certainly as pertinent in Algeria as they were in France. We have seen the ambivalence of Bourdieu's position. While calling for a 'rational pedagogy' and asserting the need for an education for both private and public reasons, his sociological analyses gave rise to a more fatalistic view of the power of education to change the logic of social hierarchies. His early work on schooling and higher education suggested that these acted more as a mechanism by which social positioning was designated. His critique was twofold. First, he criticized the 'classical education' of the past which excluded the mass of the population in its aim to found a ruling elite. Secondly, the new vocational

education seemed to do little more than train the rest for less prestigious, albeit essential, jobs. It was still necessary to open up traditional scholastic structures and render them more democratic.

In the face of such conclusions, the notion of education as providing a source for personal transformation might be seen to be a mirage. Bourdieu's own trajectory stands in contrast to this. If social reproduction was effected through the *culture* of schooling, it is no surprise if Bourdieu should have also considered cultural experiences *per se*. Chapter 4 showed how the traditional view of aesthetic experience was turned on its head by Bourdieu. Rather than seeing art and culture as a source of personal enrichment, Bourdieu's early work in this area presented cultural consumption as another strategy employed by certain factions within society in order to assert their social distinction. This was apparent in the studies of museum attendance in the 1960s, and the general picture of 'good taste' published later in the 1970s.

Earlier in this book, I referred to Bourdieu as an 'iconoclast' and a 'whistle-blower' on what was going on in the name of postcolonial democracy, educational reform and cultural policy. I also wrote that 'no one thanks you for pointing out misrecognitions'. It is not in the interest of those who benefit from keeping these processes and products occluded to acknowledge them. In fact, the logic of Bourdieu's argument is that this is often not even done in a conscious way at all but as part of a class-based *mauvaise foi*. Still, there is an audacity in Bourdieu's 'revelations'. It is as if sociology provided for him the means to see these things, even if what was shown up was scarcely welcomed. At one point, he comments that: 'basically, the role of the sociologist is probably to say things that no one wishes to hear' (1994b). The question remains: what can be done about it? It might be questionable whether Bourdieu and his theory could have anything to say to solve the deep problems of an Algerian society apparently split and turned against both its government and people. We live in an age of global terrorism, fundamentalism and chronic political instability. Could sociology do anything about such a contemporary context? Clearly, Bourdieu's own direct interventions in the case of Algeria were more moves to alleviate the extremes of violence and to protect those most vulnerable. He acted to raise the profile of the problem and to present those in power with demands towards the formation of an infrastructure which could provide the conditions for a more peaceful solution.

In education too, policies of democratization and vocationalization had only resulted in an alienated scholastic population; disenchanted with qualifications which do not lead to good jobs, overcrowding and constant restrictions on choice and orientation. As we have seen, education was an area where Bourdieu was most closely involved through his membership of governmental committees for reform. What he came up with amounted to principles rather than

actual concrete proposals; although even here he would argue that this was more than most political reforms. The final outlook for education as a means of effecting change on the unequal structures of society is fatalistic about eventual outcomes and pessimistic about the transformative power of education at a personal level. Art and culture had similarly been captured by the market media where everything was subordinated to the search for profit. Bourdieu's critique of the media targeted the role it played in constructing public taste and opinion for commercial purposes. Still, he recognized that what was involved was greater than the individual. To this extent, Bourdieu was seeking to help individuals and groups to help themselves.

Bourdieu's personal background was one of personal achievement. Still, there is the picture presented in Chapter 1 of someone who kicked at the very system that formed him. On various occasions, he refers to feeling as an 'oblate' (1988a/84: xxvi) when in schooling, as if it was for him akin to being trained for religious observance. He further claims that his analysis of education, and presumably society as a whole, was fuelled by the need to 'gain rational mastery' over the feelings of disappointment he experienced when faced with loss of faith in the values and truths to which he had been destined. It is as if sociology is offered as a form of therapy. Personal transformation *is* personal, and change can lead to a poorer or worsening fit between the individual and the *fields* they are currently occupying. For Bourdieu, such transformation was possible in *field* terms because of the instability of *field* structures at the time he was working; initially, *field* reconstruction post-war, later *field* decline in the light of personal and political fragmentation and discontent. Bourdieu was able to succeed because his *habitus* changed in relation to these changes in the *field* structures.

Clearly, the world disappointed Bourdieu and his analyses sometimes seem to offer hope that things could be otherwise. However, in the last quarter of the twentieth century, a much more aggressive philosophy and world order came into being. Chapter 5 considered the contemporary world of neo-liberal economics. In many ways, the picture painted by Bourdieu is horrific. Old systems and structures are swept away in the path of the market logic. Individuals are marginalized or discarded. Those on the inside are crushed by the demands of management systems and work practices. The spirit of resistance that led Bourdieu to oppose the policies which produced such a society was fed by a refusal to accept that it was inevitable. That resistance was multi-dimensional. It railed against the actual world-view itself and the media which colluded in its construction. It attacked the systems of mutual support and advantage within government policies and international alliances. It is as if Bourdieu finally witnessed the coalescence of the dominating factions of the dominant into one coherent, integrated system of rule and subjugation. However, Bourdieu's resistance was not simply at a popular and political level. He also

engaged with economic theory which justified such political decisions. For him, economists had fallen foul of the scholastic fallacy of confusing 'the things of logic with the logic of things'. In other words, there was something unreal in the theoretical visions offered by economists, which may be logical in themselves but were a product of a *field* and particular mindset, and should be understood as such, not as a representation of reality.

The twentieth century gave rise to a philosophy of man which went beyond previous modernist notions of truth and progress. In the postmodernist world, such terms were liable to deconstruction and exposure as false premisses themselves. In a way, Bourdieu's academic life thrust him into the centre of the postmodernist universe, alongside its intellectual leaders – Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, Barthes. Indeed, there was a time when these writers were considered to be at the 'cutting-edge' of philosophy and radical politics. Even in the 1970s, Bourdieu was still considered as a 'conservative' sociologist, for his refusal to take on the political fashions of the day. However, for Bourdieu, postmodernism was extremely dangerous. It might be regarded as a 'computer virus': something that had got into intellectual thinking and ate away at some of its basic tenets. In the general thrust to sweep away modernist concepts of 'truth' and 'value', universal principles were also destroyed. Thus, such notions as equality, liberty and fraternity were undermined and seen as illusory. Bourdieu saw that their destruction would lead to a reactionary backlash, as the ideological vacuum was filled by old values and ways of doing things. In this way, what had been gained in the course of human development, for example, such notions as citizens' rights and the Welfare State, was destroyed. In other words, the philosophy of postmodernism acted, directly and indirectly, to provide the conditions for the unleashing of the unfettered market capitalism, with all that entailed in terms of the survival of the fittest.

Bourdieu's resistance to such philosophical, socio-political and economic trends struck an uneasy balance between the academic and the popular. The mass of his scholarly work continued to develop an epistemological attack on knowledge and the way it was used to misrepresent. However, he also took on a popular mantle in an attempt to provide ideas as 'arms of combat' for everyday men and women. His range of engagement called into question the role of the intellectual, what their responsibilities were and the means at their disposal for mobilizing action. As we have seen, Bourdieu eschewed the positions and roles in which intellectuals were placed. He fought against the type of figure Sartre had become in his life; an apologist for the actions of 'the party' and the articulator of the voice of 'the people'. Yet, he was also opposed to the modern media intellectual for the way they were taken in by the systems which produced them, and which they ultimately served. Nevertheless, Bourdieu did have recourse to modern communication systems in order to disseminate his ideas.

However, it was probably in networking that he saw the biggest hope for establishing a sustainable counter-attack on the postmodern world and its neo-liberal economics. It is therefore no surprise to see him leading in social groups and associations – students, trade unionists, writers and artists, journalists, immigrants, the homeless, homosexuals and feminists. This level of activity included the instigation and mobilization of European movements with the aim of creating a veritable internationalist network of protest/counter-attack.

In keeping with the postmodernist world, Bourdieu's own alternatives seem to revolve around conceptual questions involving their expression in language. He challenged the language of imposition and imposture, passed off and justified in terms of liberation, rights and independence. He took issue with the very language of popular and academic discourses. Language was the medium of *misrecognition* and misrepresentation. However, it could also provide the foundation of a truly liberated way of being. In his discussion of the scholarly and scientific *field*, Bourdieu asserts that the value of their product, their 'science', was defined by the degree of autonomy they possessed. In other words, the conditions of objectivity were most likely to be increased by the degree to which a knowledge *field* was freed from external influence. It is perhaps difficult to imagine how it could be possible for a sector such as pharmaceuticals to operate without the financial support of governments and drug companies. But, Bourdieu seems to be suggesting that their claims to objective science would be that much greater if they did. His is a double-edged critique, however. At the same time as calling for greater autonomy in knowledge *fields*, Bourdieu is highly critical of those who do possess a high degree of independence for what they do with it. This criticism is based on the charge that once gained, those within the *field* are not sufficiently reflexive about its structure and practice which leads to professional bias in terms of the *interests* of the *field* itself rather than its substantive aims. For Bourdieu, only such reflexivity could provide the final edge to establishing a scientific discourse. Here, it is worth recalling that for Bourdieu 'science' is best understood as 'knowledge'.

Chapter 7 set out what constituted this reflexivity. Expressed most briefly, it entailed the replacement of one set of language terms with another, or at least the qualification of one by another. If the language of a *field* was its product in terms of its structure and all the inherent bias and prejudices it entailed, Bourdieu urged the use of his own thinking tools – *habitus*, *field*, *capital*, etc. – in order to open up the limits of the objectivity of the *field* as it is so defined. At this point, Bourdieu's critique becomes most epistemological because what is at stake is the very process of knowledge formation itself, with all that involves in terms of subsequent actions. In Chapter 7, I suggested that these tools should not be understood as bolt-on things that are brought to an area of enquiry, rather what Bourdieu seems to be suggesting is that they are

internalized in a way so that they become an integral part of the individual's cognitive systems. I wrote that in this way they act as a kind of epistemological *mordant* that fixes to individual *habitus*, and through which external *field* knowledge is filtered. When this happens, Bourdieu seems to be arguing, a new dynamic way of 'knowing' and 'being' is realized. In this case, it is not a question of being reflexive or not. An individual formed by this theory of practice is *ipso facto* reflexive.

Once this happens, the raw material of social thought and action is reconstituted through this reflexive matrix. Central to this process is a personal historicization of an individual's own *habitus*, and thus biography, as part of thought and action. Bourdieu increasingly showed how this worked in operation in terms of his own case. For example, he set out the intellectual climate which formed him as a way of explaining how he came to think as he did (2001c: 184ff.). Furthermore, in addressing would-be researchers and academics (2000l: 8) he contrasted his own method with conventional approaches. Most science, he wrote, is predicated on the fact that the researcher removes themselves from the object of study in order to avoid their personal prejudices. Of course, from what I have written above, it is clear that Bourdieu saw this as an impossibility. More than this, however, we have seen that he finally argued that researchers should constantly refer to their own experiences and avoid depriving themselves of this valuable scientific resource; namely, 'social experience previously subjected to sociological critique'. Bourdieu showed how his own life experience in the Béarn provided him with the resources to understand Algeria better. These were two different worlds, but the deep generating structures were similar.

This sort of argument goes beyond the academic world of scholarly knowledge, since it is presented as a means of knowing oneself and the world as a product of each other. Bourdieu argues that this method is a necessity for both scientists and philosophers. However, as Chapter 7 pointed out, finally it is a method which is available and accessible to everyone. In this way, sociology, or at least Bourdieu's brand of it, is offered as a way of understanding oneself and the world better – *Homo sociologicus*! But this way of knowing and being, this *raison d'être*, involves not simply an acquired know-how, but a total transformation of internal cognitive structures, what was termed a *metanoia* (1992a: 251). In this way, one's whole outlook on the world is changed, there is a conversion of one's thinking and doing. It might not be too much to say that a 'new person' is produced.

In a posthumous publication, Bourdieu writes more of his work and its context, insisting that by doing so what he is offering is not a biography but rather a 'self-analysis' (2004: 141). Bourdieu was born in a modest social milieu, and lived to engage with the most pressing issues of the twentieth century. That his

own life experience was problematic somehow mirrored the difficulties he encountered in the world which surrounded him. There is then, for Bourdieu, something both very personal and private about his work. In a way, by identifying with the subjects he studied, it seems as if Bourdieu was identifying with himself to understand the world that formed him better and, by implication, to gain some freedom from it. Sartre was a philosopher who through his writings, plays and theatre ended up addressing not only philosophers but the world at large. Post-war existentialism provided a way of 'being' for an entire generation. In the end, it is as if Bourdieu was attempting to do likewise – but offering sociology in place of existentialism. He did not have drama and literature at his disposal. He did however have a theory of practice and a social position from which he could present it to the world. He always seemed to hold a love-hate relationship with Sartre. While their two outlooks, both public and academic, were very different, there was the same ambition to engage with the world in a way which is direct to individual men and women and inherently socio-political. Ultimately, it is not simply individual lives that are open to transformation but *through* them the socio-political structures which impact *on* them.

In a way, much of Bourdieu's philosophy resonates with existentialism, in spirit at least. Man is conceived as an embodied being with thoughts and feelings. These three act together and in opposition when faced with a social world which has formed them and continues to challenge them. Bourdieu's reflexive sociology is offered as a method which allows for individual objectification through a process of self-observation. But, it is an observation that is both biographical and historical, involving conceptual tools – *habitus*, *field*, etc. – which act as a kind of epistemological structural mirror which can be held up not only to the individual but to the world as a whole. The fact that the resultant knowledge can reveal what is concealed makes it revelatory and transformatory. However, it is not simply at the level of personal psychologies that the method is targeted. Finally, what is challenged are the very social forces which constitute individuals and act to imprison them in their social provenance and trajectory. At one point, Bourdieu connects the rites of institution which society sanctions, and which confer legitimacy on individuals as an act of consecration and legitimation, with the authority of the State (2000a/1997: 245). He then argues that the State needs to be understood as the 'realization of God on earth'. By this connection, he quotes Durkheim: 'society is God'. Faced with this allegiance, Bourdieu refers to sociology as 'a kind of theology of the last instance', charged with the 'absolute power of truth-telling'. In a postmodern age, with its philosophy of arbitrariness and decentred meaning, it is of course highly dangerous to talk or write about 'truth'. For Bourdieu, too, any knowledge can only ever be relative and contingent. This is the sense behind his notion of *radical doubt*.

But, Bourdieu has little doubt that *misrecognitions* rule in the contemporary world and it is the business of sociology to reveal them.

There is then, for Bourdieu, a greater 'truth' than both 'common sense' or 'scholastic knowledge'. At various points in his writings Bourdieu writes about this truth. It is for him a creation of history (2001d: 48). In this respect, it was something that humanity had produced in the course of its development and progress (a modernist concept!), just as his own sociology was a product of the growth of knowledge. However, he quotes Spinoza that: 'there is no intrinsic power in truth' (2001b: 40). If truth was, therefore, a universal gift to mankind, it was also fragile and had to be protected from those who would threaten it for their own gains. Bourdieu finally argued (2002c: 325) that it was necessary to work to provide 'the truth': to teach, to speak, to write it and to come together collectively in order to give 'social power to truth'. This is a socio-political call:

We should seek the truth without hesitation; and if we refuse it, we show that we value the esteem of men more than the search for truth. (2000a/1997: 239)

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The bibliography gives details of all the references cited in the book. In order to aid an English-speaking reader, I have used English translations of Bourdieu's works wherever possible. These are cited and listed below with two dates: the first refers to the English publication; the second to the French publication. Occasionally, the French publication is a reprint of an earlier work. In these cases, I have given the original publication as a third date. Bourdieu always argued that his work should be read in terms of its 'socio-genesis'; namely, the context in which it appeared. I therefore feel it is important to make details of time of publication as explicit as possible. Where the reference is cited in French only, the translation in the text is my own.

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