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# The Routledge Companion to Bourdieu's *Distinction*

Edited by
Philippe Coulangeon and Julien Duval

Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change

ROUTLEDGE

# The Routledge Companion to Bourdieu's *Distinction*

This edited collection explores the genesis of Bourdieu's classical book *Distinction* and its international career in contemporary social sciences. It includes contributions by sociologists from diverse countries who question the theoretical legacy of this book in various fields and national contexts. Invited authors review and exemplify current controversies concerning the theses promoted in *Distinction* in the sociology of culture, lifestyles, social classes and stratification, with specific attention to the emerging forms of cultural capital, and the logics of distinction that occur in relation to material consumption or bodily practices.

They also illustrate empirically the theoretical contribution of *Distinction* in relation to such notions as field or *habitus*, with a particular focus on the emerging area of '*Distinction* studies' and the opportunities offered by geometrical data analysis of social spaces.

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2015
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*



*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*
The Routledge companion to Bourdieu's Distinction/edited by
Philippe Coulangeon and Julien Duval.
pages cm
1. Bourdieu, Pierre, 1930-2002. 2. Sociology–France–History.
3. Sociology–Methodology. 4. Social sciences–Research–
Methodology. I. Coulangeon, Philippe. II. Duval, Julien.
HM479.B68R68 2014
301.0944–dc23
2014010071

ISBN: 978-0-415-72727-3 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-85253-9 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo
by Cenveo Publisher Services

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# 1
# Introduction

*Philippe Coulangeon and Julien Duval*

Of all Pierre Bourdieu's books, *Distinction*, first published in French in 1979 and translated into English in 1984, remains the most frequently cited work to date.[1] In 1998, *Distinction* ranked sixth in the top 10 most influential sociology books according to International Sociological Association members, alongside books by Max Weber, Robert K. Merton, C. Wright Mills, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman, among others. Conceived as a synthesis of earlier research on cultural consumption and social classes, *Distinction* holds a special place in Bourdieu's work: '[it] is to Pierre Bourdieu what *Suicide* was to Emile Durkheim: what Francis Bacon calls an *experimentum crisis*, a "critical experiment" designed to demonstrate, first, the generic potency of the sociological method […] and, second, the fecundity of a distinctive theoretical schema' (Wacquant, 2001: 114).

Nevertheless, the international fate of the book is surprising, if not paradoxical. Although it is indeed 'very French', as Bourdieu himself noted in the preface of the English-language edition of the book, *Distinction* rapidly reached an international audience. While it relied on a very detailed investigation of cultural taste and lifestyles in France in the 1960s and 1970s, the book is also very complex in its writing and composition, mixing sophisticated analyses, both quantitative and qualitative, with intricate and demanding theoretical considerations. As pointed out in its subtitle ('A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste'), the book promotes a sociological alternative to Kantian aesthetics. But the book cannot be reduced to its contribution to cultural sociology alone. Rather, *Distinction* is today seen as a magnum opus of sociology as a whole that also notably deals with politics and philosophy, challenging traditional conceptions of class and social stratification and promoting innovative concepts, such as social space, fields and distinction.

The aim of the present volume is twofold. First, to provide today's readers of *Distinction* with some contextual elements about the book's genesis and trajectory.

Second, to give an overview of the very active and diverse research areas that still draw on *Distinction*'s legacy, both in France and abroad.

## The French career of *Distinction*

The genesis of *Distinction* and its reception in France cannot be understood without a brief overview of Bourdieu's trajectory. During the postwar period, the main cleavage between French sociologists was between Marxists and those who imported the empirical sociology theories developed in the United States by Paul Lazarsfeld's entourage. Bourdieu was never a Marxist, nor was he a truly empirical sociologist like Lazarsfeld's followers, partly because he initially trained as a philosopher.[2] He came to sociology via anthropology. His first empirical studies were conducted in Algeria between 1958 and 1960, and were more influenced by Lévi-Strauss than by the French sociologists of the time. He actually turned to sociology when he came back to France. Then he was recruited by Raymond Aron, who was very influential in French academia. In 1960, Aron founded the *Centre de sociologie européenne* (CSE) and Bourdieu became his assistant. Although their political views varied greatly, since Aron was a quite conservative intellectual, their collaboration played an important role in Bourdieu's career. Aron really valued the surveys Bourdieu conducted in Algeria, and was confident in Bourdieu's ability to successfully implement his project of an empirically grounded and theoretically guided sociology. Bourdieu rapidly became a prominent member of the CSE, and in 1964 Aron supported him when he was recruited by the *École pratique des hautes etudes* (EPHE), which subsequently became EHESS in 1975.

EPHE was a peculiar institution within the French higher education system. Much more research-oriented than other French universities, EPHE welcomed the most innovative and also atypical social scientists of that time. Some of them, like Bourdieu, did not hold a PhD. Based on a true multidisciplinary conception of social sciences, EPHE, at least in the 1960s and 1970s, was not strictly an academic institution, since most of its members often took part in public debate. Bourdieu's sociology, which has never been restricted to the academic sphere, is certainly in part a product of this institutional context. Most of his books, including *Distinction*, were published by *Les Éditions de Minuit*, a non-academic and politically committed publisher that was quite influential in literary and intellectual fields in the 1960s and 1970s.

In addition, at the time when he wrote *Distinction*, Bourdieu had already created his own research team at the CSE, similar (at least in some respects) to the group that Durkheim formed around *L'Année sociologique*, or the various research teams that Lazarsfeld created at his different institutes for applied research. This research team included people such as Jean-Claude Chamboredon, Luc Boltanski, Yvette Delsaut, Claude Grignon, Jean-Claude Passeron and Monique de Saint Martin. Some of them were former students of the *École normale supérieure*, where Bourdieu held a seminar for many years. Bourdieu had always worked with a diversified group of people with very different profiles and skills. In the 1960s, the group worked on accumulating data and conducting a great number of surveys. By the 1970s, however, the number of surveys declined and the team spent more time working on publication, primarily in French academic journals (such as *Revue française de sociologie*) and, from 1975, mainly in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*. This journal, founded by Bourdieu and directed by him until his death, played a central role in his work and in its diffusion, and published papers focusing on issues seldom investigated at that time. The journal included contributions by sociologists, anthropologists and historians, and experimented with innovative uses of non-conventional material, such as photographs, newspaper cuttings and even comic strips, which strayed far from the model of more conventional academic journals. Thus *Distinction* benefited from the formal experimentations seen in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*. Moreover, the first drafts of parts of the book were published in the journal in 1976.

All these elements explain the context in which *Distinction* was received in France, especially the fact that the book was not originally read only in academic circles. A few weeks after its publication, Bourdieu was invited to present *Distinction* on TV, and the book was extensively reviewed in several more mainstream magazines and newspapers such as *Le Nouvel Observateur* and *Le Monde*. In the academic field, *Distinction* was generally considered to be a significant book, but it was nonetheless 'the target of fierce criticism' (Bourdieu and Chartier, 2010: 8). Two reviews were published in 1980 in *Revue française de sociologie* (Gehin and Herpin, 1980). These reviews emphasized the book's importance, but minimized its originality and criticized some aspects of its empirical analyses. These reviews also blamed Bourdieu for not complying with academic standards. In particular, as has often been noted since, they pointed to the fact that some authors, such as Thorstein Veblen, Edmond Goblot and Maurice Halbwachs, who probably, although indirectly, had influenced Bourdieu when he was writing *Distinction*, were not mentioned in the book's index.[3] Finally, they also called into question the alleged sociological reductionism of a book in which artworks seemed to be exclusively considered from the socio-genetic point of view of their production and reception. This kind of criticism echoes the comments voiced regarding *Distinction* in public debate and the mainstream media, where *Distinction* has often been associated with a socially reductionist and relativist conception of art and culture, if not 'a distinguished form of crude Marxism' (Raynaud, 1980).[4]

More elaborate criticism, which often took the form of a partial refutation or recasting of some of the book's core hypotheses, appeared a few years later. In 1989, two former close associates of Bourdieu, Claude Grignon and Jean-Claude Passeron, published their book *Le savant et le populaire*, in which they explored what they considered to be bias toward legitimate culture in Bourdieu's approach to popular culture. In their view, *Distinction* was too exclusive in considering popular culture only in terms of its distance from dominant culture, and failed to properly appreciate its relative autonomy. This critique echoes some methodological comments made by Monique de Saint Martin in this volume regarding the empirical basis of Bourdieu's views on popular culture (see Chapter 2). But the acknowledgement of the popular culture autonomy does not mean that Grignon and Passeron deny the symbolic domination of popular culture. In the end, their book can be viewed as an attempt to combine Bourdieu's approach with the theoretical contribution of cultural studies. In fact, Passeron and Bourdieu himself contributed heavily in the 1970s to the introduction in France of authors such as Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson, Richard Hoggart and Paul Willis.

In another vein, the cultural studies tradition inspired in France a more radical criticism of *Distinction*, mainly anchored in the field of media studies. During recent years, several French scholars (Macé and Maigret, 2005; Glévarec and Pinet, 2012) have called into question the very notion of cultural legitimacy at a time when mass culture and media culture are muddying the boundaries between popular culture and high arts. The blurring of symbolic boundaries at work is strengthened, they argue, by the fact that these industries structurally stimulate diversity—no matter how fake this diversity may be—and continuously support the renewal of cultural norms and fashions. Finally, these authors claim that this process goes hand in hand with the declining power of the school, in which cultural norms increasingly compete with prescriptions of mass culture and the creative industries (Pasquier, 2005). However, the emergence of competing cultural norms is synonymous with neither their equal symbolic power nor the weakening of cultural domination. Those endorsing this critique do not therefore necessarily refute that social inequalities might encompass a cultural dimension, or even that class antagonism might to some extent be a matter of cultural dissymmetry. Their contention is rather that cultural domination, if it exists, is much more difficult to exert in a society where the prescribers of cultural norms are more plentiful than in a society where the dominant classes can quietly rely upon the cultural monopoly of the school, as was the case in France in the 1960s, when the raw empirical data for *Distinction* were collected.

In more recent years, Bernard Lahire's considerations on plural socialization have explored another important facet of *Distinction*'s legacy in France (Lahire, 2004, 2008, 2011 [1998]). Lahire questioned the concept of the *habitus* and its uses (see also Lahire's contribution in Chapter 8 of this volume). What Lahire particularly questioned was the postulated unity of *habitus*: during their life course, people generally experience a plurality of social and cultural environments that most often result in a set of heterogeneous dispositions. As a result, Lahire argued that people's practices, when considered across a wide variety of fields, are seldom as coherent as the concept of *habitus* suggests.

The plurality of dispositions as well as the fragmentation of *habitus* were acknowledged in some of Bourdieu's later works (see also Bennett, 2007). The plurality—and plasticity—of *habitus* can thus be viewed as a promising extension of Bourdieu's theses, rather than a refutation.

It should be noted that Bourdieu, and his closest fellow scholars at the CSE, took very little part in these debates. Since 1982, Bourdieu held a different position (he became a professor at the *Collège de France*) and his main writings dealt with a variety of topics such as academics, higher education, the State, the literary field, journalism and economics. He also published some theoretical and political books, and a collective survey entitled *The Weight of the World* (Bourdieu, 1999 [1993]). Of course, some of those works led him to reinvestigate certain aspects of *Distinction*. For instance, in his analyses of the fields of cultural production, he gave new insights into the concept of homology, understood as the correspondence between the space of cultural goods and the space of social positions. He also devoted several issues of his journal to sports, media and politics, which were already explored (albeit not in depth) in *Distinction*. However, he did not revisit his analysis of cultural practices, and hence *Distinction* should be considered his (perhaps involuntary) definitive contribution on this topic.

## International reception of the book

*Distinction* was received by the international community similarly to how it was received in France. After being translated into English by Richard Nice in 1984, it was soon translated into many other foreign languages and enjoyed great success in a number of countries (see Chapter 3 in this volume by Gisèle Sapiro). Initially, the book's release was most controversial in the Anglo-Saxon world. While some influential American scholars, such as Paul DiMaggio, appeared sympathetic to Bourdieu's thesis (DiMaggio and Useem, 1978; DiMaggio and Mohr, 1985), others, such as Michèle Lamont, challenged its relevance in the American context (Lamont and Lareau, 1988; Lamont, 1992). The central criticism of *Distinction* has to do with its alleged French idiosyncrasies. According to Michèle Lamont, the social power of culture in France has no equivalence in the United States, where elites do not demonstrate the same familiarity with high culture and fine arts as their French counterparts. Conversely, American elites display a greater familiarity with popular culture. These observations opened up further reflections on the eclecticism of tastes, popularised by Richard Peterson (Peterson and Simkus, 1992).Indeed, Peterson argued that a historical shift occurred in the social stratification of cultural consumption according to which 'not only are high-status Americans far more likely than others to consume the fine arts but […] they are also more likely to be involved in a wide range of low-status activities' (Peterson and Kern, 1996: 900). By contrast, low-status Americans would be characterized by a narrow range of low-status activities. Omnivorousness is thus defined as 'the appreciation of all distinctive leisure activities and creative forms along with the appreciation of classic fine arts' (Peterson, 1992: 252). Since the mid-1990s, Peterson's thesis has given rise to a number of empirical analyses, many of which have been published in *Poetics*, one of the leading academic journals in the field of cultural sociology. The aim of these analyses, mainly based on survey data, has been almost entirely to test whether this emerging paradigm really challenges Bourdieu's theory. On one hand, some argue that the omnivore/univore contrast does not necessarily preclude the highbrow/lowbrow divide, to the extent that it only highlights the fact that mixing highbrow and lowbrow is becoming, for those who maintain a privileged access to high culture, an emergent form of cultural distinction. Besides, Bourdieu himself mentioned the distinctive power of eclecticism (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]: 329). On the other hand, Peterson's argument might be considered as a real challenge to the homology thesis, understood as an isomorphic relation between the structure of aesthetic preferences and the class structure. But this quite substantialist understanding of the concept of homology is precisely at odds with the emphasis Bourdieu put on its relational understanding. Various chapters of this volume return to these issues.

However, both Lamont's criticism and Peterson's alternative theory have been subject to controversy in the United States and abroad. First, it has been argued that these critical readers of *Distinction* have often misleadingly interpreted it as an emulative theory of status, in which class hierarchies of tastes and cultural repertoires are anchored in an active status competition. But Bourdieu himself rejected this interpretation of his work, claiming that class differences and hierarchies in taste are unintended consequences of socially differentiated *habitus* and practices. In that sense, the fact that high culture and fine arts are less explicitly valued by the dominant classes in the American context than in the French does not mean that cultural capital is less efficient in the production and reproduction of social inequalities in the United States than it is in France. As underlined by Douglas B. Holt (1997), the structuring impact of cultural capital on social inequalities operates mainly through the unintended process of the self-selection of people sharing the same kind of tastes, values and habits.

According to a second counterargument, the differences observed across time and space in the objectified forms of cultural capital might conceal similar embodied forms (Holt, 1997; Atkinson, 2011).[5] In that respect, it may be that, formally, different forms of cultural resources—e.g. eclectic vs highbrow, univore vs lowbrow—express the same kind of embodied cultural capital which structures the way people act, consume, talk, etc., rather than what they do, consume and say. This brings to mind, for example, the structuring opposition between the 'taste for necessity' and the 'taste of liberty' emphasized by Bourdieu when he contrasted the aesthetics of the dominated and the aesthetics of the dominant. Thereby, beyond the changes and differences observed across time and space, *Distinction* would still provide a relevant sociological framework whose scope extends beyond the specifics of 1960s France.

More recently, Omar Lizardo and Sara Skiles extended this reasoning by reconceptualizing the notion of omnivorousness as a generic and transposable form of the aesthetic disposition, consistent with Bourdieu's original assumptions (Lizardo and Skiles, 2012). They first stated that the aesthetic disposition consists in two distinct capacities. On one hand, the ability to 'consider, in and for themselves, as form rather than function, not only [...] legitimate works of art, but everything in the world, including cultural objects which are not yet consecrated' (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]: 3); on the other, the capacity to 'constitute aesthetically objects that are ordinary or even "common"' (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]: 40). Their claim was therefore that 'possession of the capacity to consider form in isolation from function or content should result in a broadening of the potential number of objects that could be found to have aesthetic appeal' (Lizardo and Skiles, 2012: 268). Finally, many of the contemporary developments in the literature on omnivorousness do not add anything more than Bourdieu himself, when he spoke of 'the elective eclecticism of aesthetes who use the mixing of genres and the subversion of hierarchies as an opportunity to manifest their all-powerful aesthetic disposition' (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]: 329).

## *Distinction* and class theory

The international reception of *Distinction* has long focused strictly on its 'cultural' dimension, despite the fact that the book also deals with other fields of practice, such as sport, food, and even economics and politics, to which a full chapter is devoted. As a consequence, the continuing debate on the persisting relevance of Bourdieu's theory of aesthetics and cultural attitudes may somewhat conceal the book's broader aim: a great examination of social classes. In fact, *Distinction* is a stepping stone in a long-term rethinking of the problem of social classes. As early as the 1960s, Bourdieu criticized the great sociological traditions on this issue and tried to meld them into a unified (and relational) theory (Bourdieu, 1966, 1980).[6] This dimension of *Distinction*'s impact is thus manifest in a number of contemporary French ethnographic studies on working-class youth (Mauger, 2006) and the working classes as a whole (Schwartz, 1990; Beaud and Pialoux, 1999). The same holds true for some major studies on the French bourgeoisie (Pinçon-Charlot and Pinçon, 1989; Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot, 1997) as well as on the middle class (Cartier *et al.*, 2008; see also Chapter 5 in this volume).

But this aspect of *Distinction*'s legacy, which is often neglected by its most culture-oriented readers, is also hardly acknowledged in the field of class and social stratification theory. Bourdieu's views on the matter are not fully compatible with Marxist orthodoxy, in that class structure is not uniquely defined by the structuring of the relations of production, but rather by the structure of people's assets (economic capital, cultural capital and social capital). Even more elaborate neo-Marxist conceptions, such as that of Erik Olin Wright, fail to grasp this complexity and remain committed to the predominant role of the relations of production (Wright, 1997). In addition, Bourdieu also criticized Marxism for its objectivism, insisting that the representations of the social world (and, for instance, the very existence of classes) were an issue central to social struggles. Thereby, contrary to what has been often said (Alexander, 1995), Bourdieu cannot be seen as a 'neo-Marxist'.

Bourdieu's approach to the social classes may in fact be closer to Max Weber's conception, except that Weber purposely separated class and *Stand* (status), whereas Bourdieu conflated the two, as he argued in the preface to the English-language edition of the book (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]: XIII–XIV). On the contrary, recent criticisms of *Distinction* by Weberian class sociologists question precisely this conflation (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). More generally, in *Distinction*, Bourdieu criticized all status-based approaches to the social world, such as that of Lloyd Warner (Warner and Lunt, 1942) and those used in many studies on social mobility which, like all traditional one-dimensional conceptions of the social world, failed to analyse the transversal forms of mobility based on the conversion of one form of capital into another.

To a certain extent, the neo-Durkheimian approach to class backed by David Grusky could appear more sympathetic to Bourdieu, partly because both Bourdieu and Grusky support a realistic inductive conception of class rather than a strictly theoretically driven one (Grusky and Weeden, 2001). However, Grusky remains committed to a strictly categorical approach to stratification, while Bourdieu, with his concept of social space, intends precisely to go beyond the opposition between categorical and continuous approach to social stratification. Indeed, Bourdieu defends a deliberately multi-dimensional conception of the social world based on a concept of social space that allows the role of the variety of capitals to be included. In other words, using his concept of 'social space', he aims to propose a theory that would integrate existing theories without suffering from their flaws. For example, at an important conference a few years after *Distinction*, he explains how his concept of 'social space' and the traditional concept of 'social classes' could be combined: the proximity between positions in social space is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the genesis of the social classes (Bourdieu, 1985).

The concept of social space falls within the relational way of thinking that Bourdieu promoted. This theoretical space, in which individuals and groups are distributed according to the volume and structure (predominantly economic or predominantly cultural) of their capital, is a set of objective relations. However, it is also a battlefield in which each agent and each group attempts to impose on others the rules of the game that promote their own interests. In such a space, even some dramatic changes, such as the diffusion of some practices previously reserved for the elite, can occur, without any strong transformation of the space's structure, which is left unchanged by nominal transformations.

This conceptualization of social space is a part of the 'field theory' that Bourdieu developed more and more explicitly, beginning in the 1970s. Both field and social space are operationalized using the same statistical technique: multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), which was developed in the 1960s by a team of French mathematicians headed by Jean-Paul Benzecri. MCA is strongly related to Bourdieu's relational approach. Various chapters in this volume rely on this methodology and illustrate its potency. In later years, Bourdieu made a very subtle use of the mathematical and geometric properties of MCA, from which he empirically built the space of social positions and the space of lifestyles, and ultimately gave substance to the concept of homology between these two spaces (Rouanet *et al.*, 2000). Breaking with the variable-oriented statistics that, in the wake of Paul Lazarsfeld, had been dominant in statistical sociology since the 1950s, MCA is a major legacy of *Distinction*. But at the same time, this methodological shift may have adversely affected the book's international diffusion, given that, until recently, the statistical technique was hardly known or used outside France (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004).

In addition to this pioneering use of MCA, *Distinction* was also innovative in its particular combination of statistical and ethnographical approaches. In fact, Bourdieu had been practising this kind of methodological mix since his early studies in Algeria. According to him, it was the combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies that allowed him to properly understand social mechanisms. In addition, *Distinction* includes formal originalities having to do both with the formulation of the reasoning as well as the restitution of the underlying data. Bourdieu made use of the aforementioned formal innovations, tested in *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*: boxes with long excerpts of interviews, newspaper and magazine cuttings and pictures, etc. Although truly conceived as a scientific piece, *Distinction* was in some respects also written as a literary work, to such an extent that Bourdieu has often been compared with famous French writers such as Balzac and Proust. Bourdieu himself has said that he encountered difficulties in writing *Distinction* and thought that literary devices could, in certain circumstances, help scientific analysis.

In this way, *Distinction* contravened many scholastic conventions, which probably hindered the book's impact in the academic world as well as its international diffusion. All this may explain why the book is so often misunderstood and misrepresented by certain sociologists.[7] But, conversely, this may also explain why *Distinction* has remained so appealing to many others. As with many of Bourdieu's works, *Distinction* provides an alternative to the standard practices of the 'mainstream' sociology, largely based on the American canons built and disseminated in the postwar period. And perhaps it is not a coincidence that *Distinction* often had a broader and earlier influence in 'little' countries than it did in the United States. Indeed, as Yvette Delsaut noted (Delsaut and Rivière, 2002: 181), it may be significant that Bourdieu's books were often translated into 'peripheral' languages before being translated into English. In that sense, the posterity of *Distinction* cannot be separated from the context of international power relationships in the academic field.

## Outline of the book

The first part of this book focuses on the historical genesis of *Distinction*, and its French and international career. The opening paper is authored by Monique de Saint Martin, a founding member of the CSE who participated in the lengthy research program that resulted in *Distinction*. Her paper explores what was then a work in progress, the first uses of MCA and the permanent tensions between the theoretical aims and empirical constraints of survey research. In different ways, the two other papers, by Gisèle Sapiro and by Ian Woodward and Michael Emmison, examine the international diffusion of *Distinction* and show how the book was somewhat reformulated by its readers from different disciplines and different countries.

The second part of the book gives an overview of the fate of *Distinction* in contemporary French sociology. All the chapters included in this section highlight to some extent the structural changes that have occurred in France since the 1970s, and their challenging impact on the relevance of the analyses elaborated by Bourdieu in a quite different context. Dealing with the same country but at a different period, these chapters allow for a thorough reappraisal of some of the concepts Bourdieu put forth in *Distinction*, such as 'new *petite bourgeoisie*' (Chapter 6 by Vincent Dubois). All these texts illustrate the diversity of the theoretical and empirical approaches that refer in some way to *Distinction* in contemporary French sociology. Bernard Lahire revisits his previously examined argument regarding the potential non-coherence of *habitus* and non-transferability of dispositions (Chapter 8). Marie Cartier, Isabelle Coutant, Olivier Masclet and Yasmine Siblot (Chapter 5) illustrate the ethnographic approach of social stratification that has flourished in France since the 1990s (Beaud and Weber, 2003). Julien Duval compares *Distinction* and Bourdieu's later works on fields of cultural production (and their contemporary transformations) to some contemporaneous challenging arguments, such as the 'omnivore' thesis (Chapter 7). Finally, Philippe Coulangeon, Yoann Demoli and Ivaylo Petev question the relevance of Bourdieu's thesis when applied to the field of material goods rather than to the field of cultural consumption (Chapter 9).

The third part of the volume is devoted to the large amount of research that tends to replicate, in other national contexts, the kind of surveys that gave *Distinction* its empirical basis (Chapter 11 by Lennart Rosenlund). Most of the chapters in this section, particularly Chapter 10 by Andreas Melldahl and Mikael Börjesson, show the increasingly sophisticated ways in which MCA is being used in the wake of the 'geometric data analysis' promoted by Henry Rouanet and Brigitte Le Roux, who collaborated on one of Bourdieu's last works (Bourdieu, 1999). These chapters raise the issue of generalizing Bourdieu's tools and findings in a wide variety of contexts. Is the structure of social space posited in *Distinction* universal, or specific to some national contexts and periods? Johs. Hjellbrekke, Vegard Jarness and Olav Korsnes (Chapter 12) and Mauricio Bustamante and Domingo Garcia (Chapter 16) question the relevance of *Distinction*'s framework when it is applied to societies that are more egalitarian than France, or to countries that differ greatly from the West. The confrontation of these international studies also underlines the importance of the reflexive analysis of statistical data, as well as its limits. Chapter 13 by Henk Roose, Koen van Eijck and John Lievens and Chapter 17 by Annick Prieur and Mike Savage review the international debates that exist regarding *Distinction*'s analysis of cultural practices and lifestyles. These international interpretations of *Distinction* also explore emerging topics, such as corpulence and class bodies (Chapter 14 by Dieter Vanderbroeck), that have not received as much attention to date as cultural practices.

## Notes

1 Based on a count of 37 sociology journals (all in English), *Distinction* was the most cited reference in the 2008–12 period (see http://nealcaren.web.unc.edu/the-102-most-cited-works-in-sociology-2008-2012/ accessed 29 June 2013). Based on another count of 47 sociology journals ('which have a significant US editorial presence'), *Distinction* was the most cited book in 2012 (http://scatter.wordpress.com/2012/12/21/cited/ accessed 29 June 2013).
2 Regarding the relationship between philosophy and social sciences in France during the postwar period, see Bourdieu and Passeron (1967).
3 In this regard, it should be kept in mind that Pierre Bourdieu often emphasized the differences between *Distinction* and Veblen's analyses (see, for instance, Bourdieu, 1998: 9). As for Maurice Halbwachs, it is also worth noting that Bourdieu was one of the promoters of this author's rediscovery in France. Also, it may be useful to note that Bourdieu happened to invite his students to read Goblot's book *La barrière et le niveau* (Goblot, 1925).
4 For a more in-depth analysis of *Distinction*'s reception by French journalists and intellectuals, see Coulangeon and Duval (2013).
5 Bourdieu established three sub-types of cultural capital: embodied, objectified and institutionalised (Bourdieu, 1986: 47). The embodied cultural capital corresponds to long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body, largely inherited, both consciously and unconsciously, through socialization. The objectified cultural capital consists of cultural goods, such as pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc. The institutionalized cultural capital mainly corresponds to academic credentials or qualifications.
6 Loïc Wacquant highlighted the fact that the 'sociology of the realization of categories' that Bourdieu sketched in the 1980s could be, more than *Distinction*, the definitive reformulation by Bourdieu of the problem of social classes (Wacquant, 2013).
7 See, for example, Harry Ganzeboom's review in *European Sociological Review* (Ganzeboom, 1987).

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# Part I

# The genesis and career of *Distinction*

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# 2

# From 'Anatomie du goût' to *La Distinction**

## Attempting to construct the social space. Some markers for the history of the research

*Monique de Saint Martin*

The history of *La Distinction* is the history of a lengthy research conducted in a workshop which began around 1962; at that point, a pre-survey was carried out using interviews and observations of photographic practices and taste. It is also the history of a book, published for the first time by the *Éditions de Minuit* in 1979, and its conception, writing and production; considerable thought was given to the layout—one might almost say to the staging—unusual at the time in the social sciences. Finally, it is also the history of its national and international reception, its translations, adaptations and extensions; the translations began as soon as the book was published, doubtless even before, and continued long after.[1] There were numerous commentaries, criticisms and articles in the press and in academic journals as soon as the book came out. Thirty-one years after *La Distinction*, the colloquium held on 4–5 November 2010 invited us to give papers and to discuss and confront the interpretations, arguments and research experiences that frequently followed on from this book. A large number of papers were presented, bearing witness to the impact of the book and the theory underlying it. The history of *La Distinction* is still ongoing.

This chapter focuses mainly on the history of the research and the conditions of its production without, however, losing sight of the history of the book. Bourdieu was fascinated by this research, to which he referred fleetingly, but on several occasions, in the *Esquisse pour une auto-analyse* (Bourdieu, 2008). He directed it from beginning to end, although of course, he did not imagine, conceive, implement, analyze and write everything alone. At different stages and points in time, several researchers, collaborators, students and layout specialists worked in the research workshop.[2] We should also mention the researchers, statisticians and others at *l'Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques* (INSEE); and in particular the *Centre de recherche pour l'étude et l'observation des conditions de vie* (CRÉDOC), who advised, discussed and contributed actively at different stages, including Ludovic Lebart and Nicole Tabard; and the readers of the fragments, or different versions, of the texts and manuscripts on which the book is based.

In a research group which is focused on carrying out a research study over 17 years, the team changes; furthermore, the majority of the members were involved in other research studies at the same time. The research group changed over time; but it was never a big project like the one on the *grandes écoles* (Bourdieu, 1989), which was launched shortly after.

The comments that follow and the elements described here refer to a short period, mainly the years 1971–76, as well as to the attempts to construct the social space which are presented in the article 'Anatomie du goût' ['Anatomy of taste'] and then in *La Distinction*. A real historical study which considers the totality of the process and the development of the research remains necessary.[3]

## The composition of the book

*La Distinction*, 'a book in many respects unusual' and 'totally unexpected' (Encrevé, 1980) is nevertheless not a book that is really new, nor is it completely original. The composition is new and personal, and demanded a considerable effort to orchestrate. However, the major part of the book is based on earlier publications, which moreover are not all referenced in the text or in the notes.[4] Various articles and texts are mobilized; these are often re-worked, sometimes cut into pieces and scattered throughout the book to integrate them more appropriately.

The list of articles and books authored or co-authored by Bourdieu that are more or less directly re-used in *La Distinction*, or that have added to it, is indeed long. *Un art moyen. Les usages sociaux de la photographie*, a book published in 1965, supervised by Bourdieu, who co-authored it with Luc Boltanski, Robert Castel and Jean-Claude Chamboredon, in which in particular the part of the survey on taste dealing with photography is analyzed, was the first of these texts. *La Distinction* constitutes the point at which research and articles meet and interact; these include the 'disposition esthétique' (Bourdieu, 1971); 'Les modes d'appropriation des œuvres d'art' (Bourdieu, 1974); 'Anatomie du goût' (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin, 1976); 'L'économie des biens symboliques, 'La production de la croyance' (Bourdieu, 1977a); 'La critique sociale du jugement esthétique' (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin, 1978); and also 'Les stratégies de reconversion' (Bourdieu *et al.*, 1973); 'Questions de politique' (Bourdieu, 1977b) and 'Classement, déclassement, reclassement' (Bourdieu, 1978). It was thus possible for *La Distinction* to be presented as a comprehensive 'summary of earlier work' (Ferenczi, 1979), amongst which Thomas Ferenczi also includes *Les Héritiers*, *La Reproduction*, *L'Amour de l'Art* (Bourdieu *et al.*, 1966 [1969]) and 'Le couturier et sa griffe' (Bourdieu and Delsaut, 1975).

One of these earlier articles, 'Anatomie du goût' (published in 1976 in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, an article in the form of a special issue, over 100 pages long, in which I collaborated), constructed around the question of the construction of the social space and the space of lifestyles, can be considered as the core of *La Distinction*. Numerous long extracts, re-worked to some extent by Bourdieu after the article, appear in chapter 2, 'The social space and its transformations'; chapter 5, 'The sense of distinction', which deals with the different fractions of the dominant class, and chapter 6, 'Cultural goodwill', which deals with middle classes. The book has eight chapters in all plus a long post-script. The working classes are almost non-existent in 'Anatomie du goût', but are the subject of a chapter in the book *The Choice of the Necessary*, most of which had not been previously published.

## The survey on taste

While the research studies that led to *La Distinction* were carried out over a time span of 17 years of thinking, conception, questioning, writing and rewriting, and were characterized by long periods of stopping and starting again, moments of doubt and then of advances, the survey, properly speaking, lasted 12 years, from 1962 to 1974. After the pre-survey, by means of in-depth interviews, observations and tests (with photos being shown), in 1963 the survey itself was carried out in Paris, Lille and a small provincial town. A total of 692 persons were invited to reply to a questionnaire that included 25 questions on photographic practices, 25 questions on taste, and a few questions on the main individual characteristics of the interviewees. However, the sample was considered to be too restricted to study taste in different social groups. It was not until 1967–68 that a complementary survey using the same questionnaire was submitted (to Parisians and to provincials in the north of France), bringing the number of interviewees to 1,217.

Then, from the beginning of the 1970s, a considerable and decisive task was carried out. This led to re-thinking the classification categories used in the first instance, in particular the socio-professional categories, to re-coding the questionnaires, and to researching and analyzing the major statistical surveys. These included those carried out by INSEE on consumption, income, vocational training and professional qualifications, as well as by the various study and research bodies such as the *Secrétariat d'État à la Culture*, the *Centre d'études des supports de publicité* (CESP), and several opinion poll institutes (*Institut français d'opinion publique*, IFOP; *Société d'économie et de mathématiques appliquées*, SEMA; *Société française d'enquêtes par sondages*, SOFRES, etc.). Gradually the idea of constructing a social space and a lifestyle space began to take shape. I worked primarily on these issues. We had to analyze, or rather re-analyze, the survey on taste, the INSEE surveys and those of other institutes to enable us to situate the survey on taste in a much larger whole and, above all, to endeavor in different ways to construct the social space and the space of lifestyles.

In 1974, when the analyses of the survey on taste and of the various statistical surveys carried out by different institutes were almost finished, in-depth interviews, attempting to list, as systematically as possible, the most significant features of each of the lifestyles which the analysis of the statistical surveys had enabled us to isolate, were carried out with members of the different social groups (a 'grand bourgeois', a young male executive, a university teacher, two female nurses—one 'very modest', the other who 'lives with passion'—a technician, a baker's wife, a foreman). Very long extracts from eight of these interviews were inserted, as portraits, in 'Anatomie du goût' and in *La Distinction*. Nothing new in the way of analysis or writing was added to these interviews for the book.

When a survey lasts, as this one did, for 12 years and the research for 17, the context, interpretation and analysis of the data necessarily change and practices alter. Genuine consideration as to the effects of this spread over time was undoubtedly required. But the time lag between the different surveys was not a major preoccupation at the time. Thus, according to Bourdieu, the interval between the survey in 1963 and the one in 1967–68 had little effect on the survey (apart, perhaps, from the question about singers, 'a cultural sphere which is subject to more rapid renewal') (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 588). It does, however, seem to have been able to affect the construction of the social space and the lifestyles space as they are outlined in 'Anatomie du goût' and even more so in *La Distinction*. There was often considerable haste to add new data, particularly if it provided information that had been lacking, without in fact having the means to verify how their construction was affected by the time lag, which was 9 years for the social space and 14 years for the space of lifestyles. Pierre Mercklé has quite rightly pointed out that 'the hypothesis is never made of the possible displacement in space of forms of behavior and cultural goods which are constituent of life styles, nor therefore *a fortiori* of possible deformations over time of the relation between the space of lifestyles and the space of social positions' (Mercklé, 2010).

## Construction of the social space and the space of lifestyles

The construction of the social space and the space of lifestyles as they were represented in *La Distinction* was done manually,[5] and was based on the survey on taste, as well as on a large set of surveys relating to leisure, consumption, cultural practices, etc. which do not all resort to the same classifications, particularly in relation to the socio-professional categories. Thus the figures published in the social positions space and the space of lifestyles (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 122–123) are not the outcome of plane diagrams of correspondence analyses. They have been worked out on the basis of a series of manual graphs which, in the last stages, owed a lot to the principles of correspondence analysis and to a few of the correspondence analyses carried out on the basis of the data from the survey on taste and the INSEE surveys.

During the preparation of 'Anatomie du goût', we sketched out, drew and re-drew numerous graphs, schemas, diagrams and histograms. We would have to be able to find them again and study them to understand how the social positions space and the lifestyles space were constructed gradually and by trial and error. In the first instance, there were two-dimensional graphs with, for example, on the abscissa the choice of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and on the ordinal *The Blue Danube* for the different social groups, which were each represented by a point. These were done manually in order to discover the principle of the intervals and gaps between the different groups.[6]

The opposition according to the volume of capital held between groups possessing a considerable amount of economic, cultural and social capital (members of the professions) and groups who only held small amounts (unskilled and farm workers) was clear from the outset; what was required in this case was to succeed in estimating the distances separating the different groups. The opposition between the categories with more cultural capital than economic capital (university teachers, school teachers, cultural intermediaries) and categories with more economic capital than cultural capital (industrialists, commercial employers) did gradually appear in the graphs. When it became possible to implement correspondence analyses on the INSEE data and on the survey on taste, this opposition could be observed clearly in the different cases, and the structure of the schemas as they appear in the publications did emerge, so to speak.

## The different groups and classes

One of the aims was to construct classes, and fractions of classes, which would be as homogeneous as possible in terms of the links between the fundamental determinants of the material conditions of existence and the circumstances which they impose, while at the same time taking into consideration the dispersion of individuals in a group. There was considerable awareness as to the heterogeneity of the various groups; this is often referred to in the article and in the book.

In *Un art moyen*, the coding and pictures had been presented by distinguishing only five major social groups: workers, employees, craftsmen and small shopkeepers, junior executives, senior executives and professions. The survey had also been analyzed by taking into account income, sex, age and marital status. The survey on taste was first exploited according to this same principle. However, at the beginning of the 1970s, there was an increased awareness of the fact that this classification tended to simplify and was rather superficial. With these five categories alone, it was barely possible to account for the great diversity in systems of taste that were expressed; these were greater in a way than one might have imagined, bearing in mind that the closed questionnaire, the foundation of the survey, constructed around the hypothesis of a unity in tastes, appeared to be a stopgap solution (Bourdieu and Saint Martin, 1976). The decision was taken to return to the questionnaires and to re-code them. The basic nomenclature at the time was that of the nomenclature of the socio-professional categories (CSP) conceived by INSEE in 1954. This did not take into consideration differences that were important for us, for example between senior executives in the private sector, directors of firms and senior executives in the public sector, and senior civil servants, or that did not enable us to describe the new *petite bourgeoisie*, which was growing at the time. In INSEE, at the end of the 1970s, this old nomenclature was challenged and considerably re-thought (Desrosières and Thévenot, 1979); however, the new nomenclature of the professions and socio-professional categories (PCS) was only published in 1982.

In the re-coding that is the basis of the exploitation of the survey as analyzed in 'Anatomie du goût' and in *La Distinction*, we identified 24 groups, bearing in mind the size of the different dimensions (global volume of capital, structure of capital—economic, cultural, social—the history of the group), and checking the relevance of the sets thus constituted.[7] Amongst these 24 groups, nine that were constituted in 'Anatomie du goût' and used again in *La Distinction* did not exist as such in the

INSEE nomenclature. These were the junior commercial employees, secretaries, cultural intermediaries, art craftsmen and dealers, public sector executives, private sector executives, secondary school teachers, teachers in higher education, and artistic producers. For example, in the grand schema of the construction of social space (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 122–123) we could thus distinguish the craftsmen and shopkeepers in the arts from the other craftsmen and shopkeepers. This enabled us to take into consideration the big differences between, for example, people who made jewellery, printed materials and ceramics, whose lifestyles are close to those of cultural intermediaries, and electricians, mechanics or bakers, whose lifestyles are closer to those of craftsmen.

Different groupings were effected. In the middle class, we differentiated between the declining *petite bourgeoisie* (craftspeople and shopkeepers), the executive *petite bourgeoisie* (clerical and commercial employees, junior administrative executives), the new *petite bourgeoisie* (medico-social services employees, cultural intermediaries, craftspeople, secretaries, junior commercial executives) or, at other points, between the established *petite bourgeoisie* and the new *petite bourgeoisie*. In the dominant class we distinguished in particular between fractions rich in cultural capital and fractions rich in economic capital, as well as between the old business bourgeoisie or the traditional bourgeoisie and the new bourgeoisie.

## From 'Anatomie du goût' to *La Distinction*—variations in the schemas and in the interpretation

In the article 'Anatomie du goût', a first schema (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin, 1976: 10–11) set out an outline representation of what might have been the social space in France between 1963 and 1972, mainly worked out on the basis of INSEE surveys (vocational training and qualifications, incomes, living conditions and consumption per household), and to some extent on the survey on taste. A second figure, printed on a sheet of tracing paper,[8] constituted an outline representation of what might have been the social space in France between 1963 and 1977 on the basis of the survey on taste, as well as various INSEE surveys and those of a number of research institutes on the mass media, cultural practices (theatre, cinema, radio, television, theatre or music festivals, reading), sport, decoration and furnishing, clothes, food, etc. By superposing the two schemas, using the tracing paper, we obtained an outline representation of the two spaces which is very close to the figure in *La Distinction* (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]).

On the schema representing social space in both the book and the article, we observe a primary opposition between the different groups or class fractions, depending on the volume of capital held by the members of the various groups; and a second opposition between the structure of the capital, between groups which have relatively more cultural capital than economic capital, and other groups which hold relatively more economic capital than cultural capital. A third dimension is also taken into account: the history of the group or the fraction considered as a whole (represented by arrows pointing upwards, downwards and horizontally, depending on whether the group had increased, decreased or remained relatively stable between 1962 and 1968).

The social trajectory was conveyed by histograms representing the share in each group of persons from different social classes; one can thus read that by far the majority of workers come from the working classes, whereas people in the professions mainly come from the upper classes. But it is clear that the representation given remains somewhat static. We would have liked to give a volumetric representation of these spaces in three dimensions, something akin to mobiles that float in the air, to have a better grasp of the dynamics of these different groups. But the schemas adopted did not permit us to do this.

Finally, the differences between the schemas reproduced in 'Anatomie du goût' and those that appear in *La Distinction* are not great, at least as far as social position is concerned. An important difference between the two lies in the use of transparent tracing paper in 'Anatomie du goût' for the space of lifestyles, which can thus be more easily superimposed on the social class space. In the absence of tracing paper, different colours were used in *La Distinction*, black for social space and orange for the space of lifestyles.

The variations are minimal as far as social space is concerned; the clerical and commercial employees are differentiated in *La Distinction*, whereas they were considered together in 'Anatomie du goût'; and the farm workers who, in the 'Anatomie du goût' schema, occupied a strictly intermediary position between economic capital and cultural capital, tended slightly to the right on the side of economic capital in *La Distinction* as if, after re-reading the statistical tables, it appeared that the farm workers had relatively more economic than cultural capital.

As far as the space of lifestyles is concerned, the differences between the two publications are greater: the statistical indicators from answers to questions on the quality of meals, the qualities desired in friends, the qualities of an interior, or the titles of films, which were represented in the 'Anatomie du goût' schema, no longer appear on the graph in *La Distinction*. In the latter, all that is kept from the survey on taste are the names of the painters, the musical works and the singers preferred, that is, the questions that best revealed the differences and oppositions between classes and fractions of classes. Bourdieu seems to have slightly lost confidence in the survey on taste, and the indicators taken from other surveys become more visible.

In *La Distinction* we find data from surveys carried out in 1975, 1976 and 1977, including a survey on 'The French and Gastronomy' carried out by SOFRES in 1977. There are points on the graph for 'La Tour d'Argent' amongst those in the upper echelons of industry and commerce, or points for 'Chinese restaurants' amongst teachers and artistic producers in *La Distinction*; this graph also represents a greater number of sports practised.[9] The graph in *La Distinction* has gained in academic respectability; the sequencing of indicators, at times comical, presented in 'Anatomie du goût' has disappeared (for example: frozen food, whisky, Vasarely, yacht, located between private sector executives and members of the professions; frozen food no longer appears on the graph and the yacht has slightly changed position). There has been a stricter control of coherence.

The guideline in the conception and construction of the two spaces of social position and lifestyles is the hypothesis of structural homology; this hypothesis is the subject of the subtitle of the article 'Anatomie du goût', giving more direct access to the research workshop than *La Distinction*. In fact the two spaces do not correspond perfectly and the homology does not remain unchanged in space and time. In *La Distinction*, where concern for the synthesis and working out of a general theory of the different forms of capital and social class[10] is stronger, the homology of the two spaces tends to be presented as acquired. Had the homology acquired a more solid foundation or had there been, at the time of the search for an explanatory model capable of being formalized, (i) a regrettable departure from the original analyses, which in some cases were closer to the observation and to the fieldwork; and (ii) a systematic search for an explanation with the help of a more unified set of concepts?

## The correspondence analyses

We searched for a long time for spatial representations with more than two dimensions. Alain Desrosières notes that this idea of multi-dimensionality first appeared in psychology, and that 'the social sciences got hold of data analysis which became extremely fashionable in the 1970s, as witness for example two journals as different as the *Cahiers de l'analyse des données* (the journal edited by Benzécri, whose book *L'analyse des données* was published in 1973) and *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*' (Desrosières, 2008). Desrosières goes on to say 'At the beginning of the 1970s, correspondence analysis appeared to Bourdieu to be particularly suited to the study of the structure of the fields'. He also noticed that at much the same time (mid-1970s), data analysis of the Benzécri type was used to describe and analyze social space in various contexts, including academic research, INSEE, public firms, private opinion polls, and the mass media press, for example *Le Nouvel Observateur* (Desrosières, 2008).[11] 'Thus, Bourdieu and the researchers in the *Centre de Sociologie Européenne* working away at the task of describing the complex system of relations between social classes, their tastes and practices found therein a powerful tool to render these relations visible [...] Correspondence analysis constructs spaces which are organized from the point of view of the relations between the practices statistically recorded in the surveys and, more precisely, the *homologies* between the space of social groups and the space of the practices.' Henry Rouanet, Werner Ackermann and Brigitte Le Roux quite rightly stress that 'For Bourdieu, Correspondence Analysis is not simply a handy tool among others for visualizing data, but a unique instrument apt to uncover the two related spaces of individuals and of properties. A careful reading of *La Distinction* reveals a thoughtful and creative use of Correspondence Analysis, applied to Individuals × Properties tables, with its main aids to interpretation' (Rouanet *et al.*, 2000).

Numerous correspondence analyses were carried out in the 1970s to analyze the survey on taste by distinguishing various fields (cultural practices, for example) or different classes, for example the middle classes or the dominant class. Other analyses were based on the various INSEE surveys and the SOFRES survey on businessmen and senior executives (*Affaires et cadres supérieurs*) for which we did not have individual data and in which only groups were represented.

When 'Anatomie du goût' was published, and in *La Distinction*, only the figures 'Variants of dominant taste' with, for individuals, only the members of the different fractions of the dominant class (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin, 1976: 46; Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 296) and 'Variants of petit-bourgeois taste' with, for individuals, only the members of the middle classes (Bourdieu et de Saint Martin, 1976: 68 and Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 392) were kept. The working classes were not represented; in the survey on taste the farm workers and farmers were not included, and amongst the workers the unskilled and semi-skilled workers were under-represented. Thus the survey on taste did not permit a correspondence analysis on the variants of taste in the working classes.

The figures of the correspondence analyses are reproduced almost identically in the article and in the book (with a difference in mount: tracing paper and paper for 'Anatomie du goût' and paper alone using different colours in *La Distinction*, perhaps not quite as easy to read). In *La Distinction* an important addition can be seen: lines are drawn between different levels of diplomas, different levels of income and between age groups, thus revealing that Bourdieu was anxious not to explain everything by class or class fraction alone.

These correspondence analyses enabled a better understanding of both the extent of the diversity and dispersion of each social group, and the position that each individual occupied in the spaces thus represented.[12] What I remember from this work, and which does not perhaps appear in the written text, was the sensitivity to exceptions. At that time there was considerable awareness of the fact that the different members of a group, for example the craftsmen and small shopkeepers, were far from all having the same system of tastes.

When, in a correspondence analysis, individuals appeared far from the position we expected, for a example a small shopkeeper very close to a primary teacher, or a teacher in higher education close to a commercial employer, we went back to the corresponding questionnaire to understand how and why the individual concerned differed from the dominant trend in his or her group. We discovered, for example, a small shopkeeper interested in abstract painting and a teacher in higher education quoting Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* or Strauss' *Blue Danube* amongst their favorite pieces of music, and not Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* or Bach's *Well Tempered Clavier*—works chosen by a considerable number of members of the group they belonged to.

## Conditions for validity of the analyses

> Nothing would be further from the truth than to see the last word in a theory of social classes in the static and reified representation of the social world afforded by the schema (meaning Schema I—The construction of social space) with its different and hierarchically ranked groups, enclosed within their frontiers and united only by relations of symbolical difference. This representation, which we had to construct to account for a specific set of distributions, those which define lifestyles, owes some of its properties to the specific conditions of its production.
>
> *(Bourdieu and de Saint Martin, 1976: 13)*

Two conclusions at least can be drawn from this warning to readers in 'Anatomie du goût': in the first instance, the groups, as they had been depicted in this space, were not fixed, but could change. Nor were the correspondences between the two spaces fixed. Then, if the conditions of production of the research are not taken into consideration, there is a risk of deducing or drawing from the schema conclusions that go further than what it is possible to assert. In other words, the schema set out in 'Anatomie du goût' did not claim to be valid for other time periods, or for other spaces or societies.

This warning was not included directly in *La Distinction*. Bourdieu, however, did refer to his doubts, and noted that the schema of the social positions and lifestyles space 'does not aim to be the crystal ball in which the alchemists claimed to see at a glance everything happening in the world' (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 120).

## An interpretation of data at times one-dimensional

In the text, the analyses, and the interpretation of the tables or of the correspondence analyses, the approach suggested in 'Anatomie du goût' and in *La Distinction* is always relational (relations between groups, relations between groups and lifestyles, relations between lifestyles) and the focus is usually on groups and class fractions. The strongest explanatory factor is assigned to class, or class fraction or social group; their capacity to explain the differences in choices or judgments and in the search for distinction is considerable.

However, the number in each group is relatively restricted (only 20 junior commercial executives and 14 artistic producers, for example, to mention the smallest groups), and it is often necessary to merge groups. It was thus not really possible to study variations in taste according to both group and age (or generation), or by group and residence.

This said, even if we did not have a detailed table, crossing, for example, social group, age group and a specific practice, we could have made an interpretation less focused on class and class fraction alone. At times, one has the impression that the data have been interpreted only from one point of view, with the advantages and strengths this may ensure, but also the weaknesses and shortcomings in reading and interpretation. Thus, as early as 1980, Nicolas Herpin, in an article in the *Revue Française de Sociologie*, based on a re-reading of the correspondence analyses on dominant taste and petit bourgeois taste alone, demonstrated that, for example, where opinions about cooking when one received guests were concerned, the effects of age were undoubtedly more important than those of position in the class structure as revealed in *La Distinction*. In the figure 'Variants of petit-bourgeois taste', Herpin notes that 'informal meals are associated with young people below the age of 30' and 'carefully prepared or traditional meals' with the 46–65-year age group. 'Original and exotic' is closer to young people; 'exquisite meals' and 'simple well-presented' is associated with median age groups. Only one type—'plentiful and good'—is slightly off-centre (Herpin, 1980).

At the period of the interpretation of the data, the obvious tendency was to give preference to social class or group. This does not mean that the other variables were not taken into consideration. Thus analyses were devoted to the variations in the practice of sports or cinema-going according to age group or generation. The effect of school diplomas or certificates is heavily underlined in chapter 1 of *La Distinction*. However, in several cases it would have been possible to suggest alternative interpretations of the correspondence analyses, and to pay more attention in particular to variations by age, or by place of residence.

As far as gender is concerned, there seems to have been something of a blind spot. Why was gender not considered to be one of the most important dimensions, and why was no attempt made to represent a space for male lifestyles and tastes, and one for female? This would doubtless not have been easy. In the list of sources presented in the appendix to the article and the book, we see that the data obtained from the INSEE 1967 leisure survey concerning various cultural practices (museums, exhibitions, etc.) and activities (gardening, do-it-yourself, etc.) referred uniquely to the male population. Why were women not taken into consideration? This is not specified. Moreover, for a considerable number of surveys carried out by opinion poll, the data did not enable us to analyze both gender and socio-professional category at the same time; data by gender on one hand and by socio-professional category on the other did exist. This gives an idea of the difficulties encountered in the 1970s, but does not do away with the retrospective impression of almost total blindness. If we had really wanted to take gender into consideration, it would have been possible, even if it meant constructing both male and female schemas of social space and lifestyle with only a small number of indicators.

'We had difficulty in ridding ourselves of the idea that social class really was the factor which determined the relation to the social world' wrote Luc Boltanski, when questioned about what he called a 'deafening silence' in the lack of any reference to the feminist movement and the ongoing sexual revolution in the article 'La production de l'idéologie dominante', which he wrote with Bourdieu in the same years (Boltanski, 2008). Reference to gender is not totally absent from *La Distinction*, and Bourdieu did devote several pages to the differences between the sexes, for example, the division between sexes in eating tastes, as well as in relations between the sexes. However, as far as the core of the book is concerned—the construction of social space and the space of lifestyles—only two histograms close to the medico-social services draw attention to the fact that, in these professions, women at that time often came from the upper classes whereas the majority of men were of working class origin.

⋆ ⋆ ⋆

At the times when 'he sifted and re-sifted the same objects and the same analyses time and again', Bourdieu, as he explains in *Méditations pascaliennes*, 'felt a spiralling movement which makes it possible to attain each time a bigger level of explicitness and comprehension, and to discover unnoticed relationships and hidden properties' (Bourdieu, 2000: 8). This was doubtless the case with the research on taste, where he re-worked the texts countless times. If we restrict ourselves to 'Anatomie du goût' and *La Distinction*, it is easy to see that the *habitus*, a fundamental concept for Bourdieu, reduced to the congruent portion in the first text, is in prime position in the second where one of the eight chapters is devoted to 'The Habitus and the Space of Life-Styles' and is followed by another chapter entitled 'The Dynamics of the Fields'. It can also be remarked that in 'Anatomie du goût', the narrative of the construction of the two spaces is fairly close to the practical operations of the research; in *La Distinction* the narrative has gained in depth and tone, but also in distance in relation to these practical operations and facts.[13] Bourdieu makes a new suggestion and proposes to insert a third schema presenting the theoretical space of the *habitus* between the schema of the social space and that of lifestyles. Would this improve the understanding of the relation between the two spaces? The question is worth asking. If one bears in mind that the homology between the two spaces is no longer a hypothesis but something acquired in *La Distinction*, one is inclined to think that the theoretical framework has been maintained and has gained in breadth at the expense of observations that are more sensitive to the data from the fieldwork, for example, the extent of the dispersion between individuals in the social groups or the history of the different groups.

## Notes

* Translated from the French by Kristin Couper.

1 As early as July 1980, a long extract translated into English by Richard Nice entitled 'The aristocracy of culture' appeared in the journal *Media, Culture and Society*.

2 Luc Boltanski, Denise Jodelet, Yvette Delsaut, Salah Bouhedja, Marie-Claire Bourdieu, Claire Givry, Marie-Christine Rivière and Colette Borkowski all worked in the research workshop at one stage or another and with different involvements. Jacques Mézières and Biga Nunes worked on the typesetting and layout of the article 'Anatomie du goût' in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, Jean-Pierre Jauneau for *La Distinction*. We should also list all those who submitted the questionnaires of the two surveys on taste, or who did interviews.

3 In the period preceding and following the colloquium in 2010, this could not be done. The archives of the research and the book were scattered and difficult to access due, in particular, to the move of the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* (EHESS) and the *Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme* from the Boulevard Raspail to Avenue de France. The basic questionnaires of the survey which were at 54 bd Raspail were not accessible because of the possibility of there being asbestos dust in the archives of the *Centre de Sociologie Européenne*.

4 Somewhat astonishingly, the articles most directly used are not quoted. For example, 'Anatomie du goût', and 'Titres et quartiers de noblesse culturelle' (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin, 1976, 1978), but also 'Un jeu chinois. Notes pour une critique sociale du jugement' (Bourdieu, 1976), published with practically no change under the title 'Un jeu de société' in Appendix IV of the book.

5 Furthermore, the data assembled at the time did not enable a correspondence analysis between the lifestyles of the groups as a whole. The socio-professional categories were the same in the various INSEE surveys, but were not the same in all the surveys used for the construction of the lifestyles spaces.

6 For this task, we relied considerably in these years on the graphic research of Jacques Bertin and the EHESS *Laboratoire de cartographie* (Bertin, 1967).

7 It was a question of manual and unskilled workers, skilled workers and foremen, tertiary sector employees, small shopkeepers, craftsmen, clerical and commercial employees, junior executives, technicians, school teachers, junior commercial employees, secretaries, medico-social sector employees, cultural intermediaries, art craftsmen, industrial and commercial entrepreneurs, public sector executives, engineers, private sector executives, professionals, secondary school teachers, teachers in higher education, artistic producers. The farmers and farm employees were not taken into consideration in the survey on taste, but were included in the schemas representing social space.

8 Readers wishing to understand the procedure more precisely, and who do not have access to a sample edition of the original publication, can consult the article and graphs at http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/arss_0335-5322_1976_num_2_5_3471

9 Close examination also reveals changes; Renoir, who was close to executives in industry and commerce, has moved away and is closer to the professions.

10 At this time, Bourdieu was thinking of a book devoted to social classes, to which he refers concerning the fundamental principles of the construction of the social space (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 128); this book was never written.
11 There is an example in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, with a two-dimensional representation of social space as seen by the artist Wiaz in 1974. 'Le prix d'un Français', *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 16 September 1974, p. 65.
12 'The public sector and private sector executives who are widely dispersed in the plane diagram are not represented by a cloud' (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin, 1976: 44).
13 Thus, in *La Distinction*, Bourdieu notes that the representation which is given of the social space was constructed 'based on information acquired through earlier research, and on a set of data taken from various surveys all done by INSEE and therefore homogeneous at least as regards the construction of the categories' (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 121). However, this is not correct since on this schema we have the secretaries, arts craftsmen, cultural intermediaries and several other groups which were constituted on the basis of the survey on taste, and which INSEE did not recognize.

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# 3

# The international career of *Distinction*[1]

*Gisèle Sapiro*

Bourdieu is the most prolific and internationally recognized French sociologist. His work, spanning from 1958 to 2008, includes 37 titles in French and 347 titles in translation, which have been published in 34 languages and in 42 countries.[2] These translations can be considered a measure of international consecration (Sapiro and Bustamante, 2009). The number of languages and countries continues to grow exponentially, indicating what Merton has called a 'Matthew effect' (see Figure 3.1).

Being translated is not a necessary condition for the international reception of a work. The latter depends on the centrality of the original language. Because French is a central language, *Distinction* has been widely read in its original version not only in France and the French-speaking world,[3] but also in many other countries in Europe and Latin America where French is the second or third language. Thus the fact that *Distinction* has not been translated into a specific language does not automatically mean it had no reception, or that it did not have any impact in the related country. Israel is one such example. However, the declining position of French in the world language system limits this reception (De Swaan, 1993, 2001; Heilbron, 1999; Sapiro, 2008). Translation is required to broaden the potential audience of a book originally written in French. Translation is a time-consuming endeavour, and when not undertaken for free (as it usually is in the academic world), it is an expensive investment that depends on the conditions of the publishing industry and financial support from diverse sources such as the state, the Academy or philanthropic foundations.

By the same token, the impact of translation in terms of potential diffusion varies significantly according to the target language. Since English is the language with the highest number of primary and secondary speakers and is the *lingua franca* of science, a translation into English could be considered today as a sufficient condition for attracting attention from scholars around the world. However, this is not entirely true. In addition to the centrality of the language, the potential of international diffusion

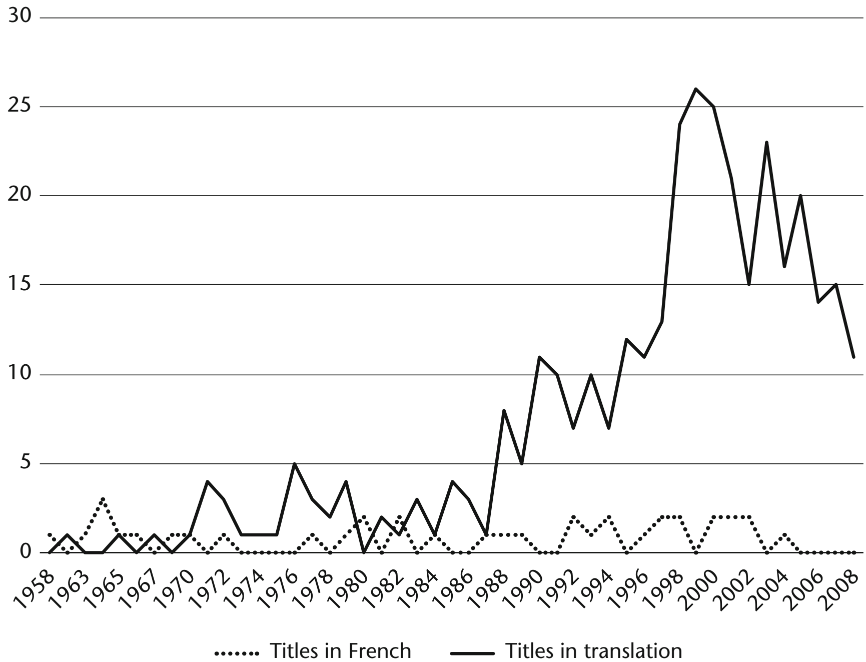


*Figure 3.1* Evolution of the total number of books by Bourdieu in translation in comparison with his publications in French (1958–2008)

depends on the place of publication. A translation does not have the same impact when it is released on the periphery of a linguistic area, for instance South Africa, or in a central country of the same zone, such as the United States or England. The linguistic situation, which varies across countries, is a third factor contributing to the international circulation of a work. For instance, in some Latin American countries such as Argentina, English is not widely read even in the academic field. The fourth factor is the degree of internationalization of disciplines (Gingras, 2002): economy is much more internationalized than law. Moreover, the position of the scholarly production of different countries in the international hierarchy varies according to the discipline, in relation to its tradition. German and French productions occupy the highest position in philosophy. As for sociology, although France and Germany have marked the history of the discipline, their weight has been declining since the post-war period, when American sociology began to dominate (Pollak, 1977). Additionally, it should be noted that books are not the only vehicle for the international circulation of academic knowledge; articles also play an important role. In the social and human sciences, however, the book is still a major vector in the diffusion of knowledge, though its importance varies from one discipline to another. It is more important in the humanities, especially literature and history, than in the social sciences. In this respect, within the social sciences economy is closer to the natural sciences, while anthropology shares more similarities with the humanities, and sociology holds more of an intermediary position.

The reception of Bourdieu's work was by no means limited to sociology. It had an impact in disciplines such as history, anthropology, literary studies and political science, depending on the topics of the books (take, for example, *The Rules of Art*, which was widely read by literary scholars). *Distinction* is probably the book that received the most attention in sociology. Studying the international reception of Bourdieu's work would therefore require specific investigations for each country and discipline, a huge task, which would need to be collective (for an attempt, see Marco Santoro (2008a) and the journal *Sociologica* nos. 2 and 3/2008, nos. 1 and 2–3/2009). Though the ambition and scope of the present paper are more limited, we must keep these questions in mind in order to interpret the data. We will focus on the international career of *Distinction* and its place and role in the international consecration of Bourdieu, before highlighting some of the issues at stake in its reception.

## *Distinction* in translation

*Distinction* is among Bourdieu's nine most translated books, appearing in 12 languages and 13 countries, and until 1992 was his most translated book (see Table 3.1). Five years after its first publication in France in 1979, it was available in German (1982), Italian (1983) and English (1984). The Spanish translation appeared in 1988, followed by the Japanese in 1990. Subsequent translations began to be published in 1995 (see Table 3.2). Among the most recent is the Chinese translation (2007).

The first three translations appeared very quickly, considering that the average time-lag between the original and its translations for the books published before 1995 was 8.3 years. This average was even higher for the longer books (11 years). As we have previously suggested, these translations do not all exert the same impact. Obviously, while the reception of German and Italian translations was limited to the geographic area of one country (or two in the case of Germany and Austria), the English translation, published in 1984, had a much wider impact throughout the world.

Until 1980, books by Bourdieu in translation appeared in nine countries: Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, Spain, Brazil, Mexico, Romania

*Table 3.1* Number of translations per title (1958–2008)

| *Title* | *Number of translations per language* | *Number of translations per country* |
|---|---|---|
| *Sur la télévision* | 25 | 27 |
| *La Domination masculine* | 20 | 21 |
| *Les Règles de l'art* | 17 | 19 |
| *Raisons pratiques* | 17 | 19 |
| *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* | 17 | 19 |
| *Contre-feux* | 14 | 16 |
| *Le Sens pratique* | 13 | 14 |
| *La Distinction* | 12 | 14 |
| *Esquisse pour une auto-analyse* | 12 | 13 |

*Table 3.2* Countries in which a translation of *Distinction* was published, by year

| *Country* | *Distinction* |
|---|---|
| Germany | 1982 |
| Italy | 1983 |
| United Kingdom | 1984 |
| United States | 1984 |
| Spain | 1988 |
| Japan | 1990 |
| Korea | 1995 |
| Norway | 1995 |
| Greece | 2002 |
| Poland | 2005 |
| Brazil | 2007 |
| China | 2007 |
| Georgia | 2007 |

and Hungary. From 1981 to 1995, the number of countries publishing Bourdieu in translation jumped to 26. The circulation pattern is one of geographic expansion rather than displacement from one country or area to another: most countries continue to translate Bourdieu's work (Sapiro and Bustamante, 2009).

Even though *Distinction* contributed to this geographic extension only by three new countries (Japan, Korea and Norway), we can hypothesize that it favoured the rise of interest in Bourdieu's work, especially after its translation into English. While the average time-lag for translating his books was decreasing, the number of translations of Bourdieu's books began increasing, starting in the second half of the 1980s (see Figure 3.2).

If we cross the number of translations and the average time-lag between the original publication and its translation, for the books Bourdieu published before 1995, the place of *Distinction* appears in the upper middle part of Figure 3.3. The titles published before *Distinction* (underlined) were translated later than those that appeared after (not underlined).

A publisher's decision to translate a work can be read as an indicator of the interest sparked by the book on the international scene. However, it is just one aspect of its importation into a national intellectual field, and does not in itself ensure an academic reception. For a closer examination of the international reception of *Distinction* and its impact on the growth of Bourdieu's reputation throughout the world, we need now to turn to qualitative data, based on the critical reception of the book in the press and in academic journals.

## The reception and impact of *Distinction*

Until *Distinction*, the international reception of Bourdieu's work was segmented into the three research fields in which he became a major reference: education, culture

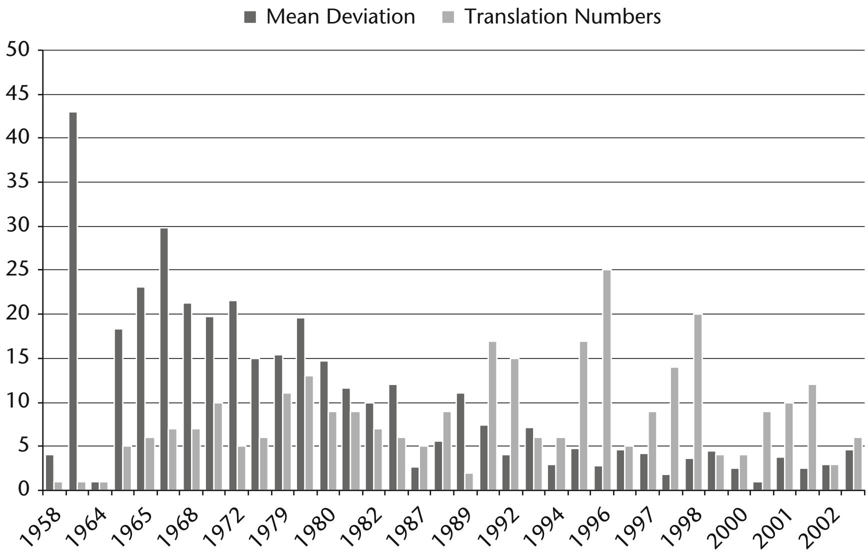


*Figure 3.2* Number of translations per title and average time lag between year of publication of the original book in French and the year it was translated into different languages (1958–2008)

and anthropology. However, these research fields were disconnected, as Craig Calhoun described: 'They were parts of different conversations'.[4] *Les Héritiers* is the only book translated into Spanish, Italian and English, thus highlighting the centrality of the sociology of education in the first stage of Bourdieu's international reception. By contrast, it became less important later on (for the English case, see Robbins, 1989; for the American and English, see Wacquant, 1993).

As Nicholas Garnham and Raymond Williams, two leading figures in British cultural studies, remarked in the important article they published on Bourdieu's work in 1980, such a 'fragmentary and partial appropriation of what is a rich and unified body of theory and related empirical work [...] can lead to a danger of seriously misreading the theory'. Along with the American sociologist Paul DiMaggio's 1979 article in the *American Journal of Sociology* (*AJS*), their article contributed to the unification of the reception of Bourdieu's work.

But it was with *Distinction*, which brought together many of the themes that Bourdieu had developed since the 1960s (Brubaker, 1985), that the international reception of Bourdieu's work was unified and became a central reference in sociology. According to Calhoun, 'this was the breakthrough sort of book into broader general recognition'.[5] This was particularly true in the United States, but because of the centrality of American social science in the international space, the American reception of Bourdieu had a broader impact throughout the world, beyond its translation into various languages, as was the case with 'French Theory' in the humanities.

Among the reasons for the book's success is the reputation of its American publisher. Harvard University Press, the most prestigious American academic publisher,

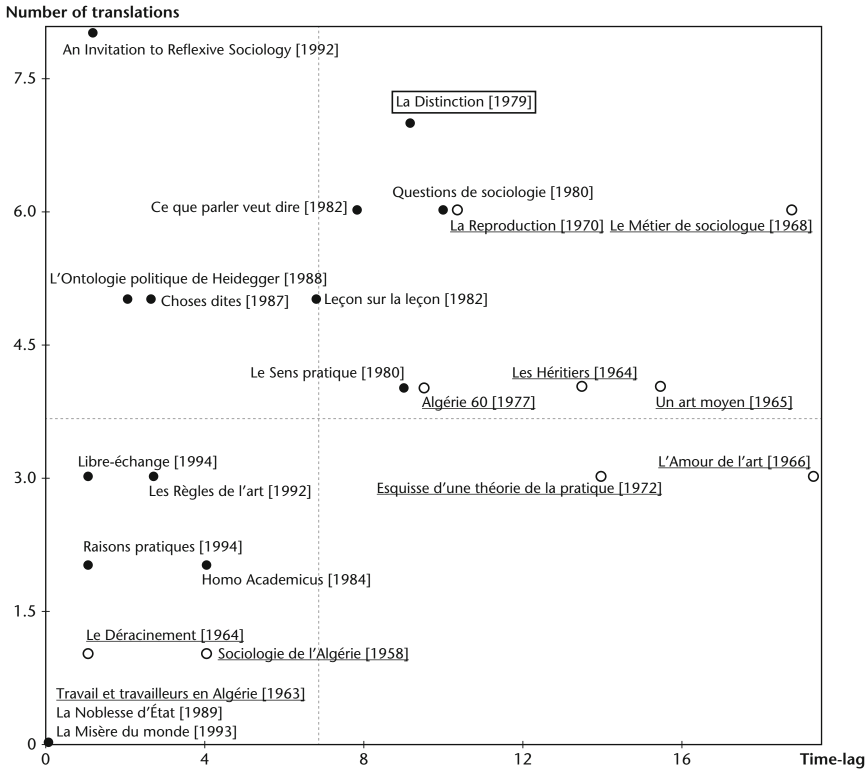


*Figure 3.3* Number of translations per title and average time lag between year of publication of the original book in French and the year it was translated into different languages (1958–1995)

released the English translation of *Distinction* in the United States. American university presses do not publish many translations, especially in sociology. Various factors probably motivated the decision of Harvard UP to translate such a lengthy book: the major attention *Distinction* received in the French press (two full pages in *Le Monde*), the fact that it had already sold rights to Italy and Germany, and the positive reception of Bourdieu's previous work in English.[6] Bourdieu's academic position seems to have counted less in the reception of the book. Only one or two reviewers mentioned that he had been appointed to the *Collège de France*, the most prestigious scientific institution in France, but whose international reputation barely goes beyond Francophile circles. The quality of Richard Nice's translation, praised by many reviewers, was certainly another significant factor responsible for its success.

The critical reception of *Distinction* reveals key aspects of the intellectual and scientific interest it aroused. The following overview relies on reviews published in English and, to a lesser extent, in German, Italian and Spanish. As in France, the critical reception of *Distinction* in the United States was not confined to academic journals. As evidence of its broad visibility, it was reviewed in newspapers such as the

*San Francisco Chronicle* and even in the fashion magazine *Vogue*. Within the academic field, the book was discussed in journals across different disciplines, notably sociology, ethnology, education, French studies and art history.

Based on the content of the reviews, four ideal-typical readings can be roughly distinguished: some regarded it as a study of French society, while others emphasized the social criticism. Some were more interested in its theoretical discussion, and some gleaned from it a 'research program' in the sense of Lakatos (Lakatos and Musgrave, 1970). Some reviewers, of course, highlighted two or more of these aspects.

The general press usually described the book as a 'portrait of French society', as *Publishers Weekly* had referred to it in their 26 October 1984 issue, restricting its potential public to the 'serious Francophile'. However, in the Catholic magazine *Commonweal* (dated 30 November 1984), Irving Louis Horowitz identified it 'under the plethora of distinctions and stratifications [...] an old-fashioned American-type of populism – one which must be terrible news in Mitterand's France'. Indeed, the critical aspect of the book revealing the social function of taste as an instrument of domination was heralded in the United States and in England as a demystification of 'snobbery' (Christopher Lasch in *Vogue*, November 1984; Douglas Johnson in *The Observer*, 10 February 1985). In Italy, on the other hand, it was harshly attacked as an expression of populism by Alexandro Dal Lago in the journal *Rassegna Italiana di sociologica* (Dal Lago, 1985).

Nicholas Garnham, who praised the book as a political intervention in *The Sociological Review*, better understood its double criticism of formalistic aestheticism and populism (Garnham, 1986). The critical dimension of the book was also noted by Bennett Berger, who wrote an extended review for *AJS* (Berger, 1986: 1453): 'Bourdieu offers some comfort to the Left (very important in Paris) by unmasking the "purity" of high culture, but he does not offer much hope that anything important can be changed. His message seems democratic; "very French," indeed.' Berger also remarked that his 'scholar's "morality" is severe, ascetic, Weberian, stoic, aloof (although his picture on the dust jacket is young, smiling, movie-star handsome); he wants to maintain a clear and unblinking gaze at the truths of power, uncorrupted by sentiment, wish, or hope.' In the *Comparative Education Review*, Michael Apple, a professor at the University of Wisconsin, pointed out that the style of the book was elitist, in contradiction to its political message (Apple, 1986: 276). In *El País* (23 October 1988), Jesús Ibáñez defined Bourdieu as a 'resistant against the social order'.

The theoretical discussion was engaged by reviewers who were already familiar with Bourdieu's work, and could connect *Distinction* with his work on practice and on education (see, for instance, David Swartz's review in *French Politics & Society*: Swartz, 1985). They highlighted the concepts of 'cultural capital' and 'habitus', as well as his attempt to transcend oppositions between objectivism and subjectivism, structuralism and phenomenology, theoreticism and empiricism (see Rogers Brubaker's review in *Theory and Society* (Brubaker, 1985) and David MacLennan's in *Borderlines* (MacLennan, 1985: 28).

Whereas Bourdieu was in the past classified either as a Marxist, or (by the Marxists) as a Durkheimian, in his 1979 article Paul DiMaggio presented Bourdieu's work as a brilliant effort to marry Durkheim and Marx. In the paper he published in

*Theory and Society* in 1985, Rogers Brubaker emphasized the importance of Weber to the understanding of Bourdieu's work, especially the concept of 'status group', his theory of charismatic domination, and his notions of ideal goods and interests. Brubaker acknowledged Bourdieu's debt to Marx and, in particular, Durkheim's program for a genetic sociology of symbolic forms as well as the social and cognitive functions of collective representations and classifications. He pointed out the fact that Bourdieu replaced the Durkheimian integrative function by Weber's approach of domination. In the context of American sociology, this was a new reading of Weber, which had, until then, been associated with Parsons' functionalism. Although there are only two explicit references to Weber in *Distinction*, many reviewers, probably following Brubaker, mentioned Weber's concept of 'status group' (*stand*), and its articulation with Marx's concept of class, from which Bourdieu's analysis diverged by not considering culture as mere reflection of economic forces. Some of them also discussed Veblen. Brubaker placed Bourdieu's work within the context of the controversy between Sartre's subjectivist theory of agency and Lévi-Strauss's structuralist objectivism. In the aforementioned article, Bennett Berger cited Gramsci, Parsons and Goffman, along with Durkheim, Marx and Weber, to show that Bourdieu had 'absorbed most of the influential sociological theorists without having become a partisan of any' (Berger, 1986: 1452). He contrasted *Distinction* with Herbert Gans' book *Popular Culture and High Culture* published in 1999:

> Gans is practical, Bourdieu is theoretical; Gans' style is plain; Bourdieu's elegant; Gans offers plans and policies, Bourdieu is apparently *au-dessus de la mêlée* – although not entirely because, as he says, there is no way out of the culture game.

Kant's aesthetics was evoked, but only art historians such as Laura Melvano in Italy (Melvano, 1984: 86–89) fully discussed the implications of Bourdieu's approach for aesthetics and art history.

Michael Apple noted that the 'enormous' range of [Bourdieu's] readings 'enables him to make connections between his work and the entire spectrum of the human science' (Apple, 1986: 276). The transdisciplinary dimension of his work, which challenged the traditional division of research labor (for instance, between the sociology of culture and the study of culture in the anthropological sense, or between sociology of art and education), as pointed out by Anna Boschetti, Bourdieu's former student, in *Rassegna Italiana di sociologica* (Boschetti, 1985), was underscored by other reviewers. Some, however, did criticize him for his synchronic approach which lacked a historical perspective (see for instance Berger, 1986). Craig Calhoun further developed this issue in the book he edited with Edward LiPouma and Moishe Postone: *Bourdieu. Critical perspectives* (Calhoun *et al.*, 1993).

In the United States, where theoretical and empirical approaches are often distinct from one another, some readers were puzzled by the 'ambitious but disorienting mixture of sociological analysis, theoretical speculation, and specific account', and the 'conflation of the particular and the general', in the terms of literary critic Michael Warner from Northwestern University, who described *Distinction* as 'one of the most powerful intellectual works of recent years' in the journal *MLN*. The epistemology, neither positivistic nor relativist, was also underlined by some commentators, such as Berger in *AJS* (Berger, 1986: 1445) and Michael Pollak (who was one of Bourdieu's collaborators) in the *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* (Pollak, 1984). Nevertheless, for some, it was still either too positivistic, or not enough.

A few researchers read the work as an empirical research program. Sociologist Vera Zolberg convincingly suggested such a reading in the review she published in the journal of the American Sociological Association, *Contemporary Sociology*:

> My answer is that the work is valuable not only for increasing our knowledge of a particular society, but for its exposition of a critically reflexive intellectual approach that provides materials for accomplishing the project proposed by Durkheim, of creating a postpositivist, comparative sociology.
>
> *(Zolberg, 1986: 512)*

Nicholas Garnham (1986) proposed that comparative analysis be done with Great Britain. In the journal *American Ethnologist*, Dan Rose from the University of Pennsylvania shared his scepticism concerning the possibility of launching such large-scale research in the United States, as American scholars 'tend not to think of society in a totalized form on the one hand, and on the other are resistant to such an undertaking because they believe it could not be done' (Rose, 1986: 164). He also correctly predicted that 'the argument would be bolstered by the claim that Bourdieu fails to account for ethnic, religious, regional, and linguistic diversity' (*ibid*.). Like Nicholas Garnham, who wondered about the consequences of the development of cultural industries (Garnham, 1986), he raised the question of the interdependence between cultural and economic trade in what would later be called the global world.

In order to understand the reception of *Distinction* as a research program, we must turn to other sources. Citations in academic journals are a good indicator of its impact and of the ways it has been used. In sociology, Sallaz and Zavisca showed that the number of citations of Bourdieu in the four major American journals they selected (*AJS*, *American Sociological Review*, *Social Forces*, *Social Problems*) increased after 1984, from 16 that year to 40 in 1994.[7] At the beginning of the 1980s, *Reproduction* was Bourdieu's most cited book in these journals, followed by *Outline for a Theory of Practice* and *Logics of Practice*. Soon after the publication of its English translation in 1984, *Distinction* became the second most cited and, in 1990, the first, far more than any other book, a 'distinction' it has kept since then. As Sallaz and Zavisca put it:

> By far the most influential work over the past 15 years, however, is *Distinction*, which during its peak period of 1990–1994 was cited by nearly 60 per cent of all articles. In sum, Bourdieu's cultural capital – especially as elaborated in *Distinction* – remains the key influence on research in American sociology journals.
>
> *(Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007a: 29)*

The success of *Distinction* is partly due to the fact that its publication in English coincided with, and contributed to, the development of the speciality of sociology of culture in America. The Sociology of Culture research network of the American Sociological Association (ASA) was created in 1986 by Vera Zolberg, Gary Alan Fine, Richard Peterson and others including Michèle Lamont. With *Distinction* as a major reference, it rapidly grew to become the most important of the ASA networks (Santoro, 2008b; Lamont, 2013). *Distinction* reached a new audience in sociology, an audience that was not familiar with Bourdieu's previous work, and that focused on the book's empirical aspects such as cultural hierarchies and indicators of cultural capital, rather than on its theoretical dimensions.

'Capital', especially 'cultural capital', is the most popular Bourdieuan concept used in American journals, significantly more than habitus, field or symbolic power (Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007a: 28). 'Social capital' appears in relation to Bourdieu in American journals only in 1995, and almost reaches 'cultural capital' after 2000. Whereas the importance and usefulness of the concept of field for exploring the relationship between social structure and symbolic production was emphasized by DiMaggio's 1979 article, and though it was thoroughly discussed in Vera Zolberg's 1986 review in *Contemporary Sociology* as well as in the above-mentioned book on Bourdieu edited by Calhoun *et al.* in 1993, it had very little impact as a research program in the United States, whereas it was very central in France and in other countries such as Germany and Israel (albeit more in literary studies than in sociology[8]). This is all the more striking in the light of the present success of the concept of field, which has been 'de-labeled' and re-appropriated by scholars who do not clearly acknowledge its origin in Bourdieu's theory (see, for instance, Fligstein and McAdam, 2012[9]).

Neither the translations nor the critical reception, nor even the citations, say much about how *Distinction* inspired research programs. Given the space constraints of the present chapter, we cannot discuss in detail all the academic works that have put Bourdieu's research program into practice, so we must make do with citing just a few examples. The survey conducted by Paul DiMaggio on the dominant classes in Boston and their use of high culture as a way of delimiting the boundaries of their group figures prominently among the first attempts at applying the analytic model proposed by Bourdieu to study American society (DiMaggio, 1982). Initially a literary publication, the Dutch journal *Poetics*, headed by Paul DiMaggio and Kees Van Rees and beginning in 1990, published numerous articles in the domain of sociology of culture which referred to Bourdieu's analytical framework, privileging a quantitative approach, which was often positivist. In the United States, a big debate took place over the indicators of cultural capital and their relevance with regard to American society (Lareau and Lamont, 1988; Holt, 1997; Lamont, 2013). In response to a number of hesitations on the part of American scholars relating to the transferability of this model in the United States, Holt (1997) shows that the majority of these academics used as indicators the objectified forms of cultural capital, which were less distinctive in present-day American society than the incorporated forms (relationship to culture, modes of consumption). Michèle Lamont, who worked with Bourdieu in France at the beginning of the 1980s and read his work in

French, played an important role in this debate. In her book entitled *Money, Morals, and Manners: The Culture of the French and the American Upper-Middle Class* (1992), she compares the making of boundaries between social groups in France and in the United States through use of qualitative methods (such as in-depth interviews where she asks interviewees to position themselves in relation to the cultural practices of other social groups). She comes to the conclusion that differences exist between the two countries: in the United States the role of legitimate culture is less significant, or in any case provokes less contempt, and social boundaries are more porous. According to Holt (1997: 22–24), however, this work, that relies on judgments expressed during interviews, underestimates the gap between these discourses—which are related to cultural relativism and egalitarian values that prevail in the American society—and the practice. It thus ignores the tacit ways in which people distinguish themselves as precisely described by Bourdieu. Moreover, a number of research projects have been conducted in the United States testing cultural capital as an indicator of a high social status, without questioning the differentiation between cultural capital and economic capital, which is at the heart of the analysis of the social space in *La Distinction*. Yet the question—which we discuss further in our conclusion—remains: is this differentiation, which occurred in France as a result of the rise of republican meritocracy, observable in other societies?

Other scholars, such as Leenart Rosenlund (1996, 2009) in Norway or Virgilo Pereira (2011) in Portugal, tested the model in their own country using multiple correspondence analysis. An important survey on the United Kingdom used several variables from *Distinction* while paying particular attention to gender and ethnicity (Bennett *et al.*, 2009, and the critical review by Duval, 2010, who relativizes the impact of these variables on the structuring of the social space). A group of researchers known as the SCUD network has launched a systematic comparative program.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the international reception of Bourdieu's work became unified, turning him into a major reference as a social theorist. From 1995 on, his reception was influenced by the wide success of his book *On Television* (translated into 25 languages) and his commitment as a public intellectual to the struggle against neoliberalism. The average time-lag for translating his new books fell to three years, while the number of translations increased. This is an indicator that he had become a 'brand-name' for publishers. *Distinction* continued, as we have already shown, to be translated.

Faced with the re-appropriations of his work abroad in the context of his extended international recognition, starting in 1989 Bourdieu began to reflect on the conditions of international comparisons and on cultural specificities, which required an adjustment of his theory (Sapiro, 2012). The main question was whether the analysis was specific to the French case or could be generalized, and if so, how. As he explains in one of the talks he gave in Japan in 1989, the framework makes claims to '*universal validity*' and allows us to 'register the real differences which separate both structures and dispositions (the habitus), the principle of which must be sought not in the peculiarities of some national character – or "soul" – but in the particularities of different *collective histories*' (Bourdieu, 1998: 3). The model's capacity to be transposed in time and space relies on its relational character: the position of cultural practices in the social space results not from intrinsic properties, but from their uses by social groups, as a means either to distinguish themselves or to mark their difference from other practices. For instance, the fact that in France tennis and golf are no longer exclusively associated with the dominant positions does not invalidate the model, but is proof of the changing position of a practice that, having become common, is less distinctive. This is why, as Bourdieu underscores, 'comparison is possible only from *system to system*' (Bourdieu, 1998: 6).

This historical dimension has been often neglected in appropriations of the analytic framework of *Distinction*, as a result of the presentist approach that prevails in mainstream American social science. The crucial question remains whether cultural capital differentiated from economic capital everywhere, or whether it was a historical process, which did or did not occur at different moments in different parts of the world. Bourdieu's work points to the second option as the correct answer. This raises other theoretical and methodological questions about international comparisons: how can cultural capital in different cultures be compared, and according to which indicators? Is there an international cultural capital, or is it nationally rooted? Does the definition and composition of cultural capital vary across cultures and, if so, what are the implications of these variations on its relation to other species of capital (economic and social) and on the social structure? Has globalization modified the conditions of the transmission and reproduction of cultural capital? These stimulating questions invite us to continue the research program in different directions and in different socio-historical contexts.

## Notes

1 I would like to thank Craig Calhoun, Loïc Wacquant and Rogers Brubaker for agreeing to be interviewed (the interviews were not focused on *Distinction* but more broadly on Bourdieu's reception in the US), Mauricio Bustamante for helping me with the quantitative data, Marie-Christine Rivière for collecting the reviews of *Distinction*, and Madeline Bédécarré for revising the style of this chapter in English.
2 The number of titles edited in different countries is higher, between 388 and 391 depending on whether or not we count the new editions. There are 435 if we include the titles in French, with five reprints in Pocket format. These data are based on Delsaut and Riviere's bibliography (2002).
3 For example, the book was reprinted in Tunis in 1979, but it also circulated directly from France, because of the centrality of French publishing in the francophone area (Sapiro, 2009).
4 Interview with Craig Calhoun, 3 January 2009.
5 *Ibid.*
6 These hypotheses are based on my current research on translation and publishing in the US and in France, based on quantitative data and qualitative data, including interviews and archival work (Sapiro, 2010).
7 They extracted all those that cited Bourdieu at least once from 1980 to 2004, generating a total of 235 articles (5.8 per cent of the 4,040 articles published by these journals during the period). This concerned 2 per cent of the journals at the beginning of the period and 11 per cent at the end. As they note (Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007a: 25, n4), the picture might have been a little different had they included *Theory and Society*, a less mainstream journal, in the launching of which Bourdieu was involved, and in which he was frequently quoted from the 1980s (11 per cent of the articles from 1980 to 1984 referred to him).

8 I remember an international conference on multiple correspondence analysis in Köln in 1997, where the majority of the participants referred to *Distinction*, but myself and another young colleague, Frédéric Lebaron, were the only scholars applying this method to explore fields.

9 Bourdieu is cited at the end of the book with a reference to the 1984 English translation of *Distinction* and not to the French original publications on field, which date back to the mid-1960s. He is cited along with other scholars who developed field theory, such as DiMaggio (who was one of the main importers of Bourdieu's field theory in the United States). This serves as an ideal-typical example of re-appropriation strategies in the scientific field.

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# 4

# The intellectual reception of Bourdieu in Australian social sciences and humanities[1]

*Ian Woodward and Michael Emmison*

## Introduction

In this chapter we critically reconstruct the story of Bourdieu's intellectual reception within Australia. Despite a number of propitious signs that his influence may have been more forcefully felt, our story charts an initial weak and patchy uptake of his *oeuvre*, but with an eventual realisation of his significance. Bourdieu's widespread recognition and appreciation came relatively late. Although there are a few notable exceptions, prior to the mid-1990s papers that explore aspects of his conceptual armoury—or even simply make reference to his work—in Australian journals, or by Australian authors in international journals, are few and far between. Moreover, when his work is referred to, the citations are frequently 'ceremonial' in character.[2] The process of his appropriation gathers pace in the late 1990s and intensifies after 2000. The year 2002 is something of a landmark: in that year Brisbane, the state capital of Queensland, Australia's north-eastern region, hosted the International Sociological Association (ISA) conference. The 2002 ISA meeting featured six papers addressing aspects of his work, although only one of these was by an Australian based author.

The story of Bourdieu's reception, however, is complicated by the fact that there are initially two separate routes through which his ideas have been disseminated. One of these is through his home discipline of sociology, which has enjoyed a recognisable professional presence in Australian universities only since the mid-1960s when the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology* (*ANZJS*)—an inter-country collaboration which was to last until 1997—was first published. However, a great deal of social and cultural inquiry in Australia, particularly in regional tertiary institutions, has effectively been carried out under the auspices of the emergent rival discipline of cultural studies. Australia was one of the first nations to embrace this field, and many of its leading intellectuals have closer affinities to humanities-based cultural, literary and media studies than they do to the social sciences such as sociology, education or political science. A version of Bourdieu as a cultural theorist thus exists alongside the understanding of him as an empirical social scientist.

In this chapter, we document in more detail his lukewarm reception and eventual uptake as a scholar of significance. First, we chart the relative lack of influence of Bourdieu in Australian sociology, specifically within class and stratification studies, a field where one might expect Bourdieu to have had some sway. By focusing on key works and researchers, we show how this area was dominated by paradigms from three other fields: those inspired by the historical and Gramscian tradition; those influenced by the North American positivist tradition of status attainment; and, finally, the work of those who adopted the neo-Marxist and Weberian occupational schema models, which were an important innovation in the conceptualisation of class structure during the 1980s. For each of these traditions, Bourdieu's *avant* mix of abstract theory and method, and his idiosyncratic conceptualisations of class, were largely irrelevant. Partly, this is also a story of the global networks into which these Australians researchers were integrated, which tended to look toward America (Columbia, Wisconsin) and Britain (Oxford), rather than Europe (Paris). At the same time, the growth of cultural studies in Australia—the second of the two routes—took its initial inspiration from Birmingham School approaches and critical semiotics, and its key figures emerged from literary schools rather than the social sciences. From this perspective, Bourdieu's scrupulously empirical cultural investigations must have seemed antiquated. It is only since the late 1990s, prompted by an important empirical study of taste informed by both the sociological and cultural studies traditions (Bennett *et al.*, 1999), that his work has been more widely appreciated by cultural analysts. We outline the relationship between this study and Bourdieu's classic work *Distinction* (1984), with which it has clear affinities. In the final section of the chapter, we present the results of a content analysis of Australia's principal sociological journal, which reveals the extent of his omission and eventual incorporation in more detail. It is clear that Bourdieu now exerts an interdisciplinary influence in a variety of contemporary research fields, yet one that is still to be unified.

## Sociology in Australia: a natural home for Bourdieu?

The relative indifference of Australian sociology to Bourdieu's work is, on the face of it, surprising given its long-standing interest in matters such as social stratification, class and inequality, and social disadvantage—all areas in which Bourdieu's influence has been productively felt in many other countries. In the case of Australia, this intellectual preoccupation by sociologists with social inequality was perhaps prompted by the need to challenge the popular mythology in which Australia has been celebrated as a classless egalitarian society.

A great deal of sociological research and writing within Australia has been expended on debunking the myth of 'classlessness'. Closer inspection of this literature reveals a number of divisions—mostly methodological—within the social science academy which suggest some clues as to why Bourdieu's writings were neglected. Academic inquiry into social class arguably pre-dates the institutionalisation of sociology as a separate academic field, the first systematic research on class in Australia emanating from the Department of Psychology at the University of Melbourne (Oeser and Hammond, 1954). Rather less attention was paid in these early studies, however, to the investigation of class structure *per se*, and far more was given to subjective considerations—perceptions and evaluations of the class differences as well as some rudimentary political consequences of these beliefs. This largely descriptive interest in class imagery and class consciousness was echoed in a number of locally influential studies that followed over the next decades (Davies, 1967; Encel, 1970; Hiller, 1975; Chamberlain, 1983).

By the early 1980s, however, stratification research—to employ the more generic category—within Australia appeared to have stabilised into two broadly defined camps, distinguished primarily on methodological grounds, and which were largely incompatible and occasionally mutually hostile. On one hand was a looser collection represented most clearly by the Marxist descriptive work of Connell and her colleagues on the political left (e.g. Connell, 1977a,b, 1983a; Connell and Irving, 1980), but also including a number of more qualitative ethnographic studies (e.g. Wild, 1974; Williams, 1981). Located within an older tradition of historical inquiry, and profoundly influenced by E.P. Thompson's (1968) conception of class as a 'lived experience', Connell's work had its agenda set by an *a priori* concern with specific political—socialist—objectives. Significant or heroic moments in working class struggle, problems in the attainment of the appropriate forms of class consciousness, above all the conception of class analysis as the study of hegemonic social power figure prominently here. Connell's Marxism was primarily indebted to Gramsci, an influence which was also to extend to her later work on gender relations and the construction of masculinity. There appeared to be no place in Connell's *oeuvre* on class for Bourdieu. However, Connell does acknowledge the utility of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and his theory of practice elsewhere. In their important work on schooling and the reproduction of inequality, *Making the Difference* (1982), Connell and her colleagues see cultural capital as contributing to an explanation of pupil success or failure at school, yet they critique this model of the school and home relationship as 'drastically impoverished and static' (Connell *et al.*, 1982: 188). By the time of writing *Gender and Power* (1987) Connell has crystallised her critique of Bourdieu, who, along with Giddens, is now seen as failing to offer an account of agency: 'History does happen in Bourdieu's world, but it is not produced' (Connell, 1987: 94).

Partly in opposition to this descriptive historical mode of inquiry, and what was perceived to be the underdevelopment of quantitative sociology in Australia more generally, an alternative approach to stratification research was established during the 1980s, in which the mass survey and its associated statistical data analysis techniques became the principal component. At best indifferent to, and at times disdainful[3] of, the preoccupations of the former group, these latter researchers (Broom *et al.*, 1980; Jones and Davis, 1986; Graetz and McAllister, 1988) opted to sacrifice extended theoretical or conceptual clarification into the nature of class as a structuring principle for a limited but, it was argued, more rigorously empirical set of concerns. The theoretical inspiration for this line of inquiry came from the American 'status attainment' tradition (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Featherman and Hauser, 1978). Bourdieu's writings and his idiosyncratic models of class were even less relevant to this project.

A third approach to class analysis within Australia opened up in the late 1980s, when researchers from the University of Queensland and Griffith University joined the International Project on Comparative Class Structure and Class Consciousness, which had been inaugurated by the US quantitative Marxist sociologist Erik Olin Wright. The principal publication from the Australian researchers on Wright's Comparative Project (Baxter *et al.*, 1991) was conceived as an attempt to combine the best aspects of the two existing approaches to class analysis, in that it would engage seriously with theoretical conceptions of class but would also ground its claims in systematically acquired new data. However, the theoretical models of class that were utilised in this study were derived, understandably, from Wright's own novel thinking about the relational aspects of class as well as the work of the leading UK sociologist Goldthorpe and his neo-Weberian market-based conception of class position. The core focus of the study was to investigate the class structure using these rival models and to assess their applicability to conventional 'class-dependent' variables such as demographic class formation, class consciousness and identity, and the nexus between work and family life. Although Bourdieu's work was not systematically rejected, there was no conceptual space for his theoretical concerns in this study, and his work is cited only perfunctorily.[4]

In their discussion of Bourdieu's influence on UK stratification research, Savage and Bennett (2005) observe that interest by British inequality theorists in Bourdieu's work has been piecemeal and partial. They go on to comment that

> An important reason for this relative lack of engagement between the sociology of social inequality and Bourdieu's work is linked to the specific way that Bourdieu's work was introduced into British sociology. In France, Bourdieu is generally regarded as the quintessential orthodox sociologist, committed to 'scientific' empirical research, ill-disposed towards the 'cultural turn' [...] In the English speaking world, however, Bourdieu has been imported through channels more sympathetic to issues of culture [...] and this mode of reception has coloured subsequent readings of his work.
>
> *(Savage and Bennett, 2005: 2)*

The appropriation of Bourdieu by Australian sociological class analysts—at least until the mid-1990s—is, as we have shown, even less conspicuous than in the case of the UK. In the next section we turn to examine the reception of Bourdieu by cultural studies approaches, which, as Savage and Bennett suggest, may have been more sympathetic.

## Cultural studies and the reception of Bourdieu

The growth of cultural studies in the 1980s and 1990s was a prominent feature of the intellectual scene in a wide range of Australian institutions. This was a time when ideas and theories about culture, the cultural turn, and postmodernism had reached a degree of popularity in the academic community. As Frow (2007) documents in his situated historical survey of the currents of Australian cultural studies, it was in this period that Australian universities incubated a large number of cultural studies scholars who subsequently gained international prominence. Frow observes that cultural studies was formed less as a disciplinary space than as a space of intellectual flows, characterised by experimentation and fluidity. Taking inspiration from many thinkers, disciplines and theories, Australian cultural studies had at least the appearance of a relatively formless approach to studying culture, which constructed the normative boundaries of its practice. In these circumstances, cultural studies was a field where one might expect Bourdieu's mix of theoretical ideas, infused as they were by questions of power, domination and cultural practice, to gain acceptance and influence. Moreover, this period was, after all, and chiefly in this field of intellectual work, a theoretical moment set apart as a time of 'delirious consumerism' (Morris, quoted in Frow, 2007: 69) in relation to theory where celebrity, performativity, aura—and perhaps even the provenance of being 'French'—mattered for the uptake and circulation of new ideas in the humanities. In Australia, for example, Baudrillard and Lyotard gave famous and well attended public talks in Sydney in the 1990s. Leading scholars, for example the Sydney-based feminist theorist of the body Elizabeth Grosz, were responsible for championing continental theorists such as Deleuze and Guattari to antipodean intellectual audiences in the 1980s (Frow, 2007: 67). Supported by close networks of friendships and strong local publishing outlets overseen by powerful local gatekeepers, theoretical innovations—and sometimes intellectual fashionability—clearly mattered (Frow and Morris, 1993).

As in the case of Bourdieu's half-hearted deployment within sociology, despite such conditions favouring both innovation and continental theory, the uptake of Bourdieu's work in Australian cultural studies has been much less extensive than other major theorists and traditions. To explain this, we must look to the nature of the field of cultural studies, and to the development of its intellectual discourses within Australian universities. Further, this must be considered in relation to local intellectual networks, considered in the context of the influence of strong global currents on Australian cultural studies. Rather than necessarily being a relatively free space of innovation, cultural studies was a structured field of academic practice where some theorists and theoretical perspective became favoured more than others. Morris (in Morris and Muecke, 1991), for example, pointed out that the principal challenge for the cultural studies theorist was to immerse themselves in the space of intellectual flows and to construct theoretical innovation 'on the spot', defining their space in relation to other theoretical spaces. In the 1980s, the early days of cultural studies in Australia, 'the moment of theory' celebrated the potentiality of theoretical thinking freed from, and in critique of, disciplines. This in itself may have harmed the potential for uptake of Bourdieu's ideas, given his early anthropological work engaged with a strong strand of structuralism in the tradition of Lévi-Strauss. Clearly, such a formalist pedigree would not have been attractive to most cultural studies scholars of the period, who might have been interested in the Lévi-Straussian figure of the *bricoleur*, but not in a structuralist reading of a Kabyle house.

The disciplinary mythology of cultural studies suggested a field defined by a democracy of theoretical ideas, by innovation and intellectual *bricoleurship*. For example, Turner (1993) makes the case that the cultural studies tradition in Australia is without origin myths, being in a state of perpetual fragmentation. Such an assertion seems to constitute a myth in its own right. In trying to uncover the myths of Australian nationhood, it actually creates its own mythical objects, succumbing to the same logic it claims to expose. This is a point picked up on by Frow (2007), who points out that this account of the origin of Australian cultural studies uncritically overlooks the structural conditions of knowledge production in this field. Knowing about this field can inform us of the relative possibilities of Bourdieu's ideas taking hold. Before we look more closely, a qualification needs to be made: in talking about key figures, we talk about them as though they were 'Australian'. In most cases the key figures in Australian cultural studies were globally mobile and networked. Some had received their training overseas, many or all were likely to have significant overseas research contacts or relationships, some moved to Australia from the UK to take up positions, but were nonetheless pivotal in the development of Australian cultural studies. The degree of this global networking stands in contrast to the relatively inward-looking nature of the Australian sociological tradition.

Frow's (2007) genealogy of Australian cultural studies shows the multiple theoretical, geographic, institutional, publishing and network factors that have constituted cultural studies in Australia. Cultural studies took hold first in relatively young universities and regionally peripheral universities where a lack of historically entrenched research interests favoured innovation. Faculties latched onto new theoretical ideas with enthusiasm and saw themselves as creating cutting-edge research and teaching programs. So, this is partly a mix of mythology and historical fact. However, while this aspect of the cultural studies narrative of openness and innovation has probably been a foundation stone for the discipline globally, its idealism overlooks various structural realities. The intellectual provenances of the discipline's key players tended to be from strands of Marxism as played out in the British cultural studies tradition. Frow's (2007) documentation shows Marxism to be a general influence, noting that a number of key players in the field came out of the Althusserian tradition. A further major strand took inspiration from Foucault's ideas on governmentality and applied them to cultural policy questions in the field. This perspective was originally championed by the group of scholars at Griffith University in the 1970s such as David Saunders and Ian Hunter, and later Tony Bennett, who formed the Institute for Cultural Policy Studies at Griffith in 1987, which became an agenda-setting organisation for the dissemination of research into cultural and media policy for at least the next decade. Predominantly dealing with cultural policy and with media production and institutions—a field where we might have expected Bourdieu's ideas to be useful—the key theoretical frames were articulated by media theorists from the British tradition and Foucauldian ideas about governance, citizenship and the subject.

Along with Marxism, Australian cultural studies drew heavily from the formative British tradition of cultural studies, including the work of Hoggart and Williams, which tended to encourage a nostalgic embrace of the everyday and pointed to the inherent value of working-class and popular culture. Complementing this, and inspired by Gramscian ideas of hegemony which found their apotheosis in Birmingham School texts such as *Policing the Crisis* (Hall *et al*., 1978), cultural studies was firmly grounded in critical cultural analyses of the 'construction of the hegemonically organised everyday'

(Frow 2007: 68). A prominent example of this model is found in the work of Graeme Turner, whose work should be seen as developing Australian cultural studies in a way that links both to nascent forms of native cultural critique by writers such as Robin Boyd, Craig McGregor, Donald Horne and Humphrey McQueen, and to the aforementioned British tradition. Turner's texts *National Fictions* (1986) and *Myths of Oz* (co-authored with Fiske and Hodge: Fiske *et al.*, 1987) were important in this regard, undertaking cultural critiques of contemporary Australian culture using ideas principally drawn from semiotics. In *Myths of Oz* the turn toward acknowledgment of popular suburban culture arrived more fully developed, though in a rather theoretically and empirically impoverished form. This version of Australian poplar culture analysis retained an interest in the principal sites that carried popular 'myths'—the suburbs, shops, the beach—as did McGregor, Horne and to some extent Boyd. However, this more recent work is notable for its deployment of semiotic principles in the analysis of culture, hence its subtitle *Reading Australian Popular Culture*. Consistent with Barthes' stated goal in *Mythologies* (1973), Fiske, Hodge and Turner's goal was to expose the ideological—capitalist, masculinist, middle-class, family-based—values which apparently lay unexposed within everyday cultural forms. The emphasis was not on cultural capital, practices and cultural fields, but was premised on the privileged position of the analyst to make a reading of a range of cultural domains. This was a (rather turgid) semiotically inspired version of cultural Marxism; Barthes without *élan*.

While Turner's work best illustrates one dominant trajectory within Australian cultural studies which largely ignored Bourdieu in favour of cultural Marxism and semiotics, we can look to the work of John Frow and Tony Bennett as examples somewhat counter to this pattern. Significantly, however, it is the case that both Bennett and Frow are, by their own admissions, not straightforward cultural studies scholars. Frow suggests that his work sits at the edge of cultural studies, engaging with it as a means of carrying out work that sits between the humanities and social sciences (2007: 60). Frow's (1987) paper in the first edition of the key Australian journal *Cultural Studies* (formerly *Australian Journal of Cultural Studies*) shows simultaneously a deep engagement with and ambivalence towards Bourdieu's work *Distinction*. In it Frow demonstrates both sensitivity and skill for social scientific empiricism as practised in Bourdieu's work, but develops a powerful rejection of some of its basic principles. Frow's argument was that Bourdieu's model of tastes was too rigid, failing to allow for facets of relationality and tension in the way aesthetic objects are interpreted. By reworking Bourdieu's own classifications of cultural and economic capitals in the field of music preferences, Frow shows the arbitrariness of Bourdieu's assumptions, challenging his model of how class fractions supposedly relate to cultural forms. Without offering his own empirical evidence, Frow skilfully deconstructs—and then reconstructs—Bourdieu's model, and suggests an account of aesthetic relations which promises greater flexibility and reflexivity.

Bennett's work perhaps sits both more centrally within cultural studies and also the sociology of culture. Whilst his earlier work on popular culture took inspiration from Gramscian perspectives on hegemony, much of his later work on museums has been inspired by the Foucauldian turn in culture. Its basic presupposition is that culture is something acted upon by policy; it is policy that constitutes culture (Jin, 2008: 171).

Bennett's investigation of the emergence of the modern exhibition and museum (Bennett, 1995) was designed primarily as a Foucauldian-inspired investigation of techniques of governance and sites for civic inculcation. But Bennett's scholarly ambit has been more catholic, and he has deployed a mix of social scientific methodologies which allow him to maintain a research profile across the cultural studies and sociology spectrum. His subsequent interest in Bourdieu was ignited by his perceived need to investigate the relations between culture, class and power across the broader space of lifestyles. Although Bennett is ultimately equivocal about Bourdieu's contribution to these questions, he recognises their utility for exploring longstanding issues in cultural inquiries relating to the nexus of culture, education and class: 'Bourdieu's work points us to [...] the most theoretically productive and politically relevant framework from which to engage with questions of class analysis' (Bennett, in Jin, 2008: 168).

Finally, in summarising the cultural studies reception of Bourdieu, we should also note the work of Ghassan Hage, a scholar whose research crosses the boundaries of anthropology and social and cultural theory. Hage's writings (1998) have drawn extensively on Bourdieu's work and have had a strong bearing on questions of belonging and citizenship in relation to population mobilities, immigration and the negotiations of cultural difference.

## Bourdieu as both sociologist and cultural theorist: the Australian everyday culture project

The 'sociological' and the 'cultural studies' appropriations of Bourdieu appeared to coalesce in the mid-1990s in the institutional form of the Australian Everyday Culture Project (AECP), a major empirical inquiry into the social distribution of taste which was, in broad outline, developed as a replication of Bourdieu's analysis of the French system of tastes reported in *Distinction* (1984). The project was a collaboration between Bennett, who was then the Director of the Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy at Griffith University, Michael Emmison, from the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland, and Frow, also based at that time at University of Queensland in the Department of English. However, to see the study as some mechanical fusion of these two fields is to underestimate the degree of inter-disciplinary engagement which, as we have seen, was a constituent feature of Bennett's and Frow's career trajectories. This point was made clear in the authors' introductory chapter where they comment that:

> A further difference between our work and that of Bourdieu consists in the disciplinary protocols which have shaped our inquiry. Bourdieu, of course, has always written as a sociologist; indeed, militantly so in his unremitting advocacy of the virtues of an empirically-grounded, but theoretically-reflexive, sociology over the more philosophical and, in his eyes, fanciful intellectual styles which have characterised the work of many other leading French intellectuals. In Anglophone countries, however, questions concerning the relations of culture, class, gender and ethnicity have been equally to the fore in debates within cultural studies—debates

> which, supposing we had an inclination to do so, have been too influential to be ignored. We have, however, had no such inclination. To the contrary, our purpose in working together on this project has been to learn from the different disciplinary perspectives we have been able to contribute as a team whose members include one whose career and professional identity has always been within sociology, a second who has moved from a disciplinary training in comparative literature to locate his work mainly within cultural studies, and a third who has moved between sociology and cultural studies at different points in his career. Given this, the question of opting for either sociology or cultural studies simply never arose; the issue was always one of how to effect a productive imbrication of the concerns and procedures of both.
>
> *(Bennett et al., 1999: 13–14)*

To a significant extent this can be observed in the way the AECP study was designed to allow for the discovery of the distributional effects of a range of variables—in addition to social class—in the determination of the cultural choices and tastes of their sample. Bourdieu's position, developed in detail in *Distinction*, that there was a fundamental opposition between a bourgeois aesthetic of disinterestedness and a working class taste culture structured by its habitus of the necessary was not seen as relevant to a society like Australia, already well on its way to a de-industrialised service economy. Class was not ignored in the project, but it was also manifestly obvious to the research team that Bourdieu's *ad hoc* system of class fractions derived from 1960s France simply would not translate to Australia of the 1990s. Accordingly, an innovative class model, drawing on elements of Erik Olin Wright's Marxist schema—in particular so as to retain the category of 'employers' as a discreet class grouping—and the Weberian occupational status model devised by UK sociologist John Goldthorpe, was developed for the analysis of their data. Nevertheless, the project did take significant direct inspiration from Bourdieu, down to the reproduction of very similar, or even identical, survey questions.

Suspicions about the relevance of a simplistic class taste model were borne out in the results of their inquiry. Other variables, in particular age and gender, were found to be often better predictors of taste choices. The overall picture that emerged was of an altogether more complex structuring of cultural choice than Bourdieu had envisaged. The dominant pattern of cultural practice demonstrated a clear differentiation between an omnivorous or *inclusive* mode of taste, in which people participate actively in a wide range of activities, and a univorous or *restricted* mode, in which participation was relatively passive and confined to relatively narrow areas. The inclusive mode was most strongly correlated with high levels of education, with urbanity, with youth, and with women rather than men; significantly, its core class location was the professional, not the employers or even those enjoying managerial authority and privileges. The restricted mode is associated with low levels of education, with rural and regional Australia, with age, and with men rather than women, and it was most clearly exemplified in the manual working class.

In this respect, their findings gave support to the emerging work on omnivorous taste cultures in the US by Richard Peterson and his associates (Peterson, 1992;

Peterson and Simkus, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996). But the AECP was able to extend and refine Peterson's work in crucial respects. For example, in relation to musical culture, the researchers discovered an important difference between 'tastes' and knowledge of different music genres and performers. This was something that was never entertained as an issue with Bourdieu, and was analytically blurred in Peterson's own work. 'Omnivorousness', the neologism introduced by Peterson and Kern, needed to be understood in terms of a knowledge base rather than of any deep affinity for a range of music genres. What the AECP showed was that inclusive music taste—the domain of the omnivore—was not to be found among those closest to the apex of the taste hierarchy. Peterson was partly correct in his view that univorous tastes are more likely to be found among those nearer the base of the socio-economic order, but this was also found to be a characteristic of professionals' music tastes. Manual workers and professionals did not like the same types of music, but what each had in common was a tendency to make their selections from amongst aesthetically similar genres: more highbrow in the case of professionals, more lowbrow in the case of workers. In short, both had tastes that were more restricted than other classes. Where they differed was in their command of musical cultures. Manual workers remain more restricted than other classes in the knowledge they have of both classical and popular music; in contrast, professionals have much more inclusive knowledge of both of these realms. In later work, Emmison (2003) was to suggest that this greater ability to move between, and demonstrate knowledge of, 'discrepant' cultural realms was a significant asset that the high status professionals enjoyed. The 'cultural mobility' which this strata can exercise has also been linked to the debates concerning the growth of cosmopolitanism (Skrbis *et al.*, 2004; Woodward *et al.*, 2008).

## Documenting the trajectory of Bourdieu's appropriation

Having presented the historical context of Bourdieu's partial appropriation in sociology and cultural studies, in the final section of this chapter we provide a more nuanced account of the trajectory of Bourdieu's uptake within the Australian academic community. In order to do this, we carried out a number of investigations of relevant publications using content analysis procedures. The first was to examine all issues of the journal that has served as the 'official' professional outlet for Australian sociological research. Our primary aim was to locate articles that had discussed or cited Bourdieu, using the particular work or works cited as approximate indicators of his intellectual influence. Bourdieu has provided such a rich inventory of conceptual tools that it is likely that his incorporation within Australian sociological research has drawn selectively on certain concepts as opposed to a more diffuse wholesale adoption. However, as we have noted earlier, this yielded a relatively meagre total, and consequently we have supplemented our discussion by noting articles in the same journal that, whilst addressing issues germane to his *oeuvre*, had *not* included a reference to his work: an index, so to speak, of his 'invisibility' within the Australian sociological community—or perhaps more accurately, a lost opportunity on its part. With only one national sociology journal to examine, our task has been simplified, but clearly this procedure is unlikely to provide an exhaustive account of all the

Bourdieusian-influenced research work by Australian sociologists. Accordingly, our final step was to expand our database by locating articles by Australians that drew significantly on his work, which had been published in other national and international sociological and social science journals.

The discipline of sociology was a comparatively late arrival on the Australian academic scene. Universities were reluctant to give sociology an independent place and, although its existence can be seen in courses—generally under different names—from as early as the 1920s, it was not until 1965 that the discipline achieved significant visibility. In that year the first issue of the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology* (*ANZJS*)—an inter-country collaboration which was to last until the 1990s—was published. The professed aims of the Editorial Board (1965: 1) were to 'reflect what is going on in sociology in Australia and New Zealand and to tell the rest of the world about it', and second 'to serve as an outlet for scholarly contributions by Australian and New Zealand sociologists as well as for articles by overseas scholars writing about Australasia'. In 1997 the two national professional bodies severed connections and the *ANZJS* was relaunched as the (Australian based, internationally published) *Journal of Sociology*.

For most of its first decade, the emphasis in the *ANZJS* was very much on the local scene, and the journal carried a series of largely descriptive studies of Australian cities and regions. There was very little engagement with 'theory' or theorists of any persuasion. At the same time, as we have seen, an enduring theme in Australian sociology has been the study of class and stratification, and this found its way into the journal almost from its inception. For example, an early issue (Vol. 5) carried a two-part annotated bibliography of Australian research on social stratification for the period 1946–67 that ran to over 950 entries. Substantive articles on class issues were also evident in these early issues, most significantly those by Australia's leading class analyst during the 1970s and 1980s, R.W. Connell. However, Bourdieu is conspicuously absent in these. Perhaps most surprising is an article by Connell (1974) dealing with the causes of educational inequality. *Inter alia* Connell cites the work of Althusser, Bernstein and Gramsci—but not Bourdieu. The same fate befalls him in another, more substantial, article by Connell (1977a) which provides a detailed investigation of the theoretical logic in class and stratification research.

The first citation of Bourdieu's work in the *ANZJS* occurs in an article written by Counihan (1975) in a symposium dealing with the mass media. Counihan's article is an examination of theoretical approaches to the reception of media content, in particular television. He cites, albeit ceremonially, Bourdieu's 1968 article 'Outline of a sociological theory of art perception' in support of the view that media audiences need to be understood as culturally constructed. Five years elapse before Bourdieu makes his next appearance, which takes place in 1980 in a symposium on the sociology of education. Bourdieu is briefly discussed in three of the eight articles in the symposium. In one of these papers, author Jan Branson (1980: 11) observes tellingly that 'among educationalists, the reading of Bourdieu remains highly selective, with few educational sociologists seeing any need to examine the theoretical basis of his approach'. As we have seen, the leading empirical study of schooling and the home at this time (Connell *et al.*, 1982) echoed these sentiments.

For much of the 1980s, Branson's comments appear apposite and the story is largely one of Bourdieu's omission from published articles for which his work might appear central. Two examples are Lees and Senyard's (1985) paper dealing with the way middle-class taste practices are represented in children's literature, and Ryan's (1986) explication of the role of education in class reproduction. It is difficult to imagine that citations of Bourdieu's work would not have been included had these articles been published in any of the national European sociological journals at a corresponding time.

A significant moment in his intellectual reception occurs in 1987, when the *ANZJS* published an article by the French sociologist Loïc Wacquant, who has since become a leading commentator on Bourdieu's work as well as co-author with him of *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Wacquant (1987) offered an extended, critical discussion of many aspects of Bourdieu's sociology, but with a particular focus on the concept of symbolic violence. We are uncertain as to whether Wacquant's article should be included in our results. Wacquant has had no connections with Australia and was based at the University of Chicago at the time the article was published. Although we have no evidence to support this interpretation, it seems likely that Wacquant submitted his paper to the *ANZJS* after it had been rejected elsewhere. Whatever the case, the article did not appear to serve as the catalyst for Australian sociologists to pick up Bourdieu's conceptual tools and, with the exception of a few ceremonial citations, he disappears from the pages of the journal for the next eight years.

From the mid-1990s the situation changes, and references to Bourdieu and research that draws significantly on his work become increasingly prevalent. We can also observe something of a diffusion in the disciplinary reception of his work as articles by Australian researchers citing his work, or engaging more substantively with his key concepts, begin to appear in non-sociological journals in increasing numbers. An indication of this disciplinary migration can be observed in Table 4.1, which lists the articles since 1990 that we have located by Australian scholars, or those articles drawing on Australian data, citing or engaging with Bourdieu's work.

There are two points we wish to draw attention to in Table 4.1. The first is the proliferation of areas in which his work has been applied. Bourdieu's concepts have been taken up in a diverse range of research fields, including organisation studies, sports studies, socio-legal studies and the study of the senses, but he remains predominantly used within educational research and the study of cultural consumption. The second point, which is not directly evident from the table, is that not all these studies have appropriated his work to the same degree. The articles span the entire range from ceremonial citations to substantial research studies that seek to apply, critique and extend his core research program.

## Conclusion

The transplanting of a scholarly *oeuvre* is subject to a number of possible competing influences. First, the work of any scholar will be read locally, through the intellectual and material traditions that structure the field of any national culture. Secondly,

*Table 4.1* Summary of published articles 1990–2008 by Australian based researchers citing or using Bourdieu

| *Date* | *Journal* | *Author(s)* | *Title* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1992 | *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* | Adkins and Emmison | Youth theatre and the articulation of cultural capital: refocusing Bourdieu through ethnography |
| 1993 | *Thesis Eleven* | Harrison | Bourdieu and the possibility of a postmodern sociology |
| 1995 | *Journal of Sociology* | Crook | The role of mothers in the educational and status attainment of Australian men and women |
| 1997 | *Journal of Sociology* | Crook | Occupational returns to cultural participation in Australia |
| 1997 | *Journal of Sociology* | Emmison | Transformations of taste: Americanisation, generational change and Australian cultural consumption |
| 1997 | *Language and Education* | Carrington and Luke | Literacy and Bourdieu's sociological theory: a reframing |
| 1999 | *Journal of Sociology* | Bulbeck | The nature dispositions of visitors to animal encounter sites in Australia and New Zealand |
| 2000 | *Social Analysis* | Uhlmann | Incorporating masculine domination: theoretical and ethnographic elaborations |
| 2001 | *Journal of Sociology* | Franklin and White | Animals and modernity: changing human–animal relations, 1949–98 |
| 2001 | *Poetics* | Woodward and Emmison | From aesthetic principles to collective sentiments: the logics of everyday judgements of taste |
| 2002 | *Organizational Research Methods* | Everett | Organizational research and the praxeology of Pierre Bourdieu |
| 2002 | *Journal of Consumer Culture* | Turner and Edmonds | The distaste of taste: Bourdieu, cultural capital and the Australian post-war elite |
| 2003 | *Cultural Studies* | Schirato and Webb | Bourdieu's concept of reflexivity as metaliteracy |
| 2003 | *Cultural Studies* | Noble and Watkins | So, how did Bourdieu learn to play tennis? Habitus consciousness and habituation |
| 2003 | *Journal of Sociology* | Emmison | Social class and cultural mobility: reconfiguring the cultural omnivore thesis |
| 2003 | *Journal of Sociology* | Woodward | Divergent narratives in the imagining of the home amongst middle class consumers |
| 2004 | *Thesis Eleven* | Smith | Marcel Proust as successor and precursor to Pierre Bourdieu: a fragment |
| 2004 | *Sport, Education and Society* | Hunter | Bourdieu and the social space of the PE class: reproduction of doxa through practice |
| 2004 | *British Journal of Sociology of Education* | Kenway and McLeod | Bourdieu's reflexive sociology and spaces of points of view: whose reflexivity, which perspective? |

*(Continued)*

*Table 4.1* Summary of published articles 1990–2008 by Australian based researchers citing or using Bourdieu (Continued)

| *Date* | *Journal* | *Author(s)* | *Title* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | *Theory and Research in Education* | Allard | Capitalizing on Bourdieu: how useful are concepts of social capital and social field for researching marginalized young women? |
| 2005 | *Theory and Research in Education* | Bullen and Kenway | Bourdieu, subcultural capital and risky girlhood |
| 2005 | *Theory and Research in Education* | McLeod | Feminists re-reading Bourdieu: old debates and new questions about gender, habitus and gender change |
| 2005 | *Journal of Educational Policy* | Rawolle | Cross-field effects and temporary social fields: a case study of the mediatization of recent Australian knowledge economy policies |
| 2006 | *The Senses and Society* | Gallegos and McHoul | 'It's not about good taste. It's about tastes good': Bourdieu and Campbell's soup … and beyond |
| 2006 | *Social & Legal Studies* | Van Krieken | Law's autonomy in action: anthropology and history in court |
| 2007 | *Journal of Sociology* | Hinde and Dixon | Reinstating Pierre Bourdieu's contribution to cultural economy theorizing |
| 2007 | *Journal of Sociology* | Bowman | Men's business: negotiating entrepreneurial business and family life |
| 2008 | *British Journal of Sociology of Education* | Mills | Reproduction and transformation of inequalities in schooling: the transformative potential of the theoretical constructs of Bourdieu |
| 2008 | *British Journal of Sociology of Education* | Funnell | Tracing variations within rural habitus: an explanation of why young men stay or leave rural towns in southwest Queensland |
| 2008 | *Journal of Sociology* | Powell | *Amor fati*?: gender habitus and young people's negotiation of (hetero)sexual consent |

scholarly *oeuvre*s will be interpreted through disciplinary prisms, so that their meaning and trajectory of influence is not guaranteed, but is differentially understood in relation to emergent and historically embedded intellectual movements. Thus, like any type of object, intellectual objects will be constructed, interpreted and utilised according to the dominant ways of seeing and knowing such objects. In the case of Bourdieu, although his work on class, social status and cultural practices is now recognised as groundbreaking, and indeed constitutes a substantial theoretical and methodological paradigm across the social sciences, it was not immediately celebrated, let alone adopted, within the Australian scholarly field. The reasons for this weak uptake relate to the commitment of Australian researchers to the dominant scholarly traditions of the United States and the United Kingdom. Some received their training in these centres, others migrated from them to work in Australian universities. Consequently, it was not until the 1990s—relatively late in terms of Bourdieu's *oeuvre*—that Bourdieu's work began to be taken up with any eagerness. One of our main conclusions is that it was the Australian Everyday Culture Project—the most substantial Bourdieu-inspired project of this time—which was something of a watershed for the appreciation of Bourdieu's work in Australia, and demonstrated the potential of these ideas outside any narrow disciplinary orientation. The story since then has been more positive, with a proliferation of academic studies applying Bourdieu's ideas into diverse areas.

## Notes

1 This chapter was first published in *Sociologica*, the Italian Journal of Sociology online, Issue 2/3, 2009.
2 For an account of the way that the work of the classical sociological theorists is ceremonially cited in contemporary writing, including the functions which such ceremonial citations perform in scientific communication, see Adatto and Cole (1981).
3 For a vivid illustration of this point, see the acerbic exchange between Kelley and McAllister and Connell which took place, perhaps diplomatically concealed from the mainstream sociological arenas, in the pages of *Search*, the journal of science in Australia and New Zealand. See Connell (1983b) and Kelley and McAllister (1983a, 1983b). This struggle for ascendancy within class analysis that took place in Australia provides a vivid example of the conduct typical of the academic field that Bourdieu brilliantly dissects in *Homo Academicus* (1988).
4 We note, in passing, that Bourdieu endured a similar fate in the majority of the national studies which made up Wright's International Comparative Project. For example, there is no mention whatsoever of him in the book that reports the British study (Marshall *et al.*, 1988). France, moreover, was one of the few northern European countries not to participate in this international collaborative research. Wright (personal correspondence) has reported that his overtures to Bourdieu inquiring about the possibility of setting up a French inquiry were summarily rejected.

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# Part II

# The legacy of *Distinction* in France

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# 5

# From the '*petite bourgeoisie*' to the 'little-middles'*

## An invitation to question small-scale social mobility

*Marie Cartier, Isabelle Coutant, Olivier Masclet and Yasmine Siblot*

At the conclusion of our ethnographic study of a neighbourhood in greater Paris, inhabited by families in small-scale social ascent who had become single-family homeowners, we came up against difficulties in qualifying them socially. Were they members of the 'respectable' working class (Hoggart, 1957)? Should they be associated instead with the lower-middle class? Could their practices and world-view be accounted for by using the category '*petit-bourgeois*' (Bourdieu, 2010)? The categorisation was further complicated by the fact that a few households were characterised by a certain degree of heterogamy. We ultimately opted for an 'indigenous' category that an informant had used to socially situate himself, that of the '*petits-moyens*' ('little-middle') (Cartier *et al.*, 2008). It is not our intention, however, to defend the idea of the disappearance of social classes in favour of a 'middling' of French society. Our thinking is in continuity with Pierre Bourdieu's work, *Distinction* in particular. It is based on a multipolar conception of social space, holding that classes define themselves by their relations of domination, and that within each class category, class fractions have differentiated practices and inclinations according to the nature of their resources and trajectories. From this perspective, social position reflects the volume and structure of various kinds of capital—economic, but also cultural, social and symbolic—which are defined relationally. *Distinction* examines the internal diversity of the French middle classes in the 1970s in great detail. Inviting us to look at classes in a variety of social scenes (not just the work scene and relationships with production, but also the residential scene of everyday life and the family), the 'bourdieusian' approach points toward ethnography and local monographs. We took up this invitation for our study, as have others who have recently conducted studies in Britain (such as that of Cheadle in Greater Manchester: Savage *et al.*, 2005), Portugal (in Porto: Pereira Borges, 2005) and Germany (Hermann *et al.*, 2011).

Although we identify ourselves as having a 'bourdieusian' approach, we also try to grasp the transformations of the working classes and the middle classes and their relationships, in line with Olivier Schwartz's work. While confirming his conviction of the relevance of the concept of class, Schwartz emphasises his reservations about the state of analysis of the contemporary social space:

> For the time being we do not have an analysis of the class structure of contemporary France, a reading of contemporary France in terms of class which is satisfactory, which accounts for the developments and transformations which have affected this society since the late 1970s, and which might consequently be applied to what this society is today.
>
> *(Schwartz, 2009)*

Socially in-between situations seem to us to be good observatories: thinking about mobilities and borders between social groups drives questioning of the homogeneity of each broad class category and its class fractions. Thus, in speaking of 'little-middles' we want to go counter to the trend that reduces middle classes to 'cultural goodwill', and against the tendency to always and everywhere find the same working-class culture inherited from the 1930s–1950s. Our aim is to consider forms of dominated lifestyles invented since the 1960s, which the sociology of the 'working' or 'middle' classes has only barely described until now. We try to turn the concept of social ascent (especially in its most modest forms, which are the most frequent) away from that of a powerful and often painful 'divorce' from one's social origins, an association made both by certain Marxist usages of the *petit-bourgeois* concept[1] based on a political or moral judgement of 'class treason' and by analyses using the notion of 'split habitus' as developed by Bourdieu in particular. We reveal another form of social ascent by empirically studying hybrid lifestyles, the fruit of the complex adjustments and management work that accompanies them.

## 'Little-middles': an 'indigenous' concept

Frequently sociologists use the categories 'working classes', 'middle classes' or '*petite bourgeoisie*' routinely, without questioning them as a way of classifying groups and individuals. The originality of our undertaking is to suspend this routine to conceive of a classification that is relevant to our informants.

The study presented here took place over a period of nearly four years (2004–08) in a neighbourhood of 1,400 homes that we call 'The Poplars', located in a suburban town north of Paris. Its architectural homogeneity is the result of a series of overlapping periods of housing development construction starting in the 1920s. From 1958 to 1966, the neighbourhood saw the construction of 644 'row houses' or 'town houses' (adjoining two-storey houses sharing side walls) in several developments. These houses form rows of variable length, along a street or in a horseshoe around a small common. Houses have an area of 85 to 95 square metres, with four or five rooms, and little yards. Owners' associations manage the streets and shared infrastructure. It is a rather specific kind of habitat, individual, but akin to collective housing. Businesses and new schools appeared in the neighbourhood throughout the 1970s. Most homebuyers were employees in large businesses or public institutions, ranging from skilled workers to mid-level *cadres*.[2] These 'pioneers', as they call themselves, have formed a generation that has durably marked the neighbourhood with its manner of inhabiting the space, inventing what we have termed a 'local domestic culture'. Some of them left the neighbourhood, at first gradually in the 1970s and then more rapidly in the 1980s. A significant number of refugee families from Turkey (Kurds and Assyro-Chaldeans) have since settled in the row-houses: most of these large families (of eight to ten children) struggle to get by as workers in the clothing industry.

The third construction phase, from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, was one of tract houses in subdivisions. It produced 250 single-level houses from 90 to 110 square metres in area, with mid-sized yards. These houses are either duplex or single-family. The last phase, in the 1990s, developed around the construction of a golf course in 1991. These 200 houses have a higher standing. The residents distinguish them from the older parts of the neighbourhood by calling them the 'New Poplars'. A significant share of the residents in these new developments (dating to the 1980s and 1990s) had first lived in large housing complexes in the Paris region before leaving them for a house. This movement from public housing developments continues today, although not at the same scale as in the 1980s. The children of north or sub-Saharan African labourers, these new arrivals (like the pioneers) have experienced a certain small social mobility: through schooling and public employment, they have been able to obtain relatively stable jobs (public employees, bus drivers and mid-level *cadres*), being more highly trained than their parents.

We have, then, a wide range of housing in very diverse architectural styles and sizes, from 70 to 150 square metres, and with market values doubling between the more modest and more prestigious lodgings. They are occupied by a heterogeneous population, all the more so since the two parts of the neighbourhood are evolving so differently: one is affected by the growing insecurity of neighbouring towns, while the other is part of the movement of expanding suburban spaces to the middle and upper classes, who in France historically had preferred living closer to urban centres.

The concept of 'little-middles' that we took to designate the core of this relatively heterogeneous population is an 'indigenous category'.[3] Seeking a qualifier to identify his position and that of his neighbours, an informant began by saying they were 'the little folks' before correcting himself: 'not little-little, but little-middle'. This notion of 'little-middles' seemed to us to be particularly heuristic for taking account of the practices and representations of the neighbourhood's residents, in many ways evoking Cheadle, near Manchester, studied by Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst (2005).[4] It leads us to refrain from speaking spontaneously of 'respectable working classes', 'middle classes', 'new middle-salaried layers', or even '*petit-bourgeois*'. It led us to account for the specificities of the studied group in our characterisation, to be realistically and non-reductively attentive to its practices and inclinations, and ultimately to highlight the lifestyle of populations of working-class origins who were in social ascent in the socio-historical context of the thirty-year post-war prosperity known as the *Trente Glorieuses*, as well as that of France in the 2000s. Because our research was conducted in a housing development that had known several successive phases of settlement, we could actually approach two generations of little-middles: those arriving in the 1960s, who today are retirees; and those arriving in the 1990s, composed of two-career couples with school-aged children. The lifestyle appearing in the 1960s that we describe still persists in its principle characteristics, despite profound changes in the socio-economic context and the fact that researchers' and media attention is focused more on downward social mobility than on upward. This notion of 'little-middles' is thus to be thought of as a practical tool for critique and renewal of scholarly categories, and as an invitation to think about indigenous ways of representing one's own social position.

## How do the 'little-middles' resemble the '*petit-bourgeois*'?

It is in their social trajectory that the little-middles come close to *Distinction*'s *petit-bourgeois*, or more precisely what Pierre Bourdieu called the 'executant' or 'rising' *petite bourgeoisie*—its youngest fraction in ascent (mid-level *cadres*, technicians, commercial and clerical workers).

Indeed, the small homeowners we studied are characterised by a trajectory of social ascent from the working class, a rise that is simultaneously inter- and intra-generational. Through their lines of work, their residence, and their educational degrees, these little-middles objectively differentiate themselves from their families of origin. Their residential and professional ascent does involve a departure from the working class *milieu*, though this happens differently according to generation: the 1960s arrivals came from different constituent groups of the traditional working classes (labourers, farmers and small independent workers), more often from outside greater Paris, whereas those who have moved in more recently often come from the high-rise public housing projects on the outskirts of Paris, and are more often from families of foreign-born labourers. After pursuing education for longer than their parents, the households studied acceded to more stable employment in large public or private organisations or within the civil service, and to more highly trained labourer, technician or worker positions, often followed by an ascendant mobility over the course of their career. Interviews focused on inter- and intra-generational trajectories also reveal an 'objective' social mobility that the informants perceive as such and try neither to minimise nor to give an inflated importance.[5]

The expressions widely heard in interviews to evoke their life course lead one to believe that this objective ascent is accompanied by an aspiration of advancement. For example, when they speak of their neighbourhood's past, the retired little-middles speak of a neighbourhood of 'lower *cadres*'. The little-middles who are still professionally active point to their 'efforts' to 'evolve' in society. We find another objective indicator in their 'voluntarist' accession to the property of an individual house. By 'voluntarist' we wish to draw attention to the fact that all of the households studied came from backgrounds where their families were not able to help them invest in real estate (frequently being the first generation to become owners), so accession to property ownership represents both financial and symbolic effort, and a significant family mobilisation. Whichever generation of owners, home ownership is far from a given, for reasons that are both the same (low income) and different according to the period: a housing shortage and policies privileging collective rental housing in the early 1960s; depressed socio-economic circumstances and destabilisation of the wage workforce in the 1990s–2000s. This residential voluntarism joins with a strong aspiration for social promotion that is made possible through continuing education programmes, or by repeated investment in preparation for competitive examinations that allow access to jobs with employment security or possibilities for promotion.

This aspiration for social advancement may find itself in tension with their working-class past, as shown, for example, by limiting social relations with their families of origin, whether they be living in the provinces, for the older residents (who rarely plan on leaving greater Paris after their retirement), or still in public housing projects, in the case of the more recently arrived generation, still working and with young children. The extended family is not the privileged centre of their sociability, although some relatives may live nearby: instead it's the subdivision—the nuclear family and its home-owning neighbours—that occupies this place. We especially notice the importance of this local sociability etched in the repeated laments of the oldest residents about their new neighbours from poor families of immigrant origin: they express regret for the decline of the subdivision's in-group cohesion as much as for the collective experience of social ascent. Lastly, once again much like the *petit-bourgeois*, the little-middles' identity and social dignity, far from depending on the upkeep of a working-class legacy, are closely connected to the invention of a lifestyle that is quite new compared with that of their parents. Their place of residence and their house materialise their social ascent, sometimes more than their professional position, which is less associated with a line of work and specific technical or profession culture than with a company-centred identification and employment status (they 'work at EDF', 'at the PTT', 'at the bank', 'for the RATP').[6]

Another objective little-middle characteristic that makes them resemble the *petit-bourgeois* is the possession of moderate academic resources, mid-level, which open them up to a relationship to schooling and 'legitimate culture' very different from that characterising their families of origin. We wish to underline immediately, however (and before coming back to this later), that the cultural practices and inclinations of these homeowners are poorly captured in the notion of 'cultural goodwill' (a tendency to recognise legitimate culture while being only partially familiar with it) that characterises the entire '*petite bourgeoisie*' according to Bourdieu. At the time they started working, men of the now-retired generation of little-middles often held CAP or BEP degrees, and women sometimes a BEPC.[7] In France of the 1960s and 1970s, these academic resources were clearly not negligible. As for the little-middle households that are still working today, they have achieved the Baccalauréat[8] (General or Vocational) degree and sometimes hold a BTS,[9] which is to say they are moderately educated at a time when longer schooling has become widespread. Their attitude toward their children's schooling is ambivalent and differs according to generation, but it is not marked by a great distance. Retirees make reference to their past collective mobilisation for the opening of new schools in the neighbourhood when confronted with the saturation of the existing schools, which drove them to frequent those of the neighbouring public housing project; several were members of parent–teacher associations. Although the parents of school-age children do not adopt the most elitist strategies, they do make decisions about their children's futures, aiming to guarantee them access to highly valued and well supervised classes (but these are often, for example, athletic options, and not choices of rare languages, contrary to practices in higher class groups). As for leisure activities, if all generations' children pursue sporting activities, they seem to have done so largely in clubs (where the fathers are also sometimes active), and these activities are often accompanied by artistic pursuits in nearby music schools and municipal conservatories (taking advantage of public legitimate culture offerings).

The 'rising' or 'executant' fractions of *Distinction*'s '*petite bourgeoisie*' are also fundamentally characterised by their recognition of the social order and by a 'prudent reformism in politics' (Bourdieu, 2010: 351–352) (unlike the penchant for contesting the 'new' culturally endowed fractions), which might develop with age toward a conservatism fed by the frustration of not having been adequately compensated for their efforts. We find some of these same political attitudes among the suburban little-middles north of Paris. If the neighbourhood we studied has never been typified by a homogeneous voting record (votes have spanned across the various parties of the left–right spectrum since the 1960s), unlike contemporary working classes, the little-middles are characterised by their civic engagement: they manifest their electoral discipline through an above-average assiduity at the polls. Analysis of the results of several elections as well as our interviews bring to light, in a portion of them, an evolution toward political conservatism—an evolution that went hand in hand with the installation of immigrants in the neighbourhood and the increasing difficulty of optimistically following an ascendant social trajectory. But more generally, we find among the little-middles a moral perception of the social world that is frequent among the *petit-bourgeois*, through denunciation of 'people who live off hand-outs' or of the 'slackness' of the poor families of immigrant origin concerning education. Far from ordering the social world in different classes with opposing interests, the little-middles differentiate between individuals who are deserving, and those who are not.

In highlighting all the aspects that make the little-middles comparable with the *petit-bourgeois*, it becomes clearer that if we had considered them as a high and respectable fraction of the working classes, as other studies were able to do for populations of skilled labourers in social ascent living in other local contexts,[10] we would have silently passed over some of their social properties and 'hidden' specificities of their lifestyle which, while similar to those of the working-classes, are nonetheless quite distinct from them, physically as much as symbolically.

## How are 'little-middles' distinguished from the '*petit-bourgeois*'?

If the aspiration to social mobility characterises little-middles well, it is far from regulating all their behaviours in all aspects of life. Moreover, it doesn't dominate all their inclinations to the point of making them systematically sacrifice the present for the future.[11] Little-middles aren't typified by the 'ascetic rigour' that characterised the *petit-bourgeois* in Bourdieu. Many of our informants unhesitatingly preferred to go on vacations and to treat themselves to weekends at nearby amusement parks instead of finishing home improvements or setting money aside. The concern for accumulation is neither their priority, nor the meaning of their lives. Likewise, for most of them the choice to 'climb' in society doesn't have the automatic consequence of choosing to strictly limit their fertility: couples with three or more children are not rare. Informants born in the 1940s and raised Roman Catholic, like the younger ones who grew up in Muslim families, often have more children than the average French couple. This is proof that the slope of the trajectory does not necessarily lead to an ascendant tendency that will manifest itself in forms of behaviour defined by restriction in all aspects of life.

In addition, their relationship with culture is not marked by the frustration, guilt, or illegitimacy felt by the *petit-bourgeois*. This is why the notion of 'cultural goodwill' describes them poorly. They don't manifest the reverence Pierre Bourdieu described in relation to cultivated culture, but rather a distant relationship that, according to the institution or cultural practice under consideration, may go from indifference to oblique or partial recognition.[12] Retired little-middles fill their free time with domestic activities rather close to working-class practices (working on the house or gardening), rooted in a very local sociability (some women assiduously attend an aqua-gym club together, some men participate in a model-making group), much more often than they go on cultural outings, even though Paris is quite near. Their living rooms are decorated with poster-size pictures of their grandchildren or decorations they made themselves (models, needlework) rather than reproductions of old masters. The interiors of younger generation little-middles are characterised by the primacy given to children's toys and to the television corner equipped for evenings with the family, instead of costly furniture or imposing bookcases.

In addition to the fact that these leisure practices are very far from a quest for cultural distinction, the little-middles' aspiration to social advancement has nothing to do with a 'desire to accede to the *bourgeoisie*'. A significant distance separates them physically from the upper categories; reconstitution of the history and geography of the housing developments of Paris's northern suburbs reminds us that the *bourgeoisie* has barely ever been present in the area. Moreover, little-middles have invested in a style of neighbourhood, the housing development, that is criticised and scorned by elites (Magri, 2008). Today they settle in an area whose reputation has deteriorated to the point that middle- and upper-class households living there (especially in the more recent and costly part of the neighbourhood where the houses of highest standing are built) tend to leave as soon as they have the means (to settle for good in suburban areas that are much more socially homogeneous[13]). In addition to this spatial distance, there is above all a social, economic, cultural and symbolic distance that separates them from the bourgeoisie. This is a distance that informants themselves highlight, describing themselves, for example, as 'simple' people, unlike the 'bourgeois' (doctors, shop owners) of the town centre or the 'rich folks' who moved into the few upscale villas (businessmen, professionals). If the little-middles aren't aiming to live like the 'bourgeois', it is ultimately due to how they imagine society.

The tendency to divide society in moral terms (between people who 'live off hand-outs' and 'the deserving') mixes with the feeling of belonging to a 'society of likeness', to use Robert Castel's term.[14] This sentiment can be heard through numerous expressions that come to emphasise the shared concern for conformity and integration. So it is that the little-middles we studied (who, as we mentioned, are little inclined to identify themselves with the bourgeoisie), when summing up their social trajectory, often express their desire to be 'like everyone', 'average', 'the same as others', and so on. These expressions signify in concrete terms the objective of escaping the stigma that, today as much as in the past, remains attached to material or cultural impoverishment; they also mean that the little-middles perceive society as 'open', that is, as a society that, as hierarchical and unequal as it may be, offers opportunities for social mobility and inspires the feeling of a common belonging. This feeling of belonging to a 'society of likeness' is easily seen in the way in which retired little-middles reconstruct the history of their neighbourhood, insisting on the 'equality' of the first residents of the neighbourhood while the professional positions and economic resources were actually very unequal. But beware of misinterpretation: at issue here is not the equality of *conditions*, the moral and social norm of the labour community whose nostalgic evocation in old labour neighbourhoods is recorded by many authors today,[15] but of an equality of *social ambitions* that are at the heart of the little-middle lifestyle. In taking the democratic and meritocratic principles of the wage labour society seriously, and in endeavouring to make the ideal of integration it proposes a reality, the little-middles also contribute to the generalisation of the lifestyles of social categories above their own, transforming it into a standard way of life.[16] This way, they can show their satisfaction in being as they are: their relationship to the social world, far from being marked by frustration, is instead marked by the contentment of having successfully left the working class *milieu* and improved their living conditions through access to a better level of material comfort and a better education for their children.

Additionally, if we previously evoked the tensions that may arise between their lifestyle and the *milieu* of their origin that, for example, leads them to limit sociability with relatives living in housing projects, these tensions are not experienced as a ripping apart, and family ties are not broken in the process. Family sociability is maintained (especially for the little-middles coming from the neighbouring public housing developments, still in close geographic proximity to the family), even if it may be accompanied by forms of selectivity, such as maintaining more frequent contact with siblings experiencing a comparable ascent. Being neighbours with other households having experienced similar trajectories has probably allowed these little-middle households a less painful departure from the working class than that described by Bourdieu, speaking of the *petit-bourgeois* in terms of 'uprootedness' and 'isolation' (Bourdieu, 2010: 332). Likewise, if we highlighted that the little-middles were relatively close to the *petit-bourgeois* in political attitudes, they do not share the individualism associated with the latter.[17] The little-middles, both the retirees and the younger ones employed and living in the newer part of the neighbourhood, participate in local public and civic life, beginning with parent–teacher associations, but also, if only intermittently, in neighbourhood councils established by the town in the late 1980s.

## Fear of stigma and weakening: the little-middles' nightmare

The conditions for little-middles' happiness thus depend fundamentally on the extent to which society is open—that is, possibilities for finding employment and 'climbing' professionally; for consistently holding to the plan for social ascent, both individually and as a family; for pursuing this path by educating the children, and so on. So many possible vagaries come to temper the little-middles' optimism, especially the youngest among them who are more confronted by the risks of employment insecurity and the growing rarity of possibilities for ascendant mobility. This weakening of the wage-labour society and the raising of the 'barrier to entry' into the middle classes inspires greater anxiety among the younger residents. The insistence on situating themselves among 'the average' thus reveals the structural fragility of the little-middles' position: what has been obtained seems both too modest and too recent to shelter them from a return to social and economic insecurity.

The rising cost of real estate and the stagnation of salaries mean they pay a higher price for their property ownership. While the earlier generation were able to take advantage of a regular and meaningful increase in buying power, the younger owners cannot gamble on such a development in their income. Likewise, it means they rely more systematically on two salaries, which increases their vulnerability in case of separation. The familial norm still very present in the earlier generation meant that a significant share of the wives left employment with the birth of their first child. This phenomenon is no longer found today, in part because social expectations have changed and wives and mothers wish to retain their autonomy, but also because balancing the budget is more challenging today.

In addition, the high unemployment rate and the degrading economic situation, quite menacing for private-sector employees, slows professional promotion in all sectors. The comparison between generations here is enlightening: while the neighbourhood's senior residents benefited from the growth of the public sector (electrical, postal and railway services) and of banking and insurance, the younger are up against the degradation of the job market and growing competition for jobs. Informants who were 20 years old in 1960 found work very easily, even though their educational level was low. Training programmes within big companies and public institutions let some of them advance to skilled line positions even before serving their mandatory military service. Likewise, they were often able to benefit from internal promotions, partly thanks to seniority but also due to passing promotion examinations, or having followed training programmes throughout their careers. The youngest little-middles have a much harder time benefiting from such career developments, since internal continuing education programmes have been put into question in large organisations and there has been a considerable increase in the number of degree-holders applying for the same jobs.

Furthermore, the expansion of housing developments into the outer suburbs (into the department of the Oise north of Paris, for example; Charmes, 2005) was accompanied by the devaluation of housing developments located adjacent to working-class neighbourhoods, and by some people's scorn for immigrant families (or families perceived that way) living in public housing projects or those who left them by becoming homeowners. Housing developments such as the one we studied, which have seen their populations diversify in terms of ethnic origins, have become targets of devaluing representations that consider them equivalent to the nearby public housing complexes. The refusal to live with 'foreigners' and the general fear of seeing the neighbourhood turn into a 'ghetto' have become frequent expressions of the mixed feelings of superiority to and devaluation of a part of the population.

And this fear of 'social pollution' is found in their relationships with schools. Working-age little-middles with young children expect a lot from this institution. Like most parents, they have assimilated the scholastic norm of lengthy studies, and in addition (unlike working-class families) they have acquired considerable information on how the scholastic field works, the right orientations to take, the best optional courses to choose, the 'good' and 'problematic' schools, etc. They are grappling with the difficulty of a scholastic reality that they try to master as best they can. But because their own scholastic and cultural resources are limited, their increasing knowledge and aspirations are manifest in considerable worry about the risk of failure and schools with 'bad reputations'.[18] Little-middle households with children in school today have themselves benefited from prolonged education. They follow their children's progress in a system they know a little bit better than was the case for preceding generations, and are thus better able to develop 'scholastic strategies' and also more likely to feel mistrust of the school. This mistrust is at the root of their rejection of schools where 'immigrants' are too present, as well as their suspicion of teachers and, increasingly, their attraction to private schools.

Lastly, the aspiration to be 'average' and 'like everyone else' should be understood in two ways. For revealing little-middles' social position, it sheds light on the relative symbolic autonomy of these households in modest social ascent, an autonomy by comparison with dominant categories that allows them to experience their promotion and aspirations differently than the *petite bourgeoisie*, which is burdened with guilt and illegitimacy. It is this distance from dominant social judgement that makes the notion of *petite bourgeoisie* inadequate for thinking about their situation. At the same time, from one generation to the next of little-middles, the threat of social backsliding is obviously closer. The insistence on being 'like the others' also appears as one of the symptoms of the social and economic destabilisation of categories of people of working-class origins in small-scale social ascent, who are presently much less sure than previous generations of their futures and those of their children. The growth of all kinds of inequalities today threatens a lifestyle associated with these little social advancements by households of working-class origin that developed during the years of great economic growth and a relative breadth of possibilities.

## Conclusion: 'little-middles', a relevant category for class structure analysis in contemporary societies?

After having drawn attention to the contemporary specificities of the little-middle lifestyle in our field site, we would like to continue the analysis by trying to imagine the interrogations and research techniques that would show whether this notion retains its relevance beyond the local context upon which it was based. Here we propose some lines of research to be developed which, starting with the situation in our study, progressively widen the focus to other kinds of housing development residents who are close to the working classes; to groups in small-scale social ascent, but for whom living in a housing development of single-family homes is not a key resource; and lastly to a wider range of 'lower-middle classes' resituated in the overall space of social classes. At each of these levels, further consideration of the question might prompt new research, but also the exploration of pre-existing studies (ethnographic or monographic work as well as quantitative work, on lifestyles for example).

### *Comparing little-middles living in tract housing in various local contexts*

To test the hypothesis of a relationship to culture marked by a partial and variable recognition of legitimate culture according to domains of practice, there is a need to explore work that has already been done on populations living in tract housing developments located in a range of local settings (for a presentation of some of this work, see the special issue '*Propriété et classes populaires*', *Politix*, 101, 2013). It would also be fruitful to conduct a study focused specifically on cultural practices and consumption habits, whether in modest suburbs or in other spaces in urban peripheries where families of rural working-class origin, families coming from public housing projects, and financially better-off middle-class households coexist, as found in France, at least.

These different populations could be compared. It would be useful to identify their relationships to schooling: what scholastic strategies do they adopt? What are their relationships with teachers like? Their involvement in parents' associations? Their positions toward public and private education? As far as cultural practices are concerned, the place of gardening and home repair, renovation and upkeep should be observed: might the disappearance of the practical, technical habitus be less pronounced in the peripheral spaces farthest from urban centres? Inversely, what is happening with leisure practices that take place in formal settings, whether they be athletic or artistic?

While the consumption practices of the older generations of little-middles seemed to us to be marked by a distrust of credit, prudence in spending, and a disinclination to 'stand out' from others inherited from traditional working-class culture (Hoggart, 1957), the more recent generation's relationship to money and consumption appeared to be different. Research through interviews or questionnaires would allow this point to be explored in depth. One might also observe gender relations in these various spaces. Is the softening of the sexual division of roles found among 'our' little-middles also found among households settled in other suburban zones or in former 'bastions' of rural industrial labour? Does one find the same situation of scholastic heterogamy so often found in our field site among the older generations, in which women are often more highly educated than their husbands?

Lastly, while the little-middles of the Parisian suburbs whom we met increasingly come from high-rise public housing developments and families of immigrant origin (if not being immigrants themselves), this does not seem to be the case in other

French cities that are less affected by immigration. The comparison of these urban spaces with suburban tract housing developments would allow observation of how national and cultural origins may or may not have an impact on identities and neighbourly relations.

### Beyond housing developments: what importance does the residential trajectory have?

Another line of thought might address the importance of residential trajectories and practices in constituting the little-middles' position, as much in objective terms as in terms of self-perception (that is, of one's place in social relationships). Might one expand use of the term 'little-middles' to individuals, households and groups coming from working-class backgrounds, in small-scale social ascent, but who aren't residents of single-family homes or housing developments? In our work, we saw the importance of residential trajectory and access to property in the materialisation of our informants' social rise. We also noted that practices associated with individual habitations in a housing development are determinant in the construction of these households' lifestyle and social identity (whether concerning practices of domesticity, culture or neighbourly sociability).

And yet, the way that the notion of little-middles has been taken up in several recent publications in France shows that it has seemed heuristic for qualifying the social position and practices of populations with different residential trajectories. We are thinking especially of work carried out on various categories of wage-earners with job security and high benefits:[19] workers in public institutions, local-level public employees, or technicians for EDF (the electrical service provider) who are invested in local political life. Whether making passing reference to little-middles or making it an analytical category, these recent studies put the notion to work: they insist more than we did on the importance of having a stable, secure job as a foundation for upward mobility, but they also cast light on the hybrid character of cultural, domestic and consumption practices, and even political attitudes, that come from it.

The preceding questions might be explored systematically for such cases to deepen analysis of the similarities between groups in small-scale ascent, which would then allow the identification of shared traits that differentiate them as much from the working classes as from the *petite bourgeoisie*.

### Resituate little-middles in the overall space of lifestyles

This final theme for development would go beyond simply deepening the notion's relevance to contribute to a collective undertaking updating analysis of the space of social class and lifestyle in contemporary societies.

We might envisage new research or combinations of studies, re-using the indicators and questions proposed in *Distinction* (concerning real estate, clothing, food, fertility, sporting practices, artistic practices, forms of sociability, household arrangement …), enriched with new questions. Our study could thus contribute to the conception of a questionnaire on contemporary lifestyles. The case of the little-middles is particularly interesting for re-investing in the question of homology between different domains of practice: it especially prompts us to account for forms of scholastic heterogamy in couples, for example, and to jointly analyse domestic, leisure and political practices, which might be hetereogeneous in terms of relationships to legitimate culture. This case also contributes to analysis on the question of cultural norms and the diffusion of taste. Do these little-middles refer to an 'average taste', 'average culture', 'average art'—and how would these criteria be defined today? How are their tastes formed, what is the weight of primary socialisation, of other forms of instilling them?

We might try to better identify how individuals define their social identity (and in reference to which groups) to contribute to the sociology of the space of social relations: contrary to the *petit-bourgeois* who defines himself in reference to the *bourgeoisie*, the little-middles define themselves more in reference to working-class values, in a positive way for the older, and negatively for the younger.

We should also examine the effects of diminishing possibilities for social ascent on these little-middles' practices and self-representations. We have seen that, when it comes to politics, a weakening social position and difficult accession to the middle classes could favour a vote for the right of the political spectrum and a desire to clearly set oneself apart from the impoverished fractions of the working classes. Might these effects also appear in their lifestyle, in the form of a 'stiffening' in relations with others in daily life?

## Notes

* Translated from the French by Juliette Rogers.

1 For a summary of the socio-political debates of the 1970s on the *petite bourgeoisie* and the mid-range social levels, see Bosc (2008).

2 We use the French term *cadre* in accordance with the translation of L. Boltanski's (1987) sociological treatment of this professional category. A *cadre* may occupy a range of jobs, from low technician to upper executive, and has a certain level of job security, benefits and status.

3 In the sense of a category used spontaneously by an informant.

4 The households living in this greater Manchester neighbourhood have varied professional positions (13 labourers, 11 intermediary professions, 10 independents and 9 'professionals', jobs categorised in the 'service class' such as teachers). But beyond this diversity, the authors identify the common traits that are the foundation of a 'working-class' habitus (a 'practical habitus' or 'local habitus'). The first is a modest income having allowed accession to property ownership, but working lives marked by insecurity. The second is an experience and culture based in manual labour, technical skills in the trades or a *métier*. The last is a deep engagement in the local space. Residents express a strong attachment to Cheadle (which is seen especially in nostalgia for a 'small-village' past, coloured with ambivalence: they'd leave it happily if they were to win the lottery, but in real life they live and stay there. When questioned about their class belonging, the residents say they are 'middle class', clarifying more precisely 'the lower middle class'. Class discourse is nonetheless far from their preoccupations. While not feeling stigmatised, they are very realistic about the fact that life must be better elsewhere.

5 We find echoes of our informants in the *Formation et Qualification Professionnelle* survey (Professional Training and Qualification, a statistical survey by INSEE that is the main source for quantitative studies on social mobility in France), among respondents who reported being socially upwardly mobile. When questioned by telephone to better understand their perceptions of their life courses, these respondents said they were upwardly mobile, and say so spontaneously. Like our informants, they say they are satisfied with their course, but without excessive personal pride. Without feeling illegitimate or guilty about being distanced from their origins, they credit their current status to their 'personal efforts' and 'merit' (Duru-Bellat and Kieffer, 2006).

6 EDF: *Electricité de France* (the electricity service); PTT: *Postes et télécommunications* (the postal service); RATP: *Régie des Transports Publics en Région Parisienne* (the greater Paris train network). Employees in these public institutions have long held a secure employment status with specific guarantees and benefits.

7 The CAP (*Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle*) and BEP (*Brevet d'Aptitude Professionnelle*) are vocational degrees obtained without need for a Baccalauréat degree (see note 8), and which in principle do not lead to longer secondary studies (even if it is still possible to pursue a Professional Baccalauréat afterwards). The BEPC (*Brevet d'études du premier cycle du second degré*, also known as 'the middle-school *brevet*') is a general degree obtained at the end of middle school, prior to entry into high school.

8 Commonly referred to as the Bac, this is an examination that may be taken after completion of secondary schooling, successful passage leading to a diploma that is necessary for the pursuit of most forms of higher study.

9 The BTS (*Brevet de Technicien Supérieur*) is a vocational degree requiring two years of study after the Bac.

10 We once again think of Mike Savage *et al.*'s study (2005), but also French studies like that of Jean-Noël Retière on the labour aristocracy of Lanester, families of job-secure labourers (arsenal workers) actively engaged in local civic and political life (Retière, 1994).

11 If we partly agree with Etienne Schweisguth's critiques of *Distinction*, which assimilates all middle classes in the '*petite bourgeoisie*', we specify first that we are not at all speaking of the same categories: while he is referring to the professions of education, culture and social work that were growing rapidly in the 1970s (among which he included teachers, classified by Bourdieu in the upper classes, not the middle), we study categories with much lower cultural resources (Schweisguth, 1983).

12 Our analyses join those of Bernard Lahire (2004), who has recently shown that cultural legitimacy is not felt with the same intensity by all individuals, all the time. It is understandable, then, that individuals may appear to have 'dissonant' cultural profiles—associating practices considered 'low-brow' with high-culture practices—without feeling culturally 'at fault' or, like our informants, without seeking to develop themselves culturally.

13 Such as those studied by Eric Charmes (2005).

14 Recall that, for Castel, inequalities obviously don't disappear in the wage labour society of the thirty 'glorious years' following war reconstruction—but they are no longer perceived in the same way. Defined as a differentiated continuum of positions, unequal but comparable, the 'society of wage labour' born of the generalisation of social security measures and the rising status of wage labourers seemed to be a 'society of likeness' in which inequalities do not cut people off from shared belonging to the whole (Castel, 2002).

15 See, for example, the monographic study of a working-class neighbourhood in the Netherlands: Blokland, in Devine *et al.* (2008: 123–139).

16 We take our inspiration here from the analyses of Claude Grignon (1993).

17 'Closing in on oneself' (*repli sur soi*) is one label for such individualism. It is, generally speaking, a stereotype that was for a long time applied to suburban homeowners, who were scorned by leftist intellectuals and sociologists won over to the cause of public housing, especially in the after-war context (Magri, 2008).

18 In particular, see the special issue of *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* (180, 2009), '*Ecole ségrégative, école reproductive*'.

19 See the various contributions gathered in Cartier *et al.* (2010).

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# 6

# What has become of the 'new *petite bourgeoisie*'?

## The case of cultural managers in late 2000s France[1]

*Vincent Dubois*

In *Distinction*, Pierre Bourdieu showed that in the 1960s and 1970s, the fuzzy and emerging positions of cultural intermediaries were occupied by graduates with working-class roots who could not make the most of their educational capital as they had not inherited the necessary social capital, and symmetrically by children of the bourgeoisie who were deprived of the social capital required to reproduce the social positions of their parents (Bourdieu, 1984: 119ff.). Both groups could count on attractive yet loosely defined occupations in the fields of psychology, publicity or culture to achieve a 'social infinitude' liable to offset the effects of the *déclassement* that comes with the occupation of a position that is lower than they could expect, considering respectively their level of qualification and their parents' occupations. These choices fit within a broader quest for personal fulfillment and freedom, as they aspired to have lifestyles that differed radically from those of agents holding positions that were safer and better established, but also perceived as rigid and stifling, in the banking or administrative sectors. The concept of 'new *petite bourgeoisie*' refers to this social group and, in particular, to the combination of factors of which it is the product: the transformation of the education system, redefined social stratification processes through new social mobility trajectories, the invention of new occupations and social positions, and the affirmation of the dispositions and lifestyles that come with them.

Three or four decades later, the effects of the above processes are a worthy subject of investigation. In that it proposes an approach that encompasses all of these different factors, Bourdieu's analytical scheme remains a valuable tool for understanding the trajectories of more recent generations—however, its application in the late 2000s yields markedly different insights. In this chapter, I use this interpretive model to shed light on a contemporary society that has experienced far-reaching transformations.

This allows me both to test the current relevance of an important hypothesis formulated in *Distinction* and to investigate some of the changes that have occurred since the book was published. The effects of the second educational 'boom'[2] have now combined with those of long-term mass unemployment and led to significantly lower prospects for upward social mobility and increasing difficulties for newcomers on the job market to match the social positions of their elders (Chauvel, 1998; Peugny, 2009). In this context, cultural intermediary positions can still offer a refuge to those threatened with *déclassement*, but as both graduates with working-class roots and inheritors excluded from the education system have fewer chances to access them, they are now in the sights of those who are facing *déclassement* even though they have both high educational capital and high social backgrounds. As women are more often in such situations than men, for precisely this reason there are more women who apply for such positions.

In France, cultural manager or art manager positions share the main features of the cultural intermediaries, and provide a good angle from which to assess these changes. These occupations are first defined negatively, since they are not about artistic creation (comedians or writers), technical work (lighting engineers or proofreaders), commentary or analysis (critics, historians of literature), or pedagogy (music or art teachers). Even though they share some similarities, cultural managers are to be distinguished from the better established cultural intermediary positions, such as librarians or museum curators: their emergence is much more recent and, unlike them, they have no specialized curricula leading to a specific status and occupation, and therefore do not constitute a body of professionals endowed with a collective representation. Cultural manager is not a 'profession' in the strict sense; the cultural managers make up a professional group with fuzzy boundaries (Abbott, 1988). Seen from the angle of their place in the work team, cultural managers are the organizational component of the 'support personnel' who, according to Becker, do no creative work, but make artistic creation and its presentation to the public possible (Becker, 1982). Their roles range from managing cultural institutions to programming; they also perform strictly administrative and organizational tasks such as promotion, communication or 'cultural mediation'. They have the social positions of educated members of the middle and upper classes, but their social status and remuneration varies wildly, in particular depending on the size and resources of the organization that employs them. It is worth noting that—at least in France—cultural manager positions are more often found in the subsidized public sector than in the private sector, even though the 'cultural industries' of publishing, film or the art business are part of their professional world.

In this study, my main objective was to analyze the social reasons explaining why individuals pursue cultural management as a career path; I have therefore focused on the individuals who aspire to hold these positions, rather on those already in place. I have studied the features of applicants to the training courses that lead to these jobs—namely academic master's programs in the field (the fifth year of higher education in the French system). The main method used was the administration of an online questionnaire, to which around 1,500 individuals responded. A sample of 654 individuals was eventually selected after the removal of duplicates, incomplete responses and some atypical profiles. The responses were then subjected to three multiple correspondence analyses (MCA), probing the applicants' backgrounds, their future projects and their cultural tastes. In addition to this, we conducted twenty biographical interviews and a qualitative analysis of forty application files; this research was also enriched by the empirical experience accumulated over my twenty years of teaching in such programs.

I will first elaborate on three salient trends in these applications, which reflect the main changes that have occurred since Bourdieu first wrote about the new *petite bourgeoisie*. The first pertains to the increasing weight of educational capital in social reproduction (a process that had already begun then), and more generally to the transformations of the education system. The second development under study is the feminization of access to these positions. I introduce the dimension of gender, to which Bourdieu had given little consideration at that point in his research. The third trend highlighted is the elevation of the applicants' social backgrounds and the correlative decline of upward social trajectories in the orientation toward cultural intermediary positions. Lastly, I investigate the extent to which the relationship to the social world of these future cultural managers differs from that of their elders.[3]

## The effects of the transformations in the education system

The generalization of access to secondary education, the relative social democratization of higher education and the longer duration of education have resulted in higher educational requirements for accessing professional positions. Occupations in the cultural sector, which stand out through the high educational level of attainment of those who hold them, are also affected by this development. The younger generations are much more qualified than the older ones. For instance, whereas 60 per cent of managers in the field of TV, radio and performing arts aged above 35 have successfully completed at least two years of higher education, the proportion reaches nearly 80 per cent for those under 35, including 56.7 per cent with three years of higher education or more.[4] In other words, while at the time *Distinction* was written, cultural intermediary jobs could offer a refuge for individuals having acquired cultural capital within their family circle with no validation from the education system (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979), these positions are now accessible only by higher education graduates. Even applicants to specialized programs in the field of cultural management stand out through their very high levels of educational capital. The first evidence of this is their higher achievements in the final secondary school exam (the *baccalauréat*): more of them receive honors (64 per cent, including 7 per cent of *mentions très bien*—the highest honors—against 3.8 per cent of all university students). The relatively high representation of students in prestigious selective programs during early higher education is the second indicator of a high initial educational capital. More than one in four applicants have studied in a CPGE (preparatory school for enrollment in the *grandes écoles*), almost always following the literary/humanities curriculum, and 8 per cent have studied in an IEP (Institute of Political Studies)—the proportions for the general student population are by contrast, respectively, 3 per cent and roughly 0.35 per cent.[5]

Their specialized training is another factor distinguishing the future cultural managers of the 2000s from their predecessors. While the first arts management programs appeared in the US in the mid 1960s (DiMaggio, 1987; Peterson, 1987), they emerged only some twenty years later in France. The first cultural managers who were specifically trained to hold these positions were therefore recruited only after the mid-1980s. Since then, the number of specialized programs has risen dramatically, from five in the early 1990s to around 120 twenty years later. This increase has resulted in a higher demand for specialized graduates; cultural managers from past generations had no such specialization in their training.

The professionalization process of cultural management jobs is connected with the development of specialized training programs, but does not suffice to explain it. This boom, indeed, reflects the dynamics proper to the transformations of higher education much more than it responds to a need for specially trained professionals. The progressive imposition of the so-called 'professionalization' imperative in universities, which began progressively in the 1960s, intensified considerably in the 2000s, particularly through the implementation of EU-initiated reforms. Everything happened so that, in the context of heightened competition between universities and their departments, the teachers in literature, humanities and social science—all fields where results in terms of integration into the labor market are considered insufficient—became more involved in the creation of so-called professionalizing courses, including programs focusing on preparation to work in the cultural sector, which have attracted many students. This is one of the reasons for the rise of these programs—not so much a response to a demand for manpower as the result of new constraints and of the competitions shaping the definition of the supply of academic training.

Before it even affects hiring conditions—holding a degree is now widely required to obtain a position—the wealth of available specialized training informs the students' projects for the future and contributes to the inclusion of cultural manager jobs in their space of professional possibilities. Our study shows that the students from literature and humanities departments who make up the bulk of the applicants to cultural master's programs, when asked to formulate a professional career plan, diverted away from teaching careers because of the degradation of the teachers' status and the scarcity of available positions. Faced with competition from graduates in economics, law or marketing for access to executive positions, they turn to the cultural sector both because it fits their dispositions and the type of educational capital they hold, and because the existence of specialized programs in their department encourages them to pursue this path.

Due to the combination of the generalized increase of the weight of educational capital in the conditions of access to a social position, the professionalization of cultural sector jobs, and the changes that have occurred in the higher education system, cultural intermediary positions are no longer entrusted to individuals trained on the job, or whose low level of educational attainment is compensated by other relational or cultural resources, as was still the case in the early 1980s. Conversely, access to these positions now hinges on heightened educational selection, which did not exist when the new *petite bourgeoisie* emerged in the 1960s and 1970s.

## The reasons for feminization

The feminization of the job market has been another major structural transformation of French society. One indicator among many is particularly eloquent in this respect: while fewer than half of the women aged 25 to 59 worked in 1968, more than 75 per cent did so forty years later (Afsa Essafi and Buffeteau, 2006). Cultural sector jobs, and more precisely the population of the applicants to such occupations, have clearly reflected this trend. In addition to the main factors singled out by Bourdieu to define the new *petite bourgeoisie*—social background and educational capital—gender now plays a key role in the orientation toward cultural intermediary positions.

The main feature that distinguishes applicants to cultural manager jobs from other higher education programs is indeed the very high proportion of women: 85 per cent among the applicants and 80 per cent among students in cultural management master's programs, against 56.5 per cent of women among the general student population in 2004—only in paramedical and social work schools are similar numbers observed (83 per cent). Proportions are systematically lower in programs preparing students for related occupations, not to mention in scientific training, where women remain traditionally in the minority.

How are we to interpret the fact that cultural manager positions attract women in such numbers? The gendered identities of professional occupations ('a man's job' vs. 'a woman's job') are often thought to explain positive choices (by projection) or negative choices (by excluding activities reputed to be reserved to the opposite sex from one's space of possibles). Such mechanisms are only partially at work in cultural management. These positions are too recent or too weakly established to be assigned a gender identity; besides, the sector is far from being as feminized as one might assume. Women are in the minority in the cultural sector as a whole (43 per cent in 2007); two-thirds of posts of directors, curators and producers in TV, radio and the performing arts, coveted by many applicants, are held by men.[6]

The large majority of women among the applicants does not reflect the choice of a traditionally female sector; it indicates an ongoing feminization process. Since the 1980s, a similar process has been observed for executives in newspapers, publishing, TV, radio and performing arts, and among art and performing arts professionals—a particularly marked trend in the younger generations: in addition to publishing, where they were already increasingly numerous, the proportion of women dramatically increased in the performing arts, where gender parity has now been reached among those under 30. The process has also been observed in certain typical cultural management positions, such as managers of municipal cultural departments.

A first explanation for the overrepresentation of women among the applicants to cultural managements programs lies in the combination of disciplinary orientations and the longer duration of studies that defines the dynamics of women's educational trajectories. The traditional pattern whereby young women already start turning to literary curricula at high school level, even when their results in scientific subjects match the boys', still plays a key role, whether it is thought to be a result of self-exclusion, of the dissuasive effects of teachers' verdicts, of parental expectations, or of the highlighting of the supposed feminine connotations of literary courses (Marry, 2000). The same pattern is also observed upon access to higher education, not only because the choices made at high school level prevent girls from enrolling in scientific curricula, but also because among the holders of scientific *baccalauréats*, more girls choose literary subjects than boys (Convert, 2006). At the later stages of higher education, choices become increasingly related to professional career plans as expectations in terms of employment rise. Cultural sector jobs can then appear as a possible and desirable way out for female students, who make up a large majority in curricula such as arts, literature, languages or social sciences, where the main career prospect is teaching, but which also indirectly provide an opening to work in the cultural field. The large number of young women in cultural management programs may thus result not so much from a direct effect of gender on the 'choice' of this sector as from a succession of past choices, informed by gender rationales at every step of the way, and at the end of which the amount and type of educational capital accumulated leads their holders to perceive cultural sector jobs as a possible aspiration.

A second explanation lies in the differences between genders in the relationships to cultural and artistic practices, and in their differentiated effects on professional career paths. It has been long established that more women than men have cultural practices—at least in certain fields (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1991). Many recent studies have evidenced a trend toward the feminization of these practices: gaps are widening for practices that were already predominantly female (such as reading), and narrowing for chiefly male ones (such as amateur music). Since a strong correlation has been observed between the intensity of cultural practices and the aspiration to pursue careers in the cultural field, the feminization of cultural practices may very well be among the factors affecting the feminization of career paths in this sector.

It is worth mentioning that the investments of men and women in these jobs differ; they do not target the same positions, and differences are particularly observed in creative vs. non-creative jobs. The overall trend toward the increase in the number of applicants for artistic jobs should not lead us to overlook gender differences. These vary from one sub-sector to the next: though they make up the majority of consumers, women still are in the minority among creators (even though their numbers are increasing)—not to mention the very unequal chances of reaching prominent positions. Thus, the combination of the women's more intense cultural practices and dispositions, and the endurance of a gendered division of labor in which creation is a male business, may explain the very large number of women among those pursuing cultural administration careers—a pattern similar to that observed for many years in librarians and museum mediators, which are positions typically sought by 'women of the *petite bourgeoisie* [...] inclined to appropriate at any price [...] the distinctive and therefore distinguished properties of the dominant classes and to contribute to their imperative popularization, in particular with the aid of the circumstantial symbolic power that their position in the apparatus of production or circulation of cultural goods [...] may confer on their proselytizing zeal' (Bourdieu, 2001: 101–102). This could be seen as a way for women to find their place in a world where their distinctive type of capital is valued, while remaining in their place, i.e. without subverting the usual gendered division of tasks.

Women are both less inclined to pursue creative artistic careers and more likely to give them up. Dancers are a case in point, as motherhood often cuts their careers short (Sorignet, 2010). When artists become teachers, more men go on to be both artists and teachers, whereas more women give up their artistic work (Cacouault-Bitaud, 2007). These differences can be observed at an early stage, even before the beginning of artistic careers, when we look at professional aspirations. Among aspirants to cultural management careers, fewer women envision a career as an artist (32 per cent against 44 per cent of men) and more of them give up on this prospect (47.5 per cent against 40 per cent of men). Cultural management can in this sense allow artists who cannot expect to draw a sufficient and stable income from their art to avoid an overly painful renouncement by reinvesting their disposition, their network and the skills they have accumulated over the course of their artistic career. The predominance of women among those who pursue careers in cultural management can therefore also be interpreted as a result of their greater tendency to give up on creative work and opt for a relatively smooth career transition. This is yet another case of the reproduction of the gendered division of labor, in which production is mostly assigned to men while women tend to be entrusted with mediation and management.

This raises the question of the meaning of these professional career choices within the broader perspective of gender inequality. The educational choices discussed above can be interpreted as those of 'dominated' individuals who anticipate their likely social fate (Baudelot and Establet, 1992), which includes the acceptance of the often low earning prospects that characterize cultural sector jobs, often envisioned as a secondary source of income for the future household. The great number of women in these programs in effect contributes to sustaining a gendered division of labor in which men tend to be assigned the better paid and more powerful positions (including economically), while women are entrusted with the role of maintaining symbolic capital and social status (Bourdieu, 1984; Collins, 1988: 38–43). This does not mean these career choices are to be seen as the illustration of female 'docility', leading them to follow ready-made educational and professional trajectories and, even when they succeed, to occupy secondary positions. Indeed, pursuing a career in the cultural sector, through the uncertainty it entails and correlatively the opportunity for self-assertion it offers, can also be a way to achieve emancipation from a likely fate (as the wariness towards teaching jobs seems to indicate). It may therefore illustrate the hypothesis which posits that 'girls are less expected than boys to succeed by following the canonical model of excellence based on competition, the rule of mathematics, exclusive investment in one's career [and] have more leeway to assert their tastes' (Marry, 2000: 292). The very high rates of women who pursue cultural management careers should therefore not be seen as merely the reproduction of gender stereotypes, as these careers can also constitute ways to stray from well worn paths. However, they do not constitute a challenge to existing inequalities in the gendered distribution of occupations, since the jobs accepted by these women are, for the most, part low-earning positions. This choice is arguably neither about reproducing nor about subverting masculine domination, but much more likely a matter of coping with it.

## Higher social backgrounds

Where cultural intermediary positions were once considered as opportunities for upward social mobility *par excellence*, this has been strongly challenged by traditional forms of socio-professional reproduction and by the strategies used by those best endowed in educational and social capital to avoid *déclassement*. The working-class and lower-middle-class children's collective dreams of social promotion through culture have now given way to the upper- and upper-middle-class individuals' aspirations for self-fulfillment.

The upward social mobility strategies implemented by working-class graduates have in the past resulted in the social diversification of some cultural occupations. They had also been conducive to the emergence of a key component of the 'new *petite bourgeoisie*', which in the 1960s and 1970s made up the bulk of those who occupied the then new cultural intermediary positions (Bourdieu, 1984: 365–372). This social diversification process has now been halted, if not reversed, as objective chances of social promotion through access to more indeterminate positions have decreased. The proportion of children of blue-collar workers and farmers has been steadily decreasing in the fields of media, arts and performing arts, dropping from 22.5 per cent in 1982 to 19.3 per cent in 1992, and to 17 per cent ten years later, while concurrently increasing in the executive and upper intellectual categories in which these occupations are included (respectively 19.2 per cent in 1982 and 23 per cent in 1992 and 2002).[7]

Such backgrounds are now strongly in the minority, even among aspirants. Only 12 per cent of applicants to master's programs in cultural management have a working-class background (here, I use this term to refer to blue-collar workers, employees and farmers), against 20 per cent of all master's students.[8] To some extent, this also applies to children of holders of intermediary occupations: although they are present in higher proportions (22 per cent, roughly the same share as in the labor force), they are mostly found among the most educated of these occupations (as is evidenced by the majority of schoolteachers among them). Conversely, a significant proportion of the applicants to cultural management programs have a privileged social background. Nearly half of the students (more than 45 per cent) in these master's programs are children of executives or of holders of upper intellectual occupations,[9] against only 37 per cent of all master's level students.

This elevation of the aspirants' social backgrounds partly reflects the development of a professional reproduction process that is fairly common elsewhere, but largely unprecedented in the field of cultural management. The inter-generational transmission of professional positions in the field has increased significantly over the past few decades. Among the applicants under study for this research, 17 per cent have parents who work in the cultural sector. They may be largely in the minority, but this proportion is still ten times higher than the estimated share of this sector on the job market. In addition to being a factor of professional heredity, having parents who work in the cultural sector and have the relevant dispositions and practices (frequent cultural outings, reading, discussions, etc.) is largely a factor of intense cultural socialization, which in turn encourages these students to choose this sector. During a selection interview for access to a cultural management master's program, a young woman explained: 'My dad is an artist, my mother works in the cultural media. I've been accustomed to this world ever since I was a kid, going to concerts, exhibitions, helping out at a festival to hand out leaflets …' (observation, July 2011). As this example attests, distinctive cultural dispositions are being passed on, through the early acquisition of a sense of familiarity and practical experiences (handing out leaflets) that lead these children to move on from the world of the consumers to that of the producers. This is combined with the benefits drawn from the parents' social capital, which makes it easier for them to network in the field and obtain internships.

Arguably, this transmission reflects the extension of recently acquired familial positions more than the continuity of a long line. Indeed, many positions in the field were created when the parents of the current applicants entered the labor force. Those who benefit from this professional reproduction are thus likely, for the most part, to be the children of those who held the first cultural sector jobs, which they used to achieve upward social mobility and reach a level that their descendants try to maintain. The present-day aspirants are therefore the inheritors of the 'new *petite bourgeoisie*' rather than a new generation of its working-class component.

The trend toward higher and more restricted social backgrounds results not only from a mechanism of inter-generational transmission of professional positions; it is also influenced by the strategies used by upper-class children to fight *déclassement*. As they seek to avoid the risk of downward social mobility or tone down its effects, they leave less room for those who target the same positions in a perspective of upward mobility. A similar process happened with teaching since the stabilization of mass unemployment: upper-class children—again, mostly girls—were drawn to teaching, which in former generations used to constitute a vehicle for promotion for working-class children(Geay, 2002; Charles and Cibois, 2010).

In order to test this hypothesis of a strategy to fight social and educational *déclassement*, we have singled out those among the applicants who were high-achieving female students in literary subjects with upper-class backgrounds, a group that makes up 15 per cent of the overall population of applicants. This group can indeed be considered as characteristic of applicants both strongly endowed with social, cultural, educational and for some economic capital, and facing the likely inability to obtain positions matching this capital. In terms of cultural practices and professional experience, the backgrounds of its members do not differ much from the broader population of applicants (some features usually observed are sometimes heightened). Assessed on the basis of their artistic education and on the presence of family members working in the cultural sector, their cultural socialization is slightly higher and their tastes tend to favor legitimate art forms somewhat more. They have less anticipation of a career in cultural management, but they more readily flesh out their projects in terms of functions or cultural sectors, as if the cultural resources accumulated during socialization in the family and in school were converted into a professional horizon once their studies are ending and the time to choose a career path has arrived. Such is the case of Clara, the daughter of a 'well-to-do' physician. After studying for two years in a literary *classe préparatoire* in a prominent Parisian *lycée*, earning a bachelor's in literature and then unsuccessfully turning to sociology (she was unable to secure funding for her PhD), she started envisioning a career in the cultural field at a rather late stage—a return to her roots, or rather a professional conversion of her original cultural capital.

> I told myself I couldn't do a PhD because I wouldn't get funding and we were told so often that there was no future in sociology, so I was trying to find a way out and I thought about culture because it's true, it was something [...] I grew up in an environment where cultural activities were quite encouraged, my parents, my family, ever since I was a little kid we've been going to exhibitions, I play music, I play the flute, I was able to do theatre. So yeah, I've travelled quite a bit with my parents, I've seen cities, museums. I was already in a conducive environment that allowed me to get access to all that culture, and then I thought that actually my literature studies could also be a way to move on to that program and turn toward cultural jobs.[10]

Whereas at other times, similar trajectories are likely to lead to a teaching career, here it predisposes Clara to reject it. This is why it is necessary to consider paths of access to different sectors, which requires going back to the social logics of attraction to indeterminate positions analyzed by Bourdieu in his sociology of the new *petite bourgeoisie*. While upward social mobility for working-class graduates is now much more difficult, the conditions for the social maintenance of upper-class children have changed drastically. Due to the generalization of the longer duration of studies, and to the transformations that impacted the role of educational capital and the different forms it takes (e.g. the decline of literature and the humanities), these children (especially girls), who now face more competitive selection in school and more often fall through the cracks, often seek to capitalize on their family inheritance by maximizing a form of educational capital that is devalued (particularly in literature).

In this context, cultural management programs constitute both a way to avoid teaching (now a devalued occupation), which used to be one of the main career paths chosen by students in the humanities; an outlet for cashing in on the cultural dispositions inherited from family socialization; and, if not offering clear professional career perspectives, at least holding out the hope of finding one's place in a world that enjoys a certain degree of social prestige. This is made easier by the fact that the weak codification of cultural occupations, and of the paths to access them, often creates intermediate situations well suited to avoid experiencing failure, which might happen brutally when seeking more established positions; in other words, they are lifelines for individuals who face the risk of educational and social *déclassement*, and because they are women with upper-class backgrounds, are less affected than others by restrictions pertaining to job stability and income. The social and symbolic capital that they can expect to gain by having an occupation in the cultural sector compensates this risk.

## Coping with the social world: the aspiring cultural manager's relationship to work

The trajectories that defined the new *petite bourgeoisie* of the 1960s and 1970s were connected with a set of dispositions (cult of self-fulfillment, quest for the new in opposition to traditional bourgeois tastes and lifestyles) embedded in a relationship to the world described by Bourdieu as a 'dream of social weightlessness' (Bourdieu, 1984). These people had to find their place in society, but refused to be assigned a fixed position, and entertained the idea of always being able to move, which was the cornerstone of their belief in their own freedom. Many of these traits can be found in those who today apply for cultural management programs. Yet the transformations of the objective conditions for achieving their plans for the future, with the threat of unemployment always looming, inevitably have affected the individuals' dispositions; they have adjusted the anti-conformism of their elders to fit the restrictions of a more pressing necessity. The transformations in their relationships to work shed light on this tension.

In the 1970s, the gap between students' aspirations and their opportunities, due to educational inflation, resulted in a sense of collective disillusionment toward work, then made possible by a context in which access to employment could not be a real problem (Bourdieu, 1978, 1984). Both this gap and the sense of disillusionment it elicited contributed to the rise of post-1968 critiques arguing that work made it impossible to achieve the ideal of self-fulfillment they defended (Baudelot and Gollac, 2003; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005). This gap is now even wider, due to the combination of the further massification of higher education after the mid-1980s and the sharp deterioration of the job market—particularly for newcomers. However, I argue that, at least under certain conditions, this gap is now less a motive for refusing to work, or criticizing it collectively, but rather is increasingly experienced as a prompt to achieve self-fulfillment through work, or even thanks to work.

The population under study here illustrates this hypothesis well. Jobs in the artistic and cultural sectors are usually considered as ideals of satisfaction at work (Baudelot and Gollac, 2003: 146, 162), in the sense that they allow rewards in multiple forms, whose diversity and combinations are not limited to the binary opposition between monetary and symbolic gratifications. When considering aspiring cultural managers, it is therefore less important to define the amount of these rewards, the way they use them, or their disillusions toward them, than to investigate their belief in the potency of these rewards, which make them more likely to meet social expectations pertaining to self-fulfillment in and through their work. This is likely the result of the increasing replacement of the 'work ethic', defined by Max Weber as a constitutive feature of the development of capitalism (Weber, 2002), by the blend of the personal and professional that characterizes its contemporary forms (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005). More precisely, this relationship to work is specific to individuals whose characteristics (a majority of women with rather high social backgrounds, high cultural capital and few secure prospects for the future) lead them to see this blurring of the lines between the personal and the professional as desirable, and to find in cultural sector jobs a way to achieve it and to extend the indetermination of their youth. It is in this light that the frequent statements in which professional career choices are presented as a direct extension of personal life and identity should be understood: 'My goal is to transform my personal desires and interests into a professional career plan' [applicant to a master's program, observation, July 2011].

Because they want to 'be themselves' at work and look for a job that 'fits them', applicants express expectations for their professional career that mirror their self-described dispositions and/or qualities. Those who claim to have soft skills, which are generally associated with feminine dispositions and high levels of cultural capital, emphasize the quality of human relationships and interactions at work (teamwork, atmosphere). Those who have internalized values of autonomy and initiative and present them as personal qualities are eager to have freedom in the way they organize their work, and independence in their choices (many want, for instance, to be able to develop their own projects, or to put together the program of a festival or venue themselves). As they possess two types of cultural capital (through their family and through their studies), they are inclined to keep accumulating knowledge after completing their education. They use their adaptability and versatility to develop skills expected in future professional experiences. Dispositions toward open-mindedness, particularly regarding culture, translate into a search for new horizons that is held up as an objective in their future career. While finer analysis would be necessary in order to show how the respective work-related expectations are weighted according to individual characteristics, the above constitutes the shared basis of the applicants' relationships to work. Below, Clarisse combines these features in a virtually ideal-typical manner:

> Born in 1987, Clarisse is the daughter of a couple of marketing executives; her mother previously worked as a lawyer. She was a good student: after graduating high school (literary *baccalauréat*), she was accepted into a literary *classe préparatoire*, then studied in a regional Institute of Political Studies before being admitted into a highly selective cultural master's program. Right after her master's, she was offered a one-year work contract in an international cooperation organization, where she manages a youth cultural education program. During the interview, she uses her current work experience as the basis for describing her expectations toward the professional career she has just started. 'There are conditions that you can't measure financially that suit me [very well]. From a purely relational point of view, you know, when you go to work everyday and you feel good in a team where there's a good atmosphere, well, it changes a lot of things. I'm very happy, especially with the people with whom I'm in touch for my job. Time-wise, we organize our week sort of as we want to, as long as we put in the hours. So because of all these factors that have no direct connection to money, I like it [...]. It's the participative aspect of it, you see, developing your personality, and while you're at it discovering new horizons, be they artistic or cultural [...], from the intercultural point of view, discovering, say, a new culture or a new country, a new language, other people coming from different horizons [...]. It's about expanding your skills, your knowledge and your sensibility through artistic fields, through themes, you think about identity, you think about what difference is [...]. You discover your own skills and you also think globally with other people, other cultures. It's this combination of knowledge, skills, reflection, discovery of the other and self-discovery [that] I actually find super rewarding.
>
> *(Interview)*

These projections are not as naïve or utopic as they may seem: they are associated with realistic, far less positive perspectives regarding employment conditions. This association can be the consequence of 'values' (such as wariness of material success) or of the preference toward a 'cluster of non-monetary gratifications—psychological and social gratifications, appealing working conditions, few routine tasks, etc.—[which] makes it possible to compensate on the short- or long-term for the loss of income' (Menger, 2002: 52). It should, however, be related to the trajectories and dispositions on which adhesion to these values and the expression of this preference are based, and which also makes holding such occupations an elective choice. It is also necessary to consider the logic behind the anticipations of the types of gratification that can be expected in these jobs. In this perspective, this relationship to work of aspiring cultural managers, combining high expectations in terms of self-fulfillment and low expectations in terms of wage and employment conditions, can be understood as the product of personal social characteristics and histories (including gender, social background and education), which together constitute the basis of career choices in the cultural sector and the lack of concern for material considerations. It also operates as a form of rationalization of this 'choice', which to some extent consists in accepting the likelihood of precariousness, as if to make a virtue of necessity, or to persuade others (and/or themselves) that they have picked a path they are entirely comfortable with.

Applicants expect relatively modest remuneration for several years after having completed their studies. Regardless of pay, they often know, and mention, how difficult it is to find a job, let alone one that offers some stability. The flipside of this positive relationship to work lies in the acceptance of perspectives of under-employment and more or less extended precariousness. Precarious or part-time contracts are the lot of young graduates in many sectors; they must cope with them insofar as these employment conditions have become the norm for newcomers in the job market. However, the prospect of having a less than decent job, which is often the case in the cultural sector, does not stop after the first few learning years. While the existence of a form of close-knit community between the educated often attenuates the painful character of the subjective experience of unemployment or precariousness disguised as bohemia, the fact remains that the extension of the indeterminate time of youth and fulfillment in work come at the cost of often long-term uncertainty, which becomes less acceptable with time.

Though it has varied reasons and forms, depending on the applicants' social properties (particularly gender and social background), this mixture of realistic positivity and non-resigned acceptance characterizes the relationship to work of the aspiring cultural managers, which is itself embedded in a relationship to the social world that combines anti-conformism and accommodation to the social order.

## Conclusion

In that it jointly considers the respective roles of educational capital and social background, the effects of the (upward or downward) direction of social mobility, and relationships to the future and, more generally, to the social world that match these factors, the analysis framework developed in *Distinction* to shed light on the social trajectories that lead individuals to seek out relatively indeterminate cultural intermediate occupations remains largely relevant. The questions it raises by combining an analysis in terms of life-style with the study of professional career paths provide valuable help in situating the positions of cultural intermediaries in the social space (i.e. defining them relationally by distinguishing them from others).

Yet this does not mean that the empirical observations made in *Distinction* should be considered as unchanging laws. While it was pertinent at the time of publication to speak of a 'new' *petite bourgeoisie* and of 'new' jobs, it obviously isn't several decades later. More importantly, while the importance of educational capital in reproduction strategies has ceaselessly increased since, other developments, which had already begun in the late 1970s, such as the feminization of the labor market and the rise of mass unemployment, were also considerably heightened after the 1980s, resulting in a situation that differs radically from that of previous decades.

In the specific case of cultural managers, none of the two typical social trajectories that used to characterize the new *petite bourgeoisie* has resisted these transformations. Even the graduates among working-class and lower-middle-class children are now virtually barred from accessing these jobs; only a few can aspire to be successful in the sector. Symmetrically, upper-class children can no longer expect to make it in the field if they do not possess a high educational capital, which was far less required for the preceding generations. While the cultural sector could previously be considered as relatively open, both the social and educational hurdles have been raised quite high. These occupations are now increasingly affected by traditional patterns of socio-professional reproduction, and targeted by individuals with high social backgrounds and educational achievements as a means to prevent *déclassement*.

The space of the aspiring cultural managers is, overall, a narrower one—not in the sense of there being fewer of them, but in terms of their social and educational background. In order to stay wholly faithful to the approach developed in *Distinction*, this narrowing should be systematically related to the reduction of the space of professional possibles that has been under way since the 1960s in France. In that period of full employment and increased public expenditure, major socio-economic transformations, such as the development of a service economy, made career paths outside well established professional sectors less risky, and the invention of new professional positions possible. Mass unemployment, the trend toward less public expenditure and the institutionalization of the former 'new' jobs have considerably reduced the horizons of young people facing their career choice, forcing those who dream of 'social weightlessness' to figure out how to land earlier.

## Notes

1 The translation of this paper received support from the Excellence Initiative of the University of Strasbourg funded by the French government's Future Investments program. Translated from the French by Jean-Yves Bart

2 After the first one during the 1960s, a second educational boom started in the mid-1980s in France. It consists, among other things, in longer schooling, a dramatic increase in the number of *baccalauréat* holders, and broader access to higher education.

3 This chapter presents some elements of research I conducted with the help of Victor Lepaux. For a comprehensive presentation of its findings, see Dubois (2013).

4 Source: INSEE, 2008 Population Census.
5 The *classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles* (CPGE) are selective education programs in which students are trained over two years for admission to the *grandes écoles* (such as the *Ecole normale supérieure*) which make up the elite of the French higher education system. The *Instituts d'études politiques* (IEP or Sciences Po), located in Paris and other large towns, are also selective establishments (whereas there is no selection for access to French universities). They offer a multidisciplinary training (in economics, law, political science, history and foreign languages) and are more prestigious than the traditional university curricula.
6 Sources: Ministère de la Culture-DEPS, *Chiffres clés 2011, professions culturelles et emploi* and INSEE, 2008.
7 Source: INSEE Labor Force Survey, with additional statistical processing by the author.
8 Source: Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, *Repères et références statistiques*, 2009. These categories make up between 55 and 60 per cent of the labor force.
9 Source: SISE database, Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur.
10 Interview with Flora—born in 1986, father physician, mother nurse, holder of a literary *baccalauréat*.

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# 7

# Evolution of tastes in films and changes in field theory*

*Julien Duval*

In the 1990s and early 2000s, many sociologists were won over to the thesis of 'omnivorousness' first proposed in the United States by Richard Peterson (1992). In their opinion, the model of *Distinction* has, to say the least, aged: the former division between *lowbrow* and *highbrow* culture has gradually been replaced by an opposition between the univorous lower classes and the omnivorous upper classes. Apparently the latter no longer view non-elite class cultural practices with 'snobbery', but with an increasing degree of tolerance. Recent research studies that reproduce the theoretical and empirical system set up by Bourdieu stress that the growth of omnivorousness and the extent to which it challenges the analyses put forward in *Distinction* have often been over-estimated (Prieur *et al.*, 2008; Bennett *et al.*, 2009). In France, where, to date, nobody has undertaken to 'redo' *Distinction*, the idea that its analyses could today have become obsolescent predominates, despite a few conflicting voices (Pinto, 2009; Coulangeon, 2011). The arguments advanced frequently agree with those of Peterson (Donnat, 1994; Pedler, 2002; Lahire, 2004; Pasquier, 2005; Fabiani, 2007; Glévarec and Pinet, 2009). There is a decline in the norms of cultural legitimacy and a stronger adherence of the cultivated classes to non-elite goods and practices.

This chapter is devoted to the sphere of the cinema, and considers to what extent the analyses developed in *Distinction* are still relevant thirty or forty years later in the country where they were formulated. It falls within the framework of 'field theory', which underlies *Distinction* but which many sociologists who discuss the book leave to one side with no explanation. While, in *Distinction*, Bourdieu describes the cinema as an '*art moyen*' or a middlebrow art, he does consider it to be subject to the same analyses as '*les arts savants*' or legitimate arts: he demonstrates that the practice of cinema-going takes different forms which attract different classes and fractions of classes unequally; there is a structural resonance or homology between the space of the cinema and the social space from which the audience comes. For example, knowledge of the directors appears to be fairly strongly correlated with the cultural capital possessed. This resembles the 'cultivated disposition' observed in other spheres, in opposition to an interest in the actors, which belongs to a more immediate and non-elite relation to the cinema (Bourdieu, 2010: 18–19). In matters of cinema-going, the mid-range and upper regions of the social space reveal an opposition which is very close to that established between the 'avant-garde theatre' and the 'bourgeois theatre' (Bourdieu, 2010: 267–269, 361–362).

A survey of cultural practices which the French *Ministère de la Culture* has carried out on five occasions since 1973 provides some answers to the question of whether these observations are still valid in the France of the early 2000s.[1] The survey lends itself, at least on certain points, to comparisons with the statistical data mobilized in *Distinction*. Some of the questions are asked in a fairly similar form. Moreover, the social position of the respondents is located with the aid of the nomenclature of the socio-professional categories which was used in *Distinction* (Desrosières and Thévenot, 1982). However, this chapter is not solely based on an analysis of the cultural practices to which work on omnivorousness is often confined. It also mobilizes other sources which help to pose the question of the homology between the spaces of practices (and practitioners) and the fields of cultural production which constituted a major contribution of *Distinction*. In particular, the statistics objectivizing the legitimacy with which the different genres of films are invested by film critics, or again the studies published recently on the field of the cinema, its history and its present-day transformations, have been brought together (Darré, 2000; Duval, 2006; Mary, 2006; Baumann, 2007; Heise and Tudor, 2007).

The chapter demonstrates that while the analyses developed in *Distinction* remain relevant in France today, changes have taken place over the past few decades. On the latter point, the analysis concurs with the diagnoses relating to the growth of omnivorousness, but we draw different conclusions. In the context of an argument couched in the terms of field theory, taking recent changes into consideration leads to questioning the structural transformations that may have occurred, on one hand in the cinema-going field, and on the other in the social space from which the audience is recruited.

## The stability of oppositions in taste

The nomenclature of the socio-professional categories, often used in French surveys, lends itself well to an analysis mobilizing the concept of social space set out in *Distinction*. At the most aggregate level, if one sets aside the categories which merge the 'not in work' (retired people, students, ...) or the self-employed (farmers, small shopkeepers, ...)—whose level of income and of qualification is vary variable—there remain four categories of wage-earners (who represent 92 per cent of the employed in France in 2010), which are relatively homogenous and ranked (see Table 7.1): the workers and the employees tend to be concentrated in the lower regions of the social space, the intermediary occupations (technicians, primary teachers, nurses, ...) resemble mid-range positions, and those in the higher and professional occupations (executives, engineers, higher education teachers, artists, etc.) correspond to a category that

*Table 7.1* Synthesis of the main findings commented on

| | *Total* | *Workers* | *Employees* | *Intermediary occupations* | *Higher and professional occupations* | *Cultural fractions of higher and professional occupations* | *Economic fractions of higher and professional occupations* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic capital indicator: (monthly salary) (€) | 1,721 | 1,231 | 1,272 | 1,818 | 3,010 | 2,356 | 3,252 |
| Cultural capital indicator (% theatre) | 19 | 7 | 14 | 25 | 48 | 58 | 38 |
| Number of films seen in the past 12 months (at the cinema or at home) | 180 | 209 | 198 | 185 | 147 | 152 | 149 |
| Percentage of films seen in a cinema | 3 | 2 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 7.4 | 7.9 | 7.3 |
| Coefficient of over-representation in cinema audiences | 1 | 0.61 | 0.96 | 1.17 | 1.51 | 1.65 | 1.52 |
| Preference for American cinema (%) | 28 | 35 | 37 | 29 | 25 | 21 | 27 |
| State they have seen other films (%): | | | | | | | |
| *Camping* | 54 | 65 | 60 | 67 | 57 | 37 | 69 |
| *Star Wars* | 49 | 59 | 50 | 66 | 70 | 68 | 76 |
| *Brice de Nice* | 45 | 61 | 53 | 58 | 49 | 47 | 54 |
| *The Lives of Others* | 18 | 15 | 17 | 28 | 47 | 53 | 42 |
| State they know (at least by name) (%): | | | | | | | |
| Éric Rohmer | 22 | 8 | 18 | 36 | 63 | 71 | 56 |
| Louis de Funès | 99 | 98 | 99 | 99 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Quote amongst their two favorite genres (%): | | | | | | | |
| Action films | 31 | 52 | 33 | 37 | 22 | 13 | 31 |
| Comedies | 8 | 3 | 8 | 11 | 15 | 17 | 13 |
| Art-house films | 6 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 24 | 35 | 11 |
| Love, sentimental | 12 | 5 | 17 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| The two most viewed television channels (%): | | | | | | | |
| TF1 | 47 | 54 | 55 | 39 | 19 | 16 | 24 |
| Canal Plus | 8 | 9 | 7 | 15 | 13 | 12 | 16 |
| Arte | 9 | 5 | 6 | 13 | 21 | 24 | 19 |

*Sources*: *Enquête Emploi* INSEE, 2009 (rows 1 and 2); *Enquête 'Conditions de vie des ménages'*, INSEE, 2003 (rows 3–5); *Enquête 'Pratiques culturelles des Français'*, Ministère de la Culture et de la communication, 2008 (rows 6–19).

is well endowed overall, both economically and culturally. At a more detailed level, the nomenclature of the socio-professional categories enables the identification of sub-groups in terms of their resources: amongst the higher and professional occupations one can thus contrast the set formed by the 'higher managerial occupations in administration and commerce' and the 'engineers and higher technical occupations' on one hand with the 'teachers and scientific occupations' and those in the 'media, arts and entertainment' on the other: the former are richer in economic capital than the latter, but are relatively less well endowed in cultural capital.

The activity of watching films, either in the cinema or at home (television, video, DVD, …), appears as a very widespread practice amongst all classes. Almost all the French state they have seen films in the course of the past 12 months.[2] There are, of course, variations in function of the major socio-demographic variables: while the gap between men and women is low, the number of films seen falls when the age and social position rises: the over-65s state, on average, they have seen 1.4 times fewer films than the 15–19-year age group, and it is much the same for the working classes compared with intermediary and higher and professional occupations.[3] The lower classes on average see fewer films than the higher ones, and they are less likely to go to the cinema. Intermediary and higher and professional occupations are over-represented in the cinema-going public, while workers and employees are under-represented in relation to their weight in the French population. Today, when films are most frequently viewed at home, the number of people going to the cinema (which remains, admittedly, less concentrated in the higher categories than the outings to the theatre or the opera) can be analyzed as a distinctive practice and as the assertion of an economic and cultural ascendancy. Its economic cost presupposes a certain level of income and it does procure symbolic advantages. As the law in France imposes a time-lag between the release of a film in cinemas and its exploitation by other means (video, DVD, television), seeing a film in a cinema is a way of seeing it before others. The symbolic advantage is also due to the valorization of the location which the cinema constitutes, a valorization which is concomitant with the process of legitimization to which the cinema has been subject throughout the twentieth century (Levine, 1988).

Tastes in films also vary with social position. In the first instance, we can note that while all French people watch films on television, they do not all favour the same channels, which do not all program the same types of film. In the early 2000s, French television resembled a diversified structure which tended to reproduce the major divisions in social space. The three oldest channels (which are free) remained those with the largest audiences, and a larger proportion of the working-class than the mid-range and higher categories stated that they watched them. The highest in terms of audience is TF1, formerly a public channel, which has been in private ownership since 1987. Today watching TF1 is an indication of social class: in 2008, more than half the workers and employees, but only one-fifth of the higher and professional occupations, listed it amongst the channels which they most frequently watched. The films programmed focus on the most commercial areas of the cinema: statistics for 2007 established that the channel showed primarily American action films, and French comedies which had been highly successful in cinemas over the ten preceding years.

In contrast to TF1, there are channels with a much smaller public concentrated in the economically and/or culturally privileged strata. The films they program are also different. A subscription channel such as Canal Plus shows—like TF1 (but before it)—recent blockbusters, but these are not the only films screened. Another example is the Franco-German cultural channel Arte. The higher social categories outnumber others by far in listing it most frequently amongst their preferred channels. It specializes in screening films that have not been very successful in the cinema, but that have been highly praised by the main institutions of symbolic legitimation in the cinema world: the most prestigious festivals or the most intellectual critics, for example. In matters of television, Arte represents the type of consumption presented in *Distinction* as characteristic of the cultural fractions of the upper classes: for a very low economic cost (it is public and free), it enables a maximum return in cultural terms.

When respondents were asked to choose from a pre-determined list the two types of film which they preferred to watch, the survey on cultural practices provided further evidence of the homology between the space of the public and the field of cinema (and the space of television). The probability of choosing a horror or terror-story film declined with social position. The probability of choosing art-house or historical films or comedies varied in the opposite direction. The fans of art-house films are strongly concentrated in the higher categories, particularly in their cultural fractions. These types of film have considerable legitimacy with the critics, the invention of the art-house category in the cinema having played a pivotal role in legitimating the cinema in France in the 1950s (Mary, 2006), and even as early as the 1920s (Gauthier, 1999).

More generally, the counts that we carried out on the popularity attributed to films by two weekly publications (*Tele 7 Jours*, *Télérama*) suggest that the social ranking of the genres corresponds closely to a ranking of their critical legitimacy. While these have different publics (tending to lower working class for *Tele 7 Jours*, and intellectual for *Télérama*), both locate documentaries, dramas and historical films at the top of their lists. The least popular are action films or horror films. This hierarchy, simultaneously social and critical, is in keeping with the principles of opposition set out in *Distinction*. The lower classes favour genres focused on the spectacular, the direct expression of emotions, or with a high entertainment value. These contrast with the genres defined by the 'seriousness' and nobility of the subjects dealt with or, in the case of art-house films, by an aesthetic dimension which can only be perceived by transposing to the cinema the cultivated disposition found in relation to the *arts savants* or highbrow arts. *Distinction* contrasted a non-elite relation to the cinema based on the actors, with another, more educated relation based on directors. However, the survey on cultural practices in 2008 demonstrated that the fame of a French director such as Éric Rohmer was comparable to that of artists who are very well known in the more legitimate spheres, but who are not subject to any great vulgarization (Pierre Boulez, René Char): Rohmer was almost unknown amongst the workers (8 per cent), and only amongst the higher and professional occupations had the majority (63 per cent) heard of him. The highest percentage (71 per cent) was found in the cultural fractions of the higher managerial and professional occupations. This scenario contrasts with the almost universal fame in all categories of actors whose careers were in the commercial pole of the cinema (Louis de Funès).

The survey enables us to go further, since a list of 13 films was submitted to the respondents, who were asked to indicate which ones they had seen. The 13 films were all fairly successful. While not reflecting the entire variety of films available in France, they did represent different profiles. By referring to the social composition of their publics and by collating the information that helps to locate the films in the field of cinema production, it can be shown that the films are distributed along a continuum between two extremes.

Some belong to the most commercial end of the field, even if they did benefit from a degree of recognition by the critics. They were highly successful in the cinema and/or on television, and had been seen by a very high proportion of the population (85 per cent for the blockbuster *Titanic*). They could be described as 'omnibus' or general public films, to go back to an adjective used in *Distinction*: their public is to be found in various socio-professional categories similar to the population as a whole, with no category being either over- or under-represented. At the other extreme, two films had been seen by only a small fraction of the respondents (fewer than 20 per cent). They were fairly successful when they came out in the cinema, but in no way comparable to the blockbusters. On the other hand, they obtained a considerable number of awards in international festivals and were highly praised by the most intellectual cinema critics. These two films are, on the one hand, an American art-house film produced by a subsidiary of a major Hollywood company, specializing in art-house productions (*Brokeback Mountain*), and on the other, a German film with a historical dimension (*The Lives of Others*). The public for these two films is characterized by a marked over-representation of the higher and professional occupations, and in particular by the intellectual fractions of these categories. *The Lives of Others*, for example, was seen by only 15 per cent of workers, by 47 per cent of the higher and professional occupations and, within this category, by 53 per cent of the teachers and scientific occupations.

The other films in the list come under the 'commercial' rubric in the cinema field though, when released, none met with as exceptional success as *Titanic* or the French comedies seen by more than 80 per cent of the population. Nor are their rates of penetration in the various socio-professional categories as uniform, but the variations remain less pronounced than for *The Lives of Others* or *Brokeback Mountain*. In the case of films relatively recognized by the critics, like *Star Wars* (the director began his career in experimental cinema), the rate of penetration rises slightly with the social rank of the respondents. For films that are not so highly rated by the critics, it rises up to the intermediary occupations, then falls slightly at the level of the higher and professional occupations. A third scenario shows almost equivalent penetration rates amongst workers, employees and intermediary professions, but appreciably lower rates amongst the higher managerial professions. The phenomenon is perceptible for French comedies such as *Camping*, rated very low by the critics. For example, the reviews published in the press with a readership mainly comprising higher managerial professions tended to deny the film any aesthetic value, and stigmatized it by using adjectives resonant of 'class racism' with respect to the 'middle-brow' public which it targeted.

At this stage in our demonstration, it would seem that the analyses developed in *Distinction* remain very relevant for an understanding of the cinematic public in present-day France. The films on offer are structured around an opposition between a 'restricted market', of which the art-house film is typical, and a wider market, with national comedies or American blockbusters being two examples. The former is undeniably endowed with greater cultural legitimacy which is, in particular, materialized by the attention given to it by the most demanding film critics. It is associated with films that are characterized by the 'seriousness' of their subject and by the importance of the form and of aesthetics. Its clientele is distinguished by a marked over-representation of the higher professional categories, and in particular the cultural fractions of these categories. The wider market corresponds to films tending to the 'omnibus' or general public type, focusing more on entertainment. Secondary differences can be observed within this category because they do not all benefit from the same recognition by the critics, and do not give rise to the same adherence by the higher professional categories and, especially, the fractions best endowed with cultural resources. An aspect that is also important in present-day film-going resides in the places and times at which the different groups view the omnibus films: the material gathered suggests that the middle classes and even the higher professional categories have access to them at an earlier date than the others, in particular because their frequenting of cinemas is appreciably higher, and they subscribe more often to television channels that are not free and that release films before the mass audience channels. While the consumption and practices of the economically privileged fractions of the upper classes are less specific than the cultural fractions, they do not merge with those of the lower categories.

## Omnivorousness and decline in the 'intellectual' taste

However, while the analytical principles developed in *Distinction* remain relevant, changes have occurred since the 1960s and 1970s. The confrontation of the most recent statistical surveys and other older ones help to identify these changes. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind the difficulties in comparisons over time: when they are not impossible (the statistical surveys carried out at different dates do not always ask the same questions, or in the same terms), one must also be aware of the risk of the 'nominal illusion': the same statistical category ('young people', 'intermediary and/or higher and professional occupations', 'art-house cinema') can have different social meanings at different dates.

The question of the changes in the cinematic public since the 1970s, which is undoubtedly the easiest to complete on the basis of the existing sources, must also be treated with considerable vigilance. In the first instance, cinema-going no longer has the same meaning as in the 1970s. The possibility of home viewing at that time was much less widespread: the video and DVD did not exist, not to mention the internet. The offer was restricted to the three television channels on air at the time. Then, in the past forty years, developments such as the rise of mass unemployment and of the tertiary sector of the economy have profoundly transformed what it means to be a 'worker', an 'employee', or in an intermediary or higher and professional occupation in France. Moreover, the nomenclature of the socio-professional categories was modified in 1982 and in 2003, which makes term-for-term comparisons impossible. For these different reasons, considerable prudence has to be exercised when considering changes in the social characteristics of the cinema-going public between 1973 and 2008. An almost certain fact is that, while transformations have taken place over the past three decades, they are not of a comparable size with those that were produced in the 1950s and 1960s, when the number of people going to the cinema fell suddenly and the share of the more highly educated categories rose sharply. The changes which emerge clearly are few in number. The divergences between men and women, like those between different age groups, have been reduced and it would seem that the cinema-going public has slightly narrowed, with mainly the urban and more highly educated categories constituting its hard core since at least the 1960s. Furthermore, it has changed with the general transformations in French society. The traditional division between the sexes has been attenuated and the population has aged. Sociologists sometimes consider that today the criterion of age is increasingly important in understanding cultural practices. Although cinema has had long standing as a juvenile form of leisure (Lazarsfeld, 1947), the age composition of cinema audiences has changed significantly in recent years. Today retired people are more numerous and, on average, more highly educated. The 15–24-year age group, who accounted for almost half of the audience in 1973, now constitutes only a little over a quarter in 2008, with the over-60s representing an increasing share.

Another type of development can be shown as a result of the survey on cultural practices, asking respondents about their preferred genres since 1988. Here again, we have to be prudent because some items made their appearance only in 1997 or 2008 (like the action film), and others have been slightly changed. Nevertheless, a reduction in the size of the public for the most 'aesthetic' art-house films is clearly shown. Between 1988, 1997 and 2008, the proportion of respondents who listed these fell (from 13 per cent to 6 per cent); their average age is high and the concentration in the intermediary and the higher and professional occupations is more marked (from 27 per cent to 43 per cent). The genre retains a public, including amongst the younger generations, but it is narrower than in the past and more confined to the higher occupational categories (and even to their cultural fractions). At the same time, the proportion of intermediary and higher and professional occupations quoting art-house films amongst their two preferred genres has fallen (from 38 per cent to 21 per cent). The other very legitimate genres have experienced a development that is less marked, but overall in the same direction. These are genres whose critical legitimacy, while not negligible, is weaker, such as science fiction films or detective films, which have been on the increase over the past twenty years.

A final comparison over time can be made since the questionnaire in *Distinction* included a list of films, as did the survey in 2008. By establishing a classification for each class and class fraction, in terms of the rate of penetration in the group considered, two graphs in *Distinction* revealed marked variations (Bourdieu, 2010: 268, 361). The operation reproduced on the basis of the 2008 survey is much less conclusive: the films are ranked in practically the same way in the different socio-professional groups.

These observations converge with the changes revealed in the recent literature on cultural practices. While the art-house film remains a mark of cultivated taste in cinema-going, it is on the decline even among the occupations comprising its preferred public. It seems to be subject to the same change as intensive reading (Baudelot *et al.*, 1999) and, more generally speaking, a number of the most characteristic practices of the 'cultivated' public (Prieur and Savage, 2011). This decline has a generational dimension: if we compare similar social positions, the younger generations are less oriented to legitimate practices than the older generations (Pasquier, 2005). In the 2008 survey on cultural practices, the young generations demonstrate fairly marked affinities for cinematic practices associated with the entertainment and commercial sector. The rate of penetration of the highly successful films is greatest in the youngest age groups, who also display an appreciably more marked preference than their elders for the most commercial private television channels. Similarly, 55 per cent state that they prefer American films to French films, which is appreciably higher than the older age groups (20 per cent). This affinity of today's younger generation with a commercial and international cultural production, which is observed in other countries (Bennett *et al.*, 1999), contrasts with the affinity noted in *Distinction* between the young generations of the period (that is, the 1960s and 1970s) and the practices characteristic of 'intellectual taste'. One of the origins of this affinity seemed to lie in the expansion of the education system from which the young generations had benefited. In France, this expansion has continued since the 1970s but the statistical affinity is no longer apparent.

With these generational changes, the most cultivated practices are becoming rarer. It is possible that omnivorousness is effectively gaining ground in the higher categories, where even the most popularized cinematic products do not seem to be rejected. In the 2008 survey, almost all of the respondents who had seen the most distinctive films had seen all the other films. Similarly, the non-elite genre—action film—received a far from negligible rating by the higher and professional occupations (22 per cent listed it as being amongst their favorite genres). For all that, we should not side with the most radical formulations of Peterson's thesis. For example, action films are listed much less frequently (22 per cent) by the higher and professional occupations than by workers (52 per cent), and the fame of a film-maker like Rohmer is widespread amongst the higher professionals whereas he is little known by the workers. Furthermore, we should bear in mind that, as Bourdieu remarked, the strategies of distinction consist not only in consuming different goods, but also in consuming the same goods differently. In fact, while members of the higher classes do watch very popular films, they do seem to mark a distance toward them; thus, while the proportion of respondents having seen *Titanic* does not vary with level of education, the percentage of those who state having 'particularly liked' it falls, from 47 per cent for those with no qualifications to 17 per cent amongst those with higher educational qualifications. When different occupational groups give a film a similar rating, it is sometimes for very different reasons. The reviews devoted to *Shrek* (which roughly 12 per cent of respondents liked, irrespective of their level of education) suggest this. Both the non-elite daily *Le Parisien* and the 'cultivated' newspaper *Le Monde* praise it, but where the tabloid stresses its conformity with the most traditional expectations (an 'excellent scenario', a 'technical success', 'totally realistic synthetic images'), *Le Monde* praises it for its most innovative aspects ('*Shrek* opens up a new field for animation').

A further reason for being wary of the thesis of 'omnivorousness' is because the statistical elements that can be invoked in its favour are difficult to interpret when one reasons in terms of field theory. The 2008 survey and the *Distinction* survey are not strictly comparable, even if they both ask respondents about the films which they are likely to have seen. The two lists have not been drawn up in the same way. *Distinction* proposed a list of films with very varied types, which had been released in Paris in 1962 and 1963 and which the respondents, at the time of the submission of the questionnaire, could only have seen in a cinema. The 2008 list included primarily commercial successes which, at the time of the survey, had already been shown on television. The two lists were not constructed in the same way and they refer to different states of the cinematic field. The 2008 list included sequels, which did not exist in the 1960s. Conversely, the list in *Distinction* included several films by directors who were important at the time (Luchino Visconti, Orson Welles, Luis Buñuel) who have no real equivalent today. It also includes almost one-third of Italian co-productions which corresponds to an era in the cinematic market now in the past.

## Structural transformations

We also have to take the structural transformations into account. The studies on omnivorousness deal with the structural resonance or homology between the space of cultural goods and the space of their consumers, but almost without mentioning the transformations which fall under what is known in *Distinction* as the 'dynamics of the fields'. We cannot set out here a complete and systematic analysis of the transformations which the cinematic field and the social space from which the film-going public is recruited have experienced in thirty years, but some elements can be advanced.

The cinema has always been considered as a lucrative activity by the most powerful cinematic companies, and as an entertainment by large fractions of the public. But, from the beginning of the twentieth century, this dominant definition met with resistance from different social groups who intended to 'raise the cinema' to the status of an art—a tool for social and political moralizing and emancipation. In France, these groups were often associated with movements for the 'education of the people', the working-class movement, the Catholic Church, artistic and intellectual circles. The post-war years corresponded to a time when these definitions of the cinema were particularly strong. The ciné-club movement, which, at the margins of the commercial circuits, organized projections of works considered as exemplary from the point of view of content or form, was at its zenith. The intellectual and artistic mobilization around the cinema was also powerful. One of the most visible manifestations was the sophistication of the aesthetic discourse about the works, with the formulation in the 1950s of auteur theory, which continued as from 1959–60 with the very intellectual films of the New Wave (Mary, 2006). The increase in 'cultivated' conceptions of the cinema was particularly spectacular as the period was characterized by the loss of interest amongst the working-class cinematic public. The number of cinema tickets sold in France fell by half between 1960 and 1970. At the same time, the strong increase in the student population meant, for the cinema as in other cultural spheres, the expansion of the potential public for *avant-garde* productions in hitherto unknown proportions (Bourdieu, 2010: 148).

These transformations in the cinematic field over the years 1950 to 1970 were not specific to France. They were even to be found in the United States, where the conception of the cinema as entertainment and business has always been stronger than in France. The major Hollywood companies were weakened by the equally sudden fall in the number of people going to the cinema in the United States. The process of legitimating the cinema progressed rapidly (Baumann, 2007). With the 'New Hollywood' movement in 1968, the major companies endeavored to adapt to the new cinema-going public, but they rapidly returned to a more traditional conception which consisted in winning back a vast public primarily seeking entertainment. The success of the first blockbusters, which innovated with particularly aggressive strategies of distribution and promotion, reinforced this direction. They gradually retrieved the economic positions which they had lost.

In France, the market share of American cinema (which in the main is held by the productions of the major Hollywood companies), after having plunged to its lowest level (20 per cent) since the war in 1973, rose again. Since 1984, their share has always stood at 43 per cent at least, rising in some years to over 60 per cent. While in France national productions resisted better than in other European countries, the strategy of the blockbuster adopted by the major Hollywood companies had an effect at the level of national production. The balance between the wider market and the market of limited distribution changed in a direction unfavourable to the latter. In particular, the most commercial French companies gradually imitated the American ones, by seeking also, for example, to 'saturate the market'. In the restricted distribution market, the films which were most difficult to understand gradually encountered an increasing number of difficulties in obtaining reviews in the media and in finding cinemas that would distribute the films in good conditions. A sign of the rise in strength of the commercial pole is that in the 1990s and early 2000s, as compared with the 1970s, the number of people going to the cinema was appreciably more concentrated on a small number of entertainment films with huge budgets launched on the market with large-scale promotional schemes.

The Hollywood companies occupy so much of the international cinema space that their transformations necessarily have repercussions at national level. Nevertheless, in France factors that are more national have also contributed to the transformations in cinema over recent decades. Television, which in France has become an almost essential partner in the financing of films, has experienced considerable changes since the 1980s. In the 1970s and 1980s, it was limited to the public service channels and claimed to be educational in intent. In particular, the films programmed included box-office successes of the past decades and films praised by the critics. Things changed in the 1980s with the end of the public monopoly. In order to maximize their audiences, the private channels, financed primarily by advertising, confined their programming (and their investments in cinematic production) to recent successes which were rarely praised by the critics. The former public service channels tended to make the same choice and to delegate investment in the films which met with critical acclaim to the new cultural channel, Arte, which had a much smaller audience. Thus the restricted production sector found itself gradually deprived of the support which the mass audience media had provided in the 1970s.

Other developments have weakened cultivated practices of cinema-going. The ciné-club movement declined rapidly as from the 1970s. This was also related to the general decline of the institutions that supported it, in particular the Catholic Church, the communist party organizations and the workers' education movements. Cultivated cinematic practices also suffered from the continued decline in status of the arts and the humanities. Their spread in France had been based largely on a hard core of teachers and intellectuals who had been trained in the arts and who transferred the cultivated disposition inherited from the arts and the humanities to the cinema. Since World War II at least, the arts have lost a good deal of their prestige relative to the benefit of other forms of cultural capital characterized by a higher economic return. This phenomenon that Bourdieu had analyzed, and that he associated with the more intensive use which the 'dominant fractions of the dominant classes' make of the school system, has continued throughout the recent decades (as witness, for example, the marked rise in strength of business degree courses in higher education).

The transformations of the cinematic field cannot be separated from the more general changes in French society, all the more so as these very probably have an effect on the relation to culture and to the systems of taste. The '*anatomie du goût*' proposed in *Distinction* was associated with a state of relations between classes and fractions of classes which is no longer exactly the same. The 'dominant fractions of the dominant class' are educated to a higher level today and today tend to combine, more so than in the past, a domination which is both economic and cultural (Bourdieu, 1996a). The main social and political forces that could have still threatened them in the 1960s and 1970s have weakened. The change in economic conjuncture has doubtless played a role, along with the spread of neo-liberalism and the system of values and political programs that accompany it. The collapse of the Soviet regime and the decline of the working-class movement have modified class relations in a direction that is to the advantage of the economic elite (Beaud and Pialoux, 2005), while at the same time weakening the 'dominated fractions of the dominant class' who are tempted to rely on the dominated classes for help in their struggle against the bourgeois fractions (Bourdieu, 2011).

The transformations in the cinematic field and the transformations in the social space which have been briefly outlined here have probably interacted and generated a dynamic which, since the 1970s, has weakened the less commercial field and the most cultivated cinematic practices. We can use this dynamic to shed light on the statistical changes outlined above. Thus, the decline in intellectual taste which is revealed in the noticeable fall in numbers in art-house film audiences is perhaps a sub-product of a new state of the power relationship between classes and class fractions within the dominant class. At the very least, it appears difficult to separate this from the rise of commercial approaches in the cinematic field, as well as in television (with the mass public channels abandoning eclectic cinematic programming). Similarly, the affinity between young generations and the private channels or the American entertainment genre films can be related to the changes in the cinema over the past decades: the new generations have been socialized into conditions of supply which the new private channels have contributed to forging and which are characterized by an increase in the strength of American productions.

## Conclusion

Contrary to what many researchers think, it is perhaps not necessary to choose between consideration of recent developments and the analysis of cultural practices developed in *Distinction*. The theoretical framework that Bourdieu proposed, far from excluding the possibility of change, affords the tools for engaging with its underlying dynamics. The social spaces are social structures which are endowed with a degree of inertia, but which are also destined to change as a result of the struggles between competing groups that endeavour constantly, and sometimes successfully, to modify the balance of power to their advantage.

Instead of opposing Peterson and Bourdieu, would it not be possible to consider the transformations demonstrated by Peterson within the theoretical framework proposed by Bourdieu, and in so doing perhaps enrich their interpretation? The changes observed do not involve only a relative decline in highbrow culture and a rise in strength of the omnivorousness of the upper classes, which have become more tolerant of the 'people'. These changes also refer to struggles between 'intellectual taste' and 'bourgeois taste' which are intimately associated with the struggles taking place in the fields of cultural production between producers and firms which are neither equally autonomous, nor subject to the same conditions of judgment by the market (Bourdieu, 1996b). An important development in matters of culture over the past decade seems to reside in the rise of commercial rationales within the world of cultural production, and correlatively in the decline registered in intellectual taste. The dominant fractions of the dominant class always have a structurally ambivalent relationship with intellectual taste (Goblot, 1925; Bourdieu, 2010). On one hand, intellectual taste is constructed in opposition to bourgeois taste, and therefore in opposition to the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, intellectual taste maximizes the distance from the barbarous tastes of the people, and may thereby enable the bourgeoisie to use culture to sublimate the economic domination which it exercises. In this context, the rise of omnivorousness perhaps conceals a weakening of the position of the 'dominated fractions of the dominant class' and a correlative strengthening of the position of the 'dominant fractions of the dominant class' in the class structure. Re-considered in Bourdieu's theoretical framework, the diagnosis of omnivorousness may therefore invite us to consider the greater economic domination exercised by these dominant fractions. Today, these classes have perhaps less need of intellectual taste than in the post-war decades, simply because there is less of a challenge to their economic domination. Their apparent greater cultural tolerance may simply be an expression of a decline in their need to mark their distance with respect to a 'people' who no longer appear to be as much of a threat to their existence as in the context of the Cold War.

## Notes

* Translated from the French by Kristin Couper.

1 Unless otherwise stated, the statistical data used in this text come from this survey, some findings of which were published in Donnat (2009) and of which a complementary analysis was carried out, the researchers from the survey being put at our disposal by the Quetelet network.

2 In this paragraph, the information is based on an INSEE survey ('*Conditions de vie des ménages*', 2003), which has the advantage not only of asking respondents the number of times they went to the cinema, but also the number of films viewed at home.

3 Lack of space precludes the reproduction here of all the statistical findings. Readers are referred to Table 7.1 for the main findings.

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# 8

# Culture at the level of the individual*

## Challenging transferability

*Bernard Lahire*

Commentators on *La Culture des individus* (Lahire, 2004) have often emphasized the fact that my approach was based on a critical dialogue with Pierre Bourdieu's book *La Distinction* (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]), published twenty-five years earlier. This is quite true. The critical dialogue is explicitly asserted and, to a large extent, structures the problematic implemented. But, apart from the fact that the title of the book had been chosen to draw attention to the link with Norbert Elias' reflections on highly differentiated societies (Elias, 1991), approximate, superficial and sometimes frankly erroneous readings concerning the points of difference between Pierre Bourdieu's work and my own have proliferated. To see in *La Culture des individus* a theory of action less 'deterministic' than that of Bourdieu, with a model of cultural consumer 'freer' in his or her 'choices'; to find therein a proof of the disappearance of social classes; or yet again—with respect to the hypotheses of Richard A. Peterson—to read therein the coming of the figure of the eclectic cultural consumer in the dominant classes, is to project preoccupations, fantasies or theses which are totally foreign to this work. True, the *dispositionalist* and *contextualist* theory of action which underlies the explanation is clearly multi-determinist (it makes the network of incorporated and objective social determinations which inform individual practices more complex). The data are explicitly organized and interpreted taking class differences into consideration. Proof is given that not only are the phenomena of cultural dissonances, or incoherence, found in the majority in all social classes, but that the greatest probability of having a dissonant/incoherent cultural profile is located, first and foremost, in the middle classes.

In the last resort, very few 'critically informed readers' have a clear grasp of the central scientific issue. This consisted in systematically questioning the presumed *transfer of dispositions or schemes* from one cultural domain (or sub-domain) to the other, and doing so both using large-scale survey data[1] and developing detailed analysis from multiple specific case studies.[2] This research was designed to enable me to pursue the work of empirically testing, at the level of the individual, the elements of a sociological reflection on the social world (Lahire, 2002, 2003, 2011 [1998]). Instead of presuming that an incorporated past has a systematic influence, considered as being necessarily coherent with the present behavior of individuals, rather than imagining that *all* our past, like a block or a homogeneous synthesis (in the form of a *system* of dispositions, or of values), impacts *at every instant* on *all* our real-life situations, the sociologist can examine whether or not such incorporated dispositions and competences are activated or implemented in various action contexts. The *plurality of dispositions and competences* on one hand, and the *varieties of contexts in which they are brought into play* on the other, are, from a sociological standpoint, the elements which account for the variations in behavior of one and the same individual, or of a given group of individuals, depending on the domains of practice, the properties of the context of the action or the particular circumstances of the practice.

In a previous research study (Lahire, 2002), with a small number of respondents and in a completely experimental and intensive manner, I was able to begin to demonstrate significant variations in the degree of legitimacy in their cultural practices. (Based on six long interviews with each of the respondents, this study encompassed a range of sufficiently diversified domains of activity and dimensions of existence to enable intra-individual variations to be examined in detail and to challenge previous sociological findings on the mechanisms of transferability of dispositions.) This variation emerges when one makes a point of going into sufficient detail on the individual practices and preferences within each cultural domain on one hand, and on the other, when, instead of focusing all our attention on one domain or one sub-domain alone, one follows the evolution of individual behavior in different cultural domains. Each individual portrait—which was not intended to illustrate the culture of a group, class or class fraction—showed clearly that, far from being restricted to a single cultural register, the respondents revealed ambivalence, indecision or alternation within each domain (e.g. classical music and pop music, or classical literature and trashy novels or celebrity magazines) and/or from one domain to another (from reading to music, from television to cultural outings, etc.).

In the various case studies, the analysis had already revealed a series of elements which, usually in combination, accounted for this type of variation in cultural behavior: heterogeneous socialization experiences in childhood or adolescence (between family, school, peer groups and cultural institutions attended); far-reaching changes in material and/or cultural conditions (e.g. instances of upward or downward social mobility); specific and localized effects of highly specialized educational training courses (e.g. a high-level literary formation contrasting with the lack of skills in spheres which neither early education nor educational institutions had enabled the respondent to develop); an ambivalent relationship to their own family culture (based on family country of origin) due to the conditions of 'transmission' of the parental cultural capital; conjugal influences which change the dispositions acquired in the family; friendships which encourage practices different from those implemented between spouses; a range and, above all, a variety of bonds of friendship which enable a distribution of heterogeneous practices depending on the friends frequented—contexts that are particularly favorable, strictly limited in space and/or time (the less legitimate practices taking place, for example, during the holidays, on festive occasions or when relaxing after a period of pressure at work, etc.).

The scientific approach adopted in *La Culture des individus* thus consisted in systematizing the first elements of analysis drawn from these sociological portraits, the main aim being to demonstrate that, far from being the interpretation of overly atypical or unusual case studies, these elements revealed not only *a very general sociological problem*, but also *central aspects of our highly differentiated social formations*. It was a question of giving prominence to the fact that individual variations in behavior and attitudes have social origins or causes. The intra-individual variations of cultural behavior are the product of the interaction between the plurality of incorporated cultural dispositions and competences (assuming the plurality of socializing experiences in cultural matters) on one hand and, on the other, the diversity of cultural contexts (cultural domain or sub-domain, relational contexts or circumstances of the practices) in which individuals have to make 'choices', to do things, consume, etc.

## At the core of singularities

The task of reprocessing the quantitative survey was carried out with the aim of demonstrating that consideration of the social at the level of the individual in no case confined the researcher to the logic of the case study. Before proceeding with the necessary assigning of the respondents to categories (socio-professional status, level of qualification, sex, age, etc.), one can endeavor to take into account the separate ways of thinking which mean that each individual is characterized by *a range of not necessarily homogeneous behavior* in terms of the degree of legitimacy of cultural practices and preferences. This type of approach leads the researcher not to depart from a sociological argument, but towards a sociological argument attentive to social realities in their individualized form. To consider that scientifically constructing a sociology of individual forms of socialization is incompatible with a theory of social class would be as subtle as thinking that the study of atoms or molecules logically implies the negation of the existence of bodies or planets. This does not mean that classifying individual or groups into categories should be abandoned because of an alleged 'disappearance' of groups or classes. It is even less a question of adding an extra voice to the already numerous chorus which regularly sings the praises of present-day individualism.

The aim of the series of research studies at the origin of this book was therefore to produce a sociological understanding of the cultural practices of the French which retains a strong individual basis. In other words, an understanding which, where possible (and interpretable), takes account of the specifically individual level of social life (it is the same person who goes in for this and that, who likes this but also that, who frequents this cultural institution while at the same time frequenting another performance site, etc.). This enables us to further the collection of data concerning *individual endowments of incorporated cultural dispositions and competences* which are more or less homogeneous or heterogeneous on one hand and, on the other, the *properties of the various contexts of practices* which are either in keeping with, or in contradiction with, these individual endowments of dispositions and competences. Just as one can consider the accumulation (or non-accumulation) of cultural competences (Donnat, 1994), the survey data can be used to consider the question of the contextual variation in the degree of legitimacy of individual cultural preferences or practices.

This kind of question was unimaginable in the strict framework of a theory of cultural legitimacy which is quick to ascribe to actors a very sure sense of distinction or legitimacy. For example, it is assumed that museum visitors are too serious to envisage frequenting amusement parks or watching big action movies. Over-interpretation of this type, which is not an inevitable consequence of the theory of cultural legitimacy, then leads us to presume, by a purely imaginary intensification of cultural investments and knowledge, that all the most culturally highly endowed consumers are cultural ascetics. Whatever the context (with whom? when? why?), whatever the cultural activity in question (cinema, television, literature, music, painting, etc.), the cultivated disposition is considered to be stronger than anything else and to act as a genuine little sorting machine constantly separating the wheat from the chaff.

The theoretical commentary that has no difficulty in listing the cultural properties and social dispositions associated with the dominant taste (hatred of the mass, of mere entertainment, of the vulgar, etc.) is all the more operational since it does not seek *counter-examples* or *nuanced situations* that would cast doubt on its empirical validity. As it is, the existence of numerous empirical counter-examples to the theory of cultural legitimacy and the hypothesis of the transferability of 'systems of disposition' justifies the possibility of questioning the intra-individual variations of cultural behavior and, in particular, of endeavoring to grasp *individual cultural nuances*. We would thus pay more respect than usual to the complexity of individual *endowments of cultural dispositions and competences* and to the variety of *contexts* in which individuals set their actions.

Questions of this type have barely been addressed except in relation to changes in social class; people who are strongly upwardly socially mobile as a result of education may, depending on the domain of practice considered, implement dispositions acquired in the family (in a working-class environment) or dispositions acquired academically and/or professionally (Bourdieu, 1989: 259–264). Their consumer choices may be popular in some domains (e.g. in food or clothes); in other respects they may adopt some very legitimate cultural products (e.g. in matters of literary reading material), but also make choices that are a little less 'pure' in other domains (e.g. the cinema or television). The closer one comes to areas where the school (and sometimes the profession, and the sociability that goes with it) has exerted its influence (which is the case for literature, a little less for music and painting, etc.), the more the upwardly mobile tend to return to the categories of perception and classification learnt at school, and therefore to a sense of cultural legitimacy. On the other hand, the further one moves away from these areas, the greater the tendency for the social dispositions, tastes, categories of classification, etc. activated to become non-elite once again (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 6). The behavior of individuals of this type in an upwardly socially mobile situation is less predictable, statistically, than those who remain stationary and who perpetuate in their adult life their original social and cultural conditions. The fact that they make legitimate (or less legitimate) choices in one domain does not make it any easier to predict their behavior in other cultural domains.

There were three main stages in the method applied to the survey data. Firstly, there was, classically, the ranking of the practices and products according to their degree of cultural legitimacy. Secondly, we endeavored to reconstruct cultural profiles which, in terms of cultural legitimacy, were either more variegated or more uniform. This enabled us to highlight people with very dissonant/incoherent cultural preferences and practices, e.g. the case of those who like the most legitimate literature and who usually listen to less legitimate, light French popular music, or else the lover of classical music who views the least legitimate television programmes; those with average clashes or mixed choices (in some domains of practice their inflections in degree of cultural legitimacy or their mix of legitimate and less legitimate are visible); those with particularly coherent, or matching, choices (those who make no 'mistakes' in legitimacy or, in contrast, those who are far from the most legitimate high-status cultural institutions and consume uniquely 'popular' products).

Finally, re-examining the social determinants classically identified, we considered the probability of these types of profile emerging as a function of sex, age, socio-professional category, level of qualification and social origin. In particular, we considered which categories provided the most coherent profiles and which included the most contradictory or ambivalent profiles. One of the hypotheses we formulated at the outset of the research and which, moreover, fairly rapidly appeared as relevant, was that the positions in the social hierarchy of the respondents with the most homogeneous cultural practices and preferences were highly polarized. Homogenization may be the product of cultural and material deprivation; on the contrary, it may also be the outcome of a long-standing and 'naturalized' inclusion in the most legitimate cultural frameworks.

Between the small intellectual fractions of the dominant classes—second-generation bourgeois (at least), who statistically are the most likely to accumulate a considerable number of the most legitimate, high-status cultural practices and preferences, and the (much larger) fractions of the most educationally deprived of the working class, who themselves are of working-class origin and who are largely excluded from the legitimate cultural frameworks—we have the majority of the members of the upper, middle and working classes. The characteristic they all shared was the heterogeneity of their respective cultural profiles, which were never perfectly coherent or consonant (in one sense or another).

By aggregating the information on the practices and preferences of the same respondents, we thus had a way of measuring degrees of cultural asceticism or preference for demanding forms of culture and, more generally, the degrees of coherence in such forms of cultural involvement. This enabled us to put into perspective the proportion of respondents expressing a demanding cultural orientation at all times, or a high degree of cultural involvement, causing them persistently to refuse anything that might resemble a guilty 'dilution of cultural pursuit' and a 'vulgar' participation in 'ordinary' forms of leisure.

When sociologists intersect socio-professional categories, age, etc. with practices, preferences, tastes, etc., as is their habit, without realizing it they are giving preference to an inter-category variation rationale. On the other hand, when they constitute individual cultural profiles (a person who does this *and* that, who likes this *but also* likes that, who likes this *but*, *on the other hand*, hates that, etc.) they then conserve the individual data from their survey, as they would do when processing interviews and, so doing, grasp intra-individual variations.

## Imperfect transfers

In 1999 Herbert J. Gans, the sociologist of North American culture, wrote that individual, cultural choices are not made 'randomly' and that they are 'related':

> … people who read *Harper's* or the *New Yorker* are also likely to prefer foreign movies and public television, to listen to classical (but not chamber) music, play tennis, choose contemporary furniture, and eat gourmet foods. Subscribers to the *Reader's Digest*, on the other hand, probably go to the big Hollywood films if they go to the movies at all, watch the family comedies on commercial television, listen to popular ballads or old Broadway musicals, go bowling, choose traditional furniture and representational art, and eat American homestyle cooking. And the men who read *Argosy* will watch Westerns and sports on television, attend boxing matches and horse races, and let their wives choose the furniture but prefer the overstuffed kind.
>
> *(Gans 1999: 92)*

In support of his argument, Gans tells us that if relations of this sort exist between these various choices, the reason is that they are based on similar aesthetic norms. However, in a footnote, he points out that these are only 'hypothetical descriptions' because few academic research studies deal in fact with these 'inter-relations of choices'. This is a useful detail because the statistical data are an in-depth challenge to these cultural stereotypes. The natural explanatory curve of sociologists of culture—but perhaps ever more widely of ordinary actors—that is, the idea of a transferability of tastes or attitudes from one domain of practice to the other, is contradicted by a number of survey data-sets. Being more cautious than others, the sociologist will speak of 'statistical probability'; but this will lead to type-cast caricatures, similar to these 'hypothetical descriptions' of Herbert J. Gans and to the same astonishment at seeing readers of the *New Yorker* who attend boxing matches.

A concept is only scientifically useful if it permits the observation of elements in reality and the ordering of one's observations in a specific manner. It must enable (and even compel) empirical surveys which would not have been envisaged without the concept. Thus the concept of 'transfer' of dispositions or incorporated schemes leads us to seek the generative principles of behavior in domains of practice which have no apparent relation (diet, culture, sport, politics, etc.) or in sub-domains which are relatively autonomous (music, literature, painting, cinema, theatre, etc.). To have an overview of the statistical probability of the transfer of a sense of cultural legitimacy from one cultural sub-domain to the other, and to evaluate the importance of non-aggregation of 'weak' and 'strong' cultural legitimacy, we can therefore begin by systematically intersecting the indicators of low-status cultural legitimacy with those of high-status cultural legitimacy.

One could hypothesize that a low (or high) degree of legitimacy in one particular cultural domain would statistically attract low (or high) legitimacy in another cultural domain. In concrete terms, those whose cultural practice is legitimate in one domain (musical, cinematographic, literary, etc.) *generally* have more chances, statistically, to be on the side of legitimate cultural practices in another cultural domain, rather than on the side of practices which are less legitimate. From the standpoint of *statistical tendencies* attached to *groups* or to *categories*, one can in part (but only in part) agree with Pierre Bourdieu when he wrote:

> The clearest proof that the general principles of the transference of learning also apply to learning at school lies in the fact that the practices of the same individual or at least of individuals of a certain social category or level of education tend to constitute a system, such that a certain type of practice in any given area of culture is associated, with a very strong degree of probability, with an equivalent kind of practice in all the other areas. Thus regular museum visiting is almost necessarily associated with equally regular trips to the theatre, and to a lesser extent, to concerts. In the same way, all the indications are that knowledge and tastes arrange themselves into constellations (strictly linked to level of education) such that a typical structure of preferences and knowledge in matters of painting is very likely to be linked to a similar structure of knowledge and tastes in classical music or even in jazz or cinema.
>
> *(Bourdieu and Darbel, 1990: 63)*

Only in part because, when we take a close look, the *statistical* tendency to transfer cannot be verified in a certain number of cases.

It is difficult, moreover, to maintain on the basis of the observation of *statistical* tendencies that one observes 'overall' a 'transfer' of the (practical) sense of cultural legitimacy from one domain to the other, because this type of reasoning concerns categories of individuals. While the *statistical* nature of the tendency to transfer should be stressed, this does entail bearing in mind the fact that a substantial part of the respondents are not included in the explanatory model. Now, what we note about the individuals composing the categories is that some of them—sometimes a very small number, but sometimes a far from negligible number and, in certain cases, the majority—do not make choices which are culturally equivalent in dignity and nobility according to the domain of practice in question. If we retain only two variables, to take the most elementary cultural profiles, it is clear to see that the number of those who associate less legitimate practices or tastes with highly legitimate practices or tastes is never negligible.

Pairs that do not match from the standpoint of cultural legitimacy (legitimate/less legitimate) are even rarer when one links particularly rare and legitimate practices with particularly ordinary and less legitimate practices. For example, only 4.9 per cent of those who prefer popular or less legitimate music (light music, rap, hard rock, etc.) combine this characteristic with high annual attendance at very legitimate cultural outings (classical music concerts or the theatre, three times or more in the course of the past twelve months). Similarly, of those whose annual attendance in matters of highly legitimate cultural outings is high, only 7 per cent prefer less legitimate TV programmes (*Tout est possible*, *Côte Ouest* [*Knot's Landing*], *Le Juste Prix*, *Les Grosses Têtes*, etc.). But one series of non-matching pairs does remain very surprising: for example, 48 per cent of those who usually read very legitimate books (classical literature, essays) have a preference for less legitimate music (36.4 per cent of them also prefer low-status films). 46.1 per cent of those who view the TV channel Arte at least once a week prefer less legitimate music. 40.8 per cent of those who prefer less legitimate films (comedies, action or horror films) combine this with having made at least one highly legitimate cultural visit in the past 12 months (to a park like the Futuroscope, or La Villette, an art exhibition, a photographic exhibition, an art gallery, a museum). 40.6 per cent of those who prefer highly legitimate films (art-house films, comedies, historical films) have a preference for less legitimate music. 34.6 per cent of those who have high annual attendance at highly legitimate cultural outings prefer less legitimate music. 29.8 per cent of those who prefer very legitimate music (jazz, opera, classical music) prefer less legitimate films, *and so on and so forth*.

When one adds a third cultural domain (then a fourth, fifth, sixth and finally seventh), we observe a gradual erosion of the matching profiles and reveal the clashes amongst part of those who, until then (on the basis of two cultural practices) had a perfectly coherent profile. Consequently, the more practices we add, the more likelihood there is of revealing culturally hybrid or composite individuals, people with variable geometry in tastes (which does not mean they are culturally free of any determination). In any event, it is rather difficult to assert, as does Pierre Bourdieu, that 'the generative schemes of the habitus are applied, by simple transfer, to the most dissimilar areas of practice' (Bourdieu, 2010 [1979]: 175).

## Conclusion

Largely on the assumption of a general model of cultural transferability across domains, Pierre Bourdieu argued in *L'Amour de l'art*:

> Even while the academic institution only gives a restricted role to strictly artistic teaching, and even while it provides neither specific encouragement of cultural practice nor a body of concepts specifically aimed at works of plastic art, it does tend to inspire a certain *familiarity*—part of the feeling of belonging to the cultivated world—with the universe of art, where one feels at home and among friends, as the accredited addressee of works of art which are not delivered to just anybody.
> *(Bourdieu and Darbel, 1990: 63)*

The author invokes two main reasons in support of this model of transferability. In the first instance, a kind of *statutory* assignation and a *feeling of cultural dignity and duty* which, given their social position, level of education, etc. results in highly educated respondents being obliged to do their utmost to stay in rank whatever the domain considered (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1990: 62). Then a *technical competence* (a series of intellectual habits) which, constructed at the outset on the basis of the study of literary works, 'creates an equally generalized and transferable aptitude for classification, by artist, genre, school or period' (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1990: 62), enables us, by analogy, to know which works are legitimate in other non-literary domains.

At first sight, the argument may seem totally satisfactory: if there is cultural transferability (to a large extent taken for granted and seldom verified empirically in the book as well as in certain theoretical texts[3]), it is the result (1) of a *sense* of the rights and duties associated with one's social position, and (2) of technical competence. One can, however, nuance the weight of these two arguments. In the first instance the strength of the statutory attribution is likely to vary considerably with the trajectory of the respondents (a lack of self-confidence may originate in a slightly downwardly socially mobile family trajectory or, inversely, an ill-assumed upward social mobility) and the degree of scarcity of the status possessed (the social trivialization of a qualification or a social position and its ensuing devaluation may contribute to considerably lowering personal self-confidence[4]). Secondly, even if educational competence of a literary nature may constitute a basis for the more efficient acquisition of other skills, the fact remains that the legitimate appropriation of extra-curricular cultural domains, when this has not been prepared in the family, assumes a fairly considerable time spent in the constitution of the new competences required for this. This time may not be available to those who nevertheless do have the legitimate educational competences. Confronted with the need to spend so much time in distinctly less favorable conditions (the period of childhood and adolescence protected by the family and school gives way to the period of employment, marriage and parenthood, at times exhausting), individuals may either prioritize their favorite cultural domains without losing the feeling of being a cultural aristocrat, or relax their cultural requirements in domains that are further from those which they learned to master at school. This second attitude is particularly likely to occur as individual lives are becoming (at home and at work) stressful, and the degree of legitimacy of classical and scholarly culture is tending to weaken as a result of competition from the new media; the atmosphere of the era is no longer as supportive of endeavors to acquire legitimate cultural forms.

One of the major assumptions of the generalized transfer model is that of the homogeneity of the multiple cultural situations in the daily lives of the actors from the cultural legitimacy standpoint. In other words, without saying so, the sociologist hypothesizes that what is legitimate and enviable here (e.g. the professional, family or friendship context, etc.) continues to be so there. Irresistibly drawn by a cultural force stronger than the individual, actors apparently have no sense of the situation, its relative constraints and legitimacies. They compulsively implement the same cultural dispositions whatever the context, whatever the people with whom they find themselves and their social and cultural properties, whatever the nature of the situation—be it formal or informal, tense or relaxed, etc. While sociologists may admit the potential diversity of the situations, they nevertheless presuppose that the probability that an actor meets heterogeneous situations is so unlikely (given their habitus, they would systematically ward off unwelcome surprises, disparities and crises: social homogamy, etc.) that there is no opportunity for the theoretical question of variation in situation to be posed empirically. However, it is effectively precisely because actors do have a sense of situation, and adapt their behavior according to what they perceive this to be, that intra-individual variations of practices and cultural attitudes are observed.

## Notes

* Translated from the French by Kristin Couper.

1 By re-analysing the data from the statistical survey on the 'Cultural practices of French people, 1997'.'*Pratiques culturelles des Français 1997*', carried out by the *Ministère de la culture et de la communication*.

2 With the analysis of a long series of interviews ($n$ = 111) carried out amongst a population constructed explicitly with the aim of varying the situations according to the level and type of diploma, socio-professional position, sex and age.

3 In 1966, Pierre Bourdieu wrote, 'the school provides those who have been subjected to its direct or indirect influence, not so much specific and particularised schemas of thought but this general disposition, generating specific schemas, open to being applied in the different domains of thought and action, which can be referred to as the cultivated habitus' (Bourdieu, 1966: 904). Now, this was perhaps over hasty, in particular the assumption that the 'general disposition' in question had the almost magical power of generating specific schemas, whereas these schemas correspond to specific cultural domains (literature, music, painting, sculpture, architecture, cinema, etc.) and, consequently, assume the acquisition of specific knowledge, which is far from being the case.

4 It is obvious, for example, that being a student today no longer constitutes a situation as rare as that to which Bourdieu refers in the 1960s and which enabled him to write that '… Thus, for example, if going to university gives rise to a sort of cultural bulimia amongst most students, this is because it marks (among other things) entry into the cultivated world, in other words, access to the right and duty (which amounts to the same thing) to appropriate culture' (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1990: 62).

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# 9

# Cultural distinction and material consumption

## The case of cars in contemporary France

*Philippe Coulangeon, Yoann Demoli and Ivaylo D. Petev*

Contemporary readers of *Distinction* (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]) tend to associate it primarily with the realm of symbolic goods and cultural consumption. In turn, they may have difficulty placing material consumption in Bourdieu's approach. A useful guide in this vein is an argument Bourdieu made in an earlier work, a co-authored collective volume, *Le partage des bénéfices* (Darras, 1966). The book confronted what economists, statisticians and sociologists thought about the factors and consequences of economic expansion in postwar France, the so-called '*Trenteglorieuses*'. In his contribution, Bourdieu argued that inequalities had probably moved from the realm of material goods to the field of symbolic ones (Darras, 1966: 125). Rising living standards and decreasing inequalities in access to material goods translated into the increasingly distinctive power of cultural practices. Under conditions of economic expansion, scarcity was restored through symbolic distinction: social disparity became increasingly a matter of 'how' rather than 'what' people consumed—a matter of quality rather than quantity. To cite Bourdieu: the quality of goods was itself highly dependent on the quality of the consumer (*ibid*.: 125).

Taking a pitch at *Distinction*, David Gartman has built a deft challenge to the argument for a strong class–lifestyle association and to its pretended wide scope. For Gartman, Bourdieu's approach improperly extends to all domains of consumption what is observed in the domain of cultural practices. Outside that limited domain, Gartman insists that 'late capitalist culture legitimates the class structure by obscuring classes altogether rather than establishing a hierarchy of honor between them' (Gartman, 1991: 426). In the much broader domain of material consumption 'real qualitative differences in class power take on the appearance of merely quantitative differences in the possession of the same goods' (*ibid*.: 426). Gartman's allegiance lies with the Frankfurt School's theory of standardization of mass-culture, and his preferred empirical illustration is the automobile industry.

Cars are certainly an emblematic good of the postwar expansion period in the West. In France, the automobile industry was at the core of the growth model of the postwar decades. The model was based on strong labor productivity gains, a relatively closed domestic market and a fairly stable balance of power between labor and capital. In the resulting virtuous cycle, labor productivity gains fuelled both greater investment capacities for companies and greater purchasing power for workers (Boyer, 1986). This growth model led also to a certain standardization of consumption and lifestyles that cars have come to symbolize, in France (Mendras, 1988) and in other Western countries (Galbraith, 1958; Bell, 1973).

Automobiles constitute our object of empirical illustration too. Emblematic goods of late capitalism, they also combine symbolic and material aspects of consumption whose relation and evolution we wish to elucidate here. The objective is to explore whether social distinction shifts from goods to ways of consumption, or the other way around. Using historical records on the number and the characteristics of cars owned by French households, we settle for a middle-ground conclusion that uncovers—beyond largely quantitative differences in horsepower, weight and age of vehicles—evidence for social differentiation that is akin to descriptions in *Distinction* and is particularly pronounced among upper-class fractions.

## Still a status marker

Reflecting on the widespread diffusion of car ownership in contemporary American society, David Gartman argues that cars have ceased to act as a distinctive good: their design 'no longer bore direct, symbolic testimony to the classes of American society' (Gartman, 1994: 156). At first glance, the same is true in France. Car ownership appears to be tied more closely to residential than to class status. Households without a car are rare (18 per cent) and concentrated among residents of Paris (59 per cent) and, to a lesser degree, its immediate suburbs (30 per cent). By comparison, the class differential in car ownership between the upper social echelon (middle management, senior executives, and business owners and professionals) and the rest of the population is small, respectively 92 and 86 per cent. Moreover, the diffusion of personal vehicles resulted in the decline of the class differential during the past thirty years. The already high ownership levels of the upper-class households remained stable, while the number of car owners reached 71 per cent for non-manual and 82 per cent for manual workers, 87 per cent for farmers and 91 per cent for craftsmen and shopkeepers (see Figure 9.1).

Banal as personal vehicles have grown to be in France, however, alongside their diffusion emerged new social divisions in the finer characteristics of cars (Méot, 2010). Evolutions across three such characteristics are worth noting: state of acquisition, horsepower and national origin or brand.

For one, the diffusion of car ownership and the rise of households owning more than one vehicle propelled the second-hand market. If 47 per cent of the vehicles in French households were bought new in 1981, their share dropped to 39 per cent in 2008. The longer lifetime of contemporary cars may explain the greater interest in the second-hand market. But the social class of buyers plays a

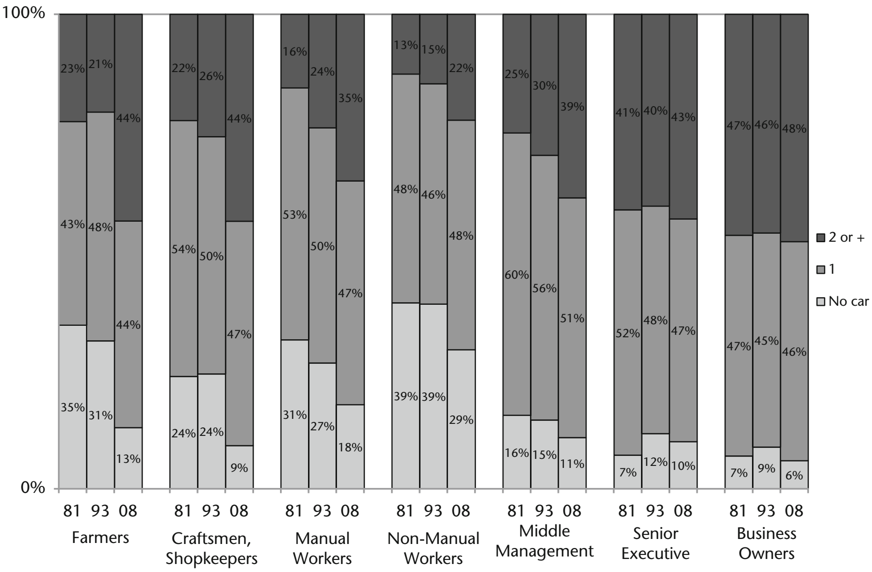


*Figure 9.1* Class-specific trends in car ownership

role as well. If, on average, one-third of French households declared in 2008 that they owned at least one car purchased first-hand, by contrast this was the case for 56 per cent of business owners and 48 per cent of senior executives.

The same is true of the social contrasts related to the ownership of vehicles of different horsepower. Upper-class households are approximately twice as likely to possess a powerful car than are working-class households, independent of the survey year. But there is an interesting nuance concerning farmers, craftsmen and shopkeepers: the wider diffusion of car ownership, particularly in 2008, corresponds to an increase in the proportion of owned high-powered vehicles. This increase is at odds with the overall, historical trend in the proportion of vehicles with above-average horsepower that declined from 60 per cent in 1980 to 45 per cent in 2008. In other words, the diffusion of car ownership shortened the social distance between upper-class households and the aforementioned largely self-employed social categories.

These trends and corresponding class differences are in no small part a consequence of the generational dynamic behind the diffusion of car ownership, and of the massive entry of women into the labor market from the 1970s onwards. In conjunction with their increased participation in the labor force, women took on driving much more than before, irretrievably reshaping the landscape of car ownership. The gap between men and women with a driving licence declined considerably between 1981 and 2008, while the rise of households owning more than one vehicle largely reflects the rising proportion of women driving their own car. In 1981, only one of every four women owned her own, personal car. Their proportion rose to 56 per cent in 2008.

The above gender dynamic, insofar as it coincides with the baby-boom cohorts, also follows a certain generational logic. If the baby-boomers represent the precursors of the massive diffusion of car ownership, for the preceding cohorts, personal vehicles carried a strong symbolic and socially distinctive value; post-baby-boom cohorts, on the other hand, manifest a rising, albeit modest penchant towards 'demotorisation' (Demoli, 2013a). This extends also to participation in the first- and second-hand car markets: the baby-boomers are far more likely than subsequent cohorts to own a vehicle bought first-hand: 45 and 27 per cent, respectively, in 2008. Moreover, with the ageing of the baby-boom population, which boasts particularly high rates of car ownership, the number of non-motorized households decreases among seniors (65 and over). At the same time, the social make-up of non-motorized households among post-baby-boom cohorts has become more polarized since the 1980s. Next to households that traditionally are less likely to own a car—elderly widowers and retired couples—non-motorized households consist mainly of single-parent families, working-class members, and a small portion of well off households who reside in city centers and choose alternative means of transportation.

That access to car ownership diffuses more widely over the years is undeniable. But also undeniable is the fact that the diffusion takes place on qualitatively different terms conditional on the social category of French households. These qualitative differences undoubtedly translate the underlying inequality of budget constraints that the various categories of households face. They also suggest a potent ground for the articulation of socially conditioned dynamics of social distinction.

A good example in this vein is the internationalization of the French car market, historically dominated by national auto-makers. Compared with their massive 80 per cent share of the market for new vehicles in 1981, thirty years later, French manufacturers sold only six out of every ten cars. Hardly a socially universal phenomenon, however, the internationalization of the car market disproportionally concerns the upper classes (see Figure 9.2). This is especially the case for German vehicles, whose advanced comfort features, technical performance and engine power attract the well off clientele. The proportion of German-made cars owned by business owners and professionals grew from 12 per cent in 1981 and 17 per cent in 1994 to 33 per cent in 2008. Exceptional by that standard, these particularly well off households also stand out with regard to their disavowal of French brands. In 1981, 60 per cent of households of business owners and professionals owned a car from one of the three big French manufacturers. By 2008, their proportion was 38 per cent, compared with 66 per cent in the overall population.[1]

As for the other social categories, they enter the international car market through the back door, by way of the second-hand market. Thus, for survey year 2008, the interaction between vehicle brand, horsepower and age at purchase reveals that upper-class members purchase first-hand specific car types that the working classes acquire second-hand. This is particularly the case for powerful French- and German-made models with above-average horsepower.

The socially differentiated access to the markets of first- and second-hand vehicles certainly translates an underlying class-sensitive effect of budget constraints. That notwithstanding, the observed social differences do not operate to the same degree

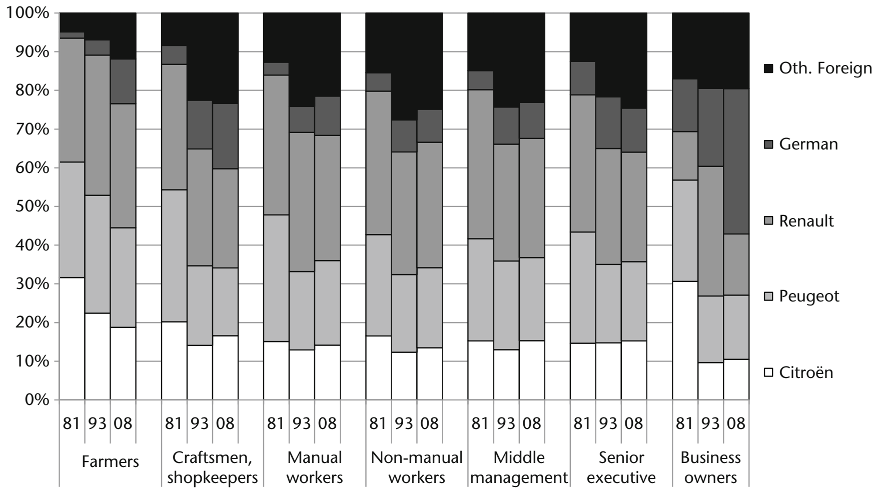


*Figure 9.2* Class-specific trends in car ownership by brand

depending on vehicles' brand and horsepower. The articulation of the first- and second-hand markets may thus be understood as a manifestation of a dynamic of diffusion and devaluation of the power of social distinction of the most powerful and expensive cars when acquired second-hand. This type of dynamic evokes in part the diffusion of other categories of material or symbolic goods (see e.g. Lieberson, 2000 on first names). In comparison, though, in the specific case of personal vehicles, the effects of symbolic valuation/devaluation are inevitably lower and the choices more directly subjected to the effect of budget constraints.

## Exploring the social space of cars

The above general trends demonstrate that the massive spread of automobiles over the past three decades is not synonymous with the homogenization of car ownership. French households continue to differ in the number, purchasing status, horsepower and brand of their vehicles. To the extent that all but the last of these differences are mostly quantitative, the trends do not necessarily contradict the mass-culture hypothesis. Our claim is, nonetheless, that social differentiation in car ownership is more than a purely quantitative matter of the size, weight, horsepower and optional features of vehicles. In this section, we explore these seemingly superficial differences more systematically, by means of a multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) and with data from the 2008 National Survey on Transportation of INSEE.

### *The structuring power of novelty, horsepower and environmental performance*

Our analysis focuses on the vehicle fleet of all French households with a professionally active head. The unit of analysis is the vehicle.[2] We single out six types of characteristics

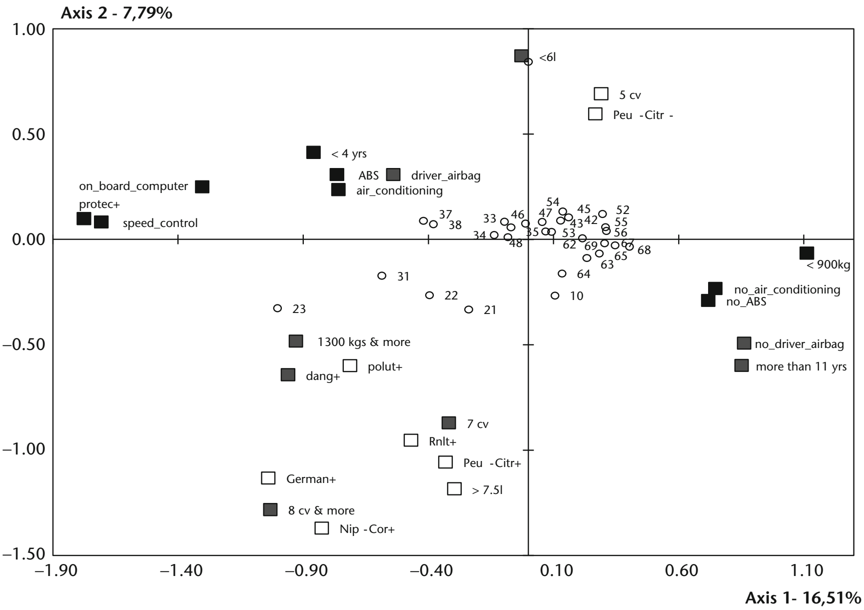


*Figure 9.3* Plane 1–2 of the MCA on car equipment—active variables and mean points of the PCS of the reference person

Note: The only categories represented on the graph are those that contribute more than average to axes 1 or 2. The relative size of the marks corresponds to the relative contribution of the corresponding categories. The categories that contribute equally to the two axes are represented by grey symbols; those that contribute only to the first axis by black symbols; and those that contribute only to axis 2 by white symbols.

to describe vehicles: (i) brand, (ii) technical performance, (iii) comfort features, (iv) passenger safety equipment, (v) road safety risk and (vi) environmental impact.[3] The first two have long been the main, if not unique, selling point of automobiles. But brand, speed, power and novelty are increasingly coupled, in marketing strategies at least, with arguments about safety, comfort and pollution. We therefore expect social differences between French households to crystallize around this broad set of characteristics. These are introduced as active variables in an MCA. It yields two main dimensions (see Figure 9.3) that adequately summarize the variance observed in the vehicle fleet.[4]

The first, horizontal axis captures a contrast at the level of vehicles' age, horsepower, weight, comfort features, road-safety risk and passenger safety. It opposes large, powerful, new vehicles with greater passenger safety but also with higher danger (i.e. road safety risk) and pollution scores, on the left side, against vehicles with the reverse characteristics on the right side of the axis.

The second, vertical axis isolates more clearly large, powerful, polluting, dangerous and less fuel-efficient cars, at the bottom of the map. Another defining feature of this axis is automobile brand. For each brand, powerful (7 HP and higher) and less powerful vehicles (less than 7 HP) are located at the opposite ends of the axis. For instance, small Peugeot and Citroën cars are at the top of the axis compared with the powerful models. It is noteworthy, however, that the axis sets apart, in the lower part of the graph, powerful foreign vehicles, of German origin in particular.

The conjoint analysis of the two axes shows that the left-side quadrants oppose recent, comfortable, heavy, powerful, dangerous, polluting, less fuel-efficient vehicles of foreign origin, in the bottom left quadrant, against equally new, comfortable, powerful and heavy vehicles in the top left quadrant, although the latter are also less polluting, more fuel-efficient and less often of foreign make. In other words, engine power and novelty appear to be the main distinctive features of vehicles. But their brand and environmental performance (measured here as fuel efficiency and pollution) are important too, albeit to a lesser degree. The mean points of small, less equipped and less safe vehicles are located on the right side of the graph, with a slight differentiation between the older ones at the bottom and the less powerful ones at the top of the vertical axis. Differentiation by brand is less pronounced on this right side of the graph.

### *The homological structure of the space of social positions and the space of cars*

Having just described the structuring principles of the space of car characteristics, we wish to explore here how the socio-economic characteristics of the owners map onto that space. The underlying question is whether there is any degree of homology or correspondence between the two that makes substantive sense. The quick answer is that there is, at least insofar as the various features of vehicles are unevenly distributed across the socio-economic characteristics of the households to which the vehicles belong. The MCA allows for a systematic analysis of this distribution following the projection of some of the households' characteristics in the previously defined two-dimensional space.

We focus our analysis on one particular household characteristic: the detailed categories of the French socio-professional categories (PCS) classification (see Table 9.1). Even though the use of other socio-demographic variables is relevant,[5] the contribution of the PCS is comparatively stronger due to the multidimensional construct of the measure and its considerable explanatory power. Originally designed in the 1970s by a group of statisticians of the INSEE, led by Alain Desrosières and Laurent Thévenot, the classification combines three distinct criteria: status (salaried vs. self-employed), occupation and skill (Desrosières, 2009). The multidimensional approach—in part a result of the intellectual influence of Bourdieu on Desrosières and Thévenot—sets the PCS apart from other classifications, which are built around a single, overarching criterion (e.g. the control over means of production in Marxist class schemas, or employment relations in John Goldthorpe's). In addition, the advocates of the PCS emphasize its strong explanatory power with regard to aspects of lifestyles of the kind explored in *Distinction* (Brousse *et al.*, 2010).

The PCS are projected onto the map of the MCA. They correspond to the reference person of the household. Their relative position on the MCA map suggests a somewhat homothetic relation between the space of automobile characteristics and the space of social positions as depicted by the PCS (see Figure 9.3).[6] First and

*Table 9.1* The French socio-professional categories

| *Code* | *Label* |
|---|---|
| PCS 10 | Farmers |
| PCS 21 | Artisans |
| PCS 22 | Shopkeepers |
| PCS 23 | Business owners with ten or more paid workers |
| PCS 31 | Professionals (doctors, lawyers, etc.) |
| PCS 33 | Public service executives |
| PCS 34 | Secondary school teachers, university lecturers and professors, professional scientists |
| PCS 35 | Professional news, arts and shows |
| PCS 37 | Executives of administrative and commercial businesses |
| PCS 38 | Engineers of technical businesses |
| PCS 42 | Primary school teachers |
| PCS 43 | Social health workers |
| PCS 44 | Clergy, religious |
| PCS 45 | Professional administration in public function |
| PCS 46 | Professional administrative and commercial institutions |
| PCS 47 | Technicians |
| PCS 48 | Supervisors |
| PCS 52 | Civil employees, service agents of public functions |
| PCS 53 | Police and military |
| PCS 54 | Administrative employees |
| PCS 55 | Business employees |
| PCS 56 | Service personnel to individuals |
| PCS 62 | Skilled factory workers |
| PCS 63 | Skilled craft workers |
| PCS 64 | Drivers |
| PCS 65 | Transport, warehousing and maintenance skilled workers |
| PCS 67 | Unskilled factory workers |
| PCS 68 | Unskilled craft workers |
| PCS 69 | Farm workers |

foremost, the twenty-nine PCS are clearly distributed along the horizontal axis: to the right, manual workers and employees (PCS 52–69); to the left, business owners, managers and professionals (PCS 23 and PCS 31–38); and in the middle, the categories of the so-called ‘intermediate occupations’ (PCS 42–48) (see Table 9.1 for the exact wording of the PCS).[7] This alignment, which brings to mind the main, horizontal axis of Bourdieu’s factorial analysis in *Distinction*, may simply reflect the unequal affluence of the PCS. Moreover, its match with the corresponding automobile characteristics makes substantive sense: generally speaking, upper-class households are more likely to own big, recent, powerful and comfortable cars than are households from middle and lower classes.

The overall dispersion of the socio-professional categories along the vertical axis is less pronounced.[8] On the bottom left side of the map, however, four PCS categories stand out: 21 (artisans), 22 (shopkeepers), 23 (business owners with ten or more paid workers), and 31 (professionals). Their position along the vertical axis is easier to interpret in light of their relative position on the horizontal axis. All four represent self-employed occupations and, with regard to the vertical axis, are located opposite PCS categories that belong to salaried occupations: executives (PCS 37) and engineers (PCS 38).[9] Furthermore, the four PCS are better endowed with economic resources than most of the categories on the top left quadrant which are better endowed in educational and cultural resources. This contrast manifestly evokes Bourdieu's second, vertical axis in *Distinction*, that is to say, the differentiation of class fractions according to whether the composition of their capital is primarily cultural or economic in nature. The comparison is not without a caveat: executives (PCS 37) and engineers (PCS 38) being also among the economically wealthiest salaried categories, the contrast between PCS on the vertical axis is more clearly interpretable in terms of employment status (salaried vs. self-occupied) than capital composition (cultural vs. economic).

Finally, consider the observed internal division of the upper class in light of the distribution of automobile characteristics on the vertical axis. Members of the upper class are equally inclined to own powerful, new cars. But if engine power and novelty come in tandem with a high environmental impact for vehicles owned by fractions located at the economic pole of the upper class, for its other fractions the engine power and novelty of vehicles relate more directly to comfort and safety. Four-wheel-drives constitute a telling example of the relation between environmentally damaging vehicles and the economic pole of the dominant class. Costly, powerful and rare (less than 2 per cent of the French vehicle fleet), four-wheel vehicles are very unevenly distributed in the social space of households. Their owners are disproportionately members of the upper class, especially of its self-employed fraction, which accounts for 25 per cent of all owners (Demoli, 2013b). By contrast, the cultural pole of the upper class is underrepresented: at similar income levels, four-wheel-drive owners are less likely than non-owners to hold a university degree (*ibid.*).

## Conclusion

In France, as in other Western countries where the automobile industry stood at the core of the postwar economic development model, cars have long been considered as emblematic of the 'mass consumption' culture. They have thus been viewed as symptomatic of a declining relevance of class cultures and lifestyles. Indeed, social distinction in car ownership comes down primarily to the size, weight, horsepower and novelty of otherwise intrinsically equivalent goods that appear equally desirable across classes. In a time of increasing inequality, especially income and wealth disparities, the popularity of four-wheel-drive vehicles has come to best embody this largely quantitative and conspicuous aspect of car ownership.

But social dynamics of emulation of the Veblenian kind (Schor, 1999; Frank, 2000) do not fully capture the conditions and logic of social differentiation that we observe in car ownership. Some of the underlying complexity results, at least in part, from the homological structure of the relation between the space of class positions and the space of lifestyles. Thereby, most of the differences in the intrinsic features of vehicles reflect not only the volume of capital of car owners, but its structure as well. In that respect, the French data on car ownership are broadly consistent with the theoretical framework of *Distinction*. The upper class, whose members have privileged access to large, powerful, new cars, is internally divided into fractions with varying sensibility to the environmental and safety characteristics of vehicles (fuel consumption, pollution, road and passenger safety). This divide may manifest two competing types of overarching upper-class ethos. A conspicuous one, among the best endowed in economic assets; and a more ascetic one, among the best endowed in cultural capital. In a time of growing environmental concern, this internal divide may become a structuring axis of attitudes toward material consumption. The absence of a strict equivalent to the divide outside the upper-class fractions should, nonetheless, moderate the scope of that prediction.

On a final note, the analysis in this chapter focuses on data, which reflect characteristics of the vehicles that households own, but not how they may use them. It is reasonable to expect that for goods as widely diffused as cars, the dynamics of social distinction may well take place at the level of their use as well.

## Notes

1 To control for the rising number across the three surveys of households with multiple vehicles, the distribution of car brands here accounts only for households that own a single vehicle. This corresponds to roughly two-thirds of all car owners. The majority (approx. 80 per cent) of the remaining third consists of households owning at least two vehicles, whose distribution by brand does not differ fundamentally from that observed in Figure 9.2.

2 The data are structured as follows: each line of the table corresponds to one vehicle to which a set of features is attached, together with a set of socio-demographic characteristics of the households to which they belong, among which the socio-professional categories (PCS) are given special attention.

3 Brands are measured with four aggregate categories to ensure sufficient sample sizes in each: (i) Peugeot and Citroen, (ii) Renault, (iii) Japanese–Korean brands, and (iv) German brands. Measures of technical performance include age (less than 4 years, 4–8, 8–11, more than 11 years), fuel type (gas vs. diesel), fuel consumption (less than 6 liters per 100 km, 6–6.5, 6.5–7.5, more than 7.5 liters), weight (less than 900 kg, 900–999, 1000–1299, 1300 kg and more), and horsepower (less than 4 HP, 5, 6, 7, 8 HP and more). Note that horsepower is cross-tabulated with brands to produce a sixteen-category variable with a subscript + for vehicles of 7 HP or more and – for those of less than 7 HP (HP refers to the taxable horsepower). Comfort features include binary measures of the presence of a cooling system and onboard computer. Passenger safety equipment refers to binary measures of the presence of a driver airbag, speed control and ABS; in addition, the sum of these features is used to construct a protection score. A vehicle's road safety risk is assessed with a dangerousness score we build from multiplying weight, horsepower and annual mileage under the assumption that the heavier, more powerful and more frequently used a car is, the more dangerous it is. Environmental impact refers to a pollution score we obtain by multiplying the vehicle's annual mileage and its average fuel consumption.

4 In terms of modified rates (Benzécri, 1992: 412; Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010: 39), the first two dimensions represent a little more than 70 per cent of the total variance of the cloud of cases covered by the analysis. These two dimensions, with a modified rate of 60 per cent for the first and 13 per cent for the second, are clearly separated from each other, in contrast to subsequent dimensions.

5 The projection of measures of income and size of the household, geographical location, age of the reference person, etc. reveals a weaker contribution relative to the PCS.
6 The spatial distribution of heads of households from all PCS is very sparse. The structuring power of PCS, as measured by the $\eta^2$ (i.e. the between variance/total variance ratio, see Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010: 22), is fairly low (0.08 for axis 1 and 0.02 for axis 2), whereas the variance within the categories is quite strong. Nonetheless, the homogeneity test (*ibid.*, pp. 85–87) run on the sub-clouds associated to the various PCS proved to be highly significant ($P < 0.0001$). In sum, their relative positions are statistically distinct (see Table 9.2).
7 Note that the mean points of the PCS 22, 23, 31, 37 and 38, on the one hand, and PCS 55, 56, 67, 68 and 69, on the other, display notable and significant deviations from the mean point of the overall cloud, according to the typicality tests reproduced in Table 9.3.
8 As mentioned in note 6, the PCS are associated with an even smaller $\eta^2$ score on axis 2 than on axis 1 (see Table 9.2).
9 The results from typicality tests computed for the six corresponding sub-clouds on axes 1 and 2 and in plane 1–2 support this joint interpretation. The sub-clouds of PCS 21, 22, 23, 31, 37 and 38 display a notable and significant deviation from the overall cloud in plane 1–2 (see Table 9.3).

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## Appendix

*Table 9.2* Coordinates of mean points and variances of the 29 PCS sub-clouds on the first two axes: double breakdown of variance

| | | *Mean points coordinates* | | | *Variances* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *PCS* | *Weight* | *Axis 1* | *Axis 2* | | *Axis 1* | *Axis 2* |
| PCS 10 | 381 | 0.0633 | –0.1096 | | 0.3572 | 0.1822 |
| PCS 21 | 429 | –0.1428 | –0.1367 | | 0.3959 | 0.1829 |
| PCS 22 | 374 | –0.2372 | –0.1088 | | 0.4294 | 0.2149 |
| PCS 23 | 121 | –0.6013 | –0.1345 | | 0.4254 | 0.1794 |
| PCS 31 | 305 | –0.3509 | –0.0711 | | 0.4324 | 0.1782 |
| PCS 33 | 290 | –0.0575 | 0.0344 | | 0.3523 | 0.1789 |
| PCS 34 | 497 | –0.0824 | 0.0084 | | 0.3611 | 0.1859 |
| PCS 35 | 120 | 0.0407 | 0.0159 | | 0.3265 | 0.1446 |
| PCS 37 | 857 | –0.2512 | 0.0365 | | 0.4257 | 0.1712 |
| PCS 38 | 932 | –0.2279 | 0.0296 | | 0.3986 | 0.1837 |
| PCS 42 | 353 | 0.0966 | 0.0434 | | 0.3055 | 0.1648 |
| PCS 43 | 558 | 0.0328 | 0.0340 | | 0.3352 | 0.1651 |
| PCS 44 | 7 | 0.0001 | 0.3475 | | 0.3076 | 0.0858 |
| PCS 45 | 261 | 0.0774 | 0.0370 | | 0.3137 | 0.1766 |
| PCS 46 | 795 | –0.0415 | 0.0237 | | 0.3668 | 0.1734 |
| PCS 47 | 689 | –0.0071 | 0.0308 | | 0.3400 | 0.1611 |
| PCS 48 | 449 | –0.0495 | 0.0046 | | 0.3740 | 0.1645 |
| PCS 52 | 795 | 0.1772 | 0.0496 | | 0.2468 | 0.1428 |
| PCS 53 | 294 | 0.0552 | 0.0150 | | 0.3083 | 0.1682 |
| PCS 54 | 542 | 0.0822 | 0.0544 | | 0.3103 | 0.1471 |
| PCS 55 | 311 | 0.1845 | 0.0243 | | 0.2885 | 0.1406 |
| PCS 56 | 381 | 0.1867 | 0.0164 | | 0.2627 | 0.1383 |
| PCS 62 | 812 | 0.1290 | 0.0020 | | 0.2890 | 0.1578 |
| PCS 63 | 810 | 0.1403 | –0.0360 | | 0.2683 | 0.1684 |
| PCS 64 | 433 | 0.0802 | –0.0664 | | 0.3030 | 0.1777 |
| PCS 65 | 279 | 0.1695 | –0.0273 | | 0.2681 | 0.1505 |
| PCS 67 | 400 | 0.2076 | –0.0113 | | 0.2627 | 0.1620 |
| PCS 68 | 168 | 0.2419 | –0.0143 | | 0.1897 | 0.1514 |
| PCS 69 | 106 | 0.1821 | –0.0072 | | 0.2004 | 0.1563 |
| N | 12,749 | | | | | |
| | | | | Within-PCS | 0.3326 | 0.1673 |
| | | | | Between-PCS | 0.0276 | 0.0027 |
| | | | | Total ($\lambda$) | 0.3602 | 0.1700 |
| | | | | $\eta^2$ | 0.0766 | 0.0157 |
| | | | | $\eta^2 \times (N-1)$ | 976.67 | 199.60 |
| | | | | Homogeneity test | $P < 0.0001$ | $P < 0.0001$ |

Note: $\eta^2$ = between-PCS/$\lambda$; $\lambda 1$ and $\lambda 2$ correspond to the eigenvalues of axes 1 and 2. The homogeneity test of the 29 sub-clouds associated with the reference person PCS variable is based on the $\chi^2$ statistic = $\eta^2 \times (N-1)$ which is approximately distributed as $\chi^2$ with (29 – 1) degrees of freedom (see Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010: 87).

*Table 9.3* Scaled deviation of the 29 PCS mean points on axis 1, axis 2 and plane 1–2 with typicality test

| | *Scaled deviations* | | | *Typical test for plane 1–2* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *PCS* | *Axis 1* | *Axis 2* | *Plane 1–2* | $\chi^2$ | *P* |
| PCS 10 | 0.1055 | 0.2659 | 0.1762 | 12.1982 | |
| PCS 21 | 0.2379 | **0.3316** | **0.3479** | 53.7156 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 22 | **0.3952** | 0.2640 | **0.4649** | 83.2850 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 23 | ***<u>1.0019</u>*** | **0.3264** | ***<u>1.1084</u>*** | 150.0633 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 31 | ***0.5847*** | 0.1724 | ***0.6144*** | 117.9582 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 33 | 0.0958 | 0.0835 | 0.1028 | 3.1344 | |
| PCS 34 | 0.1373 | 0.0205 | 0.1378 | 9.8125 | |
| PCS 35 | 0.0679 | 0.0385 | 0.0694 | 0.5830 | |
| PCS 37 | **0.4185** | 0.0886 | **0.4263** | 166.9760 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 38 | **0.3797** | 0.0719 | **0.3849** | 148.9559 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 42 | 0.1609 | 0.1053 | 0.1720 | 10.7384 | |
| PCS 43 | 0.0547 | 0.0824 | 0.0615 | 2.2044 | |
| PCS 44 | 0.0001 | ***0.8428*** | ***0.7104*** | 3.5345 | |
| PCS 45 | 0.1290 | 0.0897 | 0.1370 | 5.0020 | |
| PCS 46 | 0.0692 | 0.0575 | 0.0725 | 4.4595 | |
| PCS 47 | 0.0119 | 0.0746 | 0.0175 | 0.2219 | |
| PCS 48 | 0.0825 | 0.0111 | 0.0826 | 3.1735 | |
| PCS 52 | 0.2953 | 0.1204 | **0.3098** | 81.3584 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 53 | 0.0920 | 0.0364 | 0.0934 | 2.6231 | |
| PCS 54 | 0.1369 | 0.1319 | 0.1543 | 13.4809 | |
| PCS 55 | **0.3073** | 0.0590 | **0.3108** | 30.7967 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 56 | **0.3110** | 0.0398 | **0.3126** | 38.3813 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 62 | 0.2150 | 0.0050 | 0.2150 | 40.0939 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 63 | 0.2338 | 0.0874 | 0.2415 | 50.4334 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 64 | 0.1337 | 0.1611 | 0.1596 | 11.4215 | |
| PCS 65 | 0.2824 | 0.0661 | 0.2867 | 23.4500 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 67 | **0.3458** | 0.0275 | **0.3466** | 49.5953 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 68 | **0.4030** | 0.0346 | **0.4042** | 27.8117 | <0.0001 |
| PCS 69 | **0.3034** | 0.0176 | **0.3037** | 9.8591 | |

Note: The scaled deviations on axes 1 and 2 are calculated by dividing the mean points coordinates on each axis by the square root of the corresponding eigenvalue. A scaled deviation will be considered as fairly notable between 0.3 and 0.5 (in bold type in the table), notable between 0.5 and 1 (bold and italic), and large above 1 (bold, italic and underlined).

The typicality test for plane 1–2 is based on the index of deviation in the two-dimensional space from the mean point of the sub-cloud to the mean point of the overall cloud. Yet *d* is calculated as follows:

$$d = \sqrt{\left(\frac{\bar{y}_1}{\sqrt{\lambda_1}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{\bar{y}_2}{\sqrt{\lambda_2}}\right)^2} = \sqrt{y_1^2 + y_2^2}$$

Hence the typicality test is based on:

$$\mathrm{X}^2 = n\frac{N-1}{N-n}d^2$$

Where *N* stands for the total number of cases, *n* for the number of cases in each sub-category of the PCS variable, and $\mathrm{X}^2$ is approximately distributed as $\chi^2$ with 2 degrees of freedom (see Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010).

# Part III

# International variations on *Distinction*

# 10

# Charting the social space

## The case of Sweden in 1990

*Andreas Melldahl and Mikael Börjesson*

## Introduction—the concept of social space

*Distinction* occupies a special place in Bourdieu's oeuvre, as it is only in this study that Bourdieu extends his analytical scope to the entire society to provide a theory on its social structure (Bourdieu, 1984; its central parts first published in Bourdieu and Saint Martin, 1976).[1] The concept through which society is apprehended by Bourdieu, with its unequal distribution of scarce goods and the multitude of potential positions individuals can occupy in it, is the notion of a social space. This concept is the key topic of this chapter.

In *Distinction*, the social space could be argued to constitute the theoretical cornerstone, since it forms the very structure on which the arguments on the social distribution of taste can take form and ties them together with the distribution of objective positions.[2] Hence coordinates within the social space represents both certain social positions and particular dispositions in matters of taste. In itself, the social space is a rather simple, straightforward theoretical and empirical proposition. According to Bourdieu, the positions—or the coordinates—in the space, whether they are occupied by individuals or groups, are given by the volume and of capitals and properties the individual or group is in possession of, when compared with what other individuals or groups have. Hence, within the space, due to this relational construction, individuals who have very similar assets are located close to each other, while individuals who are different from one another, in terms of not sharing many pertinent properties, are located far away from each other. In the space, the most important factor deciding the position is the overall volume of capital, regardless of its kind, where large volumes are distant from small. The second most important is a fundamental opposition between economic capital and cultural capital; an opposition that becomes more accentuated as the volume of capital increases. A central motivating feature is the denial of substances—'real' discrete classes—and the appraisal of relations—'real' interrelated positions, located in an objectively defined space. Within this space, based on its objective distribution of assets, classes can be constructed, either as theoretical concepts by the researcher, or by a historical set of actors in the way in which E.P. Thompson describes the making of the British working class (Bourdieu, 1984: 114–125, 1985: 723–727, 1987: 2–6, 1989: 16–18).

What, then, to make of this concept—how to make use of it, and test it empirically? As is argued in the following, many studies emphasise one or the other of the two empirical manifestations of the social space: the space of social positions, or the space of life-styles. Although we focus on the space of social positions (and leave out the space of life-styles), the main thrust of this chapter is devoted to charting the general social space, defined as above by the objective distribution of capitals and properties, providing the basic structure in which social positions (and life-styles) may be located. Concretely, we study the distribution of assets and properties within the entire Swedish population of working age, using specific multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) on national census data, and chart this social space by considering its most important points of divergence and the location of different social positions within it. How, we ask in this chapter, is the Swedish social space structured?

## *Two distinctive traces of distinction*

There are several ways in which the theoretical concept of the social space has been depicted or empirically operationalised in the extensive body of research that has been inspired by *Distinction*. An organising principle for the following section is a basic analytical distinction between two ways in which the concept of social space has been appropriated by scholars, seeking inspiration in *Distinction*: on one level, Bourdieu's descriptions and employments of the social space have been read primarily as providing a class analysis, usable as a template for classifying individuals and groups; on another level, the book has been interpreted as a study on cultural consumption.

In studies employing *Distinction* as a class analysis, the distribution of capital revealed therein is used as a model, a plausible representation of how different kinds of resources are distributed in the social space and in what aggregates they are gathered (and the labelling of them). Therefore the space of social positions displayed is of particular interest. Here, bluntly stated, Bourdieu could be argued to function as a class theorist in potential competition with more Marxist or Weberian approaches—although the actual empirical studies most often are also nested in a very Bourdieusian framework, focusing on structured orders. The structure of the space of social positions, as described by Bourdieu, is used to develop classifications of social positions, to be put to use in empirical analyses. The prime benefits offered by Bourdieu through the notion of social space are twofold: on a theoretical level, his strong emphasis on the efficacy and pervasiveness of, on the one hand, immaterial and contingent resources and, on the other hand, solid and transferable assets, both of various kinds; on a more practical level, the multidimensional representation of social distances provided by locating not only classes, but also class fractions and smaller, more specific social groups. The theoretical employment of the social space in these cases hence often serves empirical purposes related to the problem of social classification, and the import of other aspects of the research model of *Distinction* is rather limited (two studies illustrating this orientation, on a Nordic basis, are Hansen, 1992: 88–94 and Gustavsson *et al.*, 2009: 92–94; see also the more elaborated class schemes in Börjesson *et al.*, 2003; Hansen *et al.*, 2009; and more qualitative approaches, e.g. Skeggs, 1997).

The common trait among studies employing *Distinction* as a study of cultural consumption is that the principal interest is directed towards the space of life-styles. That is, the social embeddedness of taste, in the broad anthropological sense, is in focus. What is done in these studies is that a survey, containing a plurality of questions on cultural practices and preferences (or sometimes more focused questions looking into the particularities of a more delimited cultural field) is analysed by retaining the multidimensionality of the subject matter in the analysis, often using correspondence analysis. That is the same construction and focus that Bourdieu methodologically employed in *Distinction*. This produces a space whose coordinates are based on the distribution of such cultural practices and preferences, where the distances and propinquities are based on how different or similar agents are in these respects. Into this space, either indicators of social positions—such as educational level or income—or positions derived from a system of social classification are plotted to examine whether, and in what way, the structure of taste is also a social structure, where distances in dispositions correspond to distances in positions (illustrative examples in this vein include Blasius and Winkler, 1989; Bennett *et al.*, 2009; Roose *et al.*, 2012). Hence, as in *Distinction*, the space of social positions is examined through the space of life-styles (or the space of position-takings, which amounts to the same theoretical object, but a different empirical case). Here we see in plain sight the research model of *Distinction*, put in motion.

A couple of conclusions can be drawn from this brief survey of the main camps of previous research charting the social space or employing it as a theoretical concept, which also serve to highlight some differences between these studies and the present one. First, there is a considerable difference in what the notion of social space means, depending on whether *Distinction* is being used as a more theoretical inspiration—acquiring the function of a theory on class—or whether it is considered a full-scale research design, with clear imperatives as to what kind of material, what kind of methods and what kind of construction are required. In the one case, the structure of the social space provided in *Distinction* is seen more or less as a functioning model of social classification, indicating the separation of the space into classes and class fractions. In the other case, *Distinction* is seen as a model of, and a provable hypothesis on, a certain highly structured relationship between taste and class. Second, as in *Distinction*, most empirical analyses on the structure of the social space investigate this through the space of life-styles, constructed on data from surveys on sampled populations. Hence the interrelation between the distribution of symbolic goods and social positions is empirically prioritised over investigations into the fundamental distribution of capital and property.

Our approach combines the two kinds of endeavour accounted for above. More specifically, we share the interest in the space of social positions with the first group, but employ the methods of the second, more often used to chart the space of life-styles. This is done by employing data on more immediate indicators of forms of capitals and properties than cultural practices and preferences. Fortunately, there is a small sub-set of '*Distinction* studies' that apart from constructing and analysing the space of life-styles (using life-style variables), also construct and analyse the space of social positions (using more traditional variables registering power resources) and thereby empirically highlighting the strong relations between these two empirical layers of the social space. (For some reason this kind of construction has become a very Nordic speciality, in studies on Norway and Denmark—Rosenlund, 2000; Harrits, 2005; Faber *et al.*, 2012; Flemmen, 2013b—but Serbia has also been investigated in this manner—Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011.) What structures, we ask, emerge of the social space of Sweden and its social positions, when it is constructed in this way? What differences and similarities arise when compared with constructs based on life-styles? In the following, our empirical case, the dataset employed and the results are introduced.

## Social distances in Sweden—a comparative view

Sweden—and especially Sweden in 1990—offers both an interesting and a potentially problematic test case when searching for structured relational distances between social positions, based on an unequal distribution of scarce goods. In comparative sociological studies on the social structure and on social mobility, Sweden (like Scandinavian countries in general) has been characterised as being more 'open' than other countries (cf. Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992), and its social structure as containing a rather small *bourgeoisie* and a comparatively large working class (Wright, 1997: 44–47, 54–55).

For the distribution of different kinds of capital, starting with economic capital, according to OECD data Sweden is unusually equal (OECD, 1999: www.oecd.org/els/soc/income-distribution-database.htm). Economic research has shown that the 1980s in fact was the most equal decade of the twentieth century in Sweden, while the gap between the top earners and the rest of the population rapidly grew again during the 1990s and early 2000s (Roine and Waldenström, 2008: 370–374). Measured by the Gini coefficient, the lowest Gini value (highest equality) seems to be in the early 1980s, but the successive increase in economic inequality during the 1980s was slow (Björklund and Jäntti, 2011: 30–41). Similar patterns have been detected for the distribution of educational opportunities, with Sweden still occupying a position as a comparatively equal country (cf. Breen and Jonsson, 2005).

As well as being the all-time high for economic equality, the 1980s also contained two other high points. First, in education, the decade was the end of a long process of unification of the education system, successively transforming a heterogeneous, often parallel system into a uniform and level-based one with the explicit aim of equivalency, which, however, through educational reforms of all levels in the early 1990s, was shattered for the benefit of regulative systems inspired by the market principles of New Public Management, emphasising school competition and free choice in education (cf. Lundahl, 2002). Second, the years preceding the severe financial crisis of the early 1990s witnessed the largest public sector ever in Sweden (and the largest of 22 countries mapped by OECD, 1999: 44, table 2-13), with the number of employed in the public sector peaking in 1990 (Clayton and Pontusson, 1998: 83). This makes it an interesting test case. A compressed wage structure together with a large, strong and active state—supplier of and warrant for the production and distribution of institutionalised cultural capital through the educational system, and at the same time either direct employer or indirect supporter, through cultural welfare, of most social positions active in the production and reproduction of cultural matters—could pose a real challenge for a theoretical model making assumptions on differences in both the volume and the composition of the possession of scarce resources.

## Construction of the national space

The empirical backbone of this chapter is the Swedish national census[3] of 1990, covering the entire population of that year, complemented by additional sources.[4]

Needless to say, the censuses were not designed primarily to provide sociologically satisfying data, perfectly adapted for quantitative research, but were motivated by the state's need to record its citizens' social and economic circumstances, as a stock of knowledge required for the development of present and future politics. This has consequences when they are used for sociological purposes. Although there are obvious strengths in employing high-quality data covering entire populations, including not having to worry about representativity, and being able to (with retained precision) study very small groups, there are also downsides. Most of these are related to the circumstance that the material is, paradoxically, simultaneously exhaustive and meagre, in the sense that each and every individual within the Swedish realm has a value for each and every one of the included variables (albeit some of these values are 'unknown') but there is no more information to obtain than what is already included. They are what Bourdieu called 'disparate data mechanically accumulated by "data banks" devoid of theoretic capital' (Bourdieu, 1984: 507). The information is organised according to a bureaucratic logic, expressed in official taxonomies and nomenclatures. The positive side of this property is that a great deal of data is recorded very precisely and in a disaggregated form, providing the possibility to re-compose it according to the principles of a more scientific logic than that which determined its recording (cf. Palme, 2008: 28).

### *Finding indicators of capital and property in official data*

For one of the kinds of capital that Bourdieu distinguishes, Swedish national census data (with the additional registers we have matched to this source) proves very satisfactory for the construction of the space: there are ample indicators of individuals' possession of economic capital. In Table 10.1, where the active variables in the analysis are shown, we have included under the first heading not only income (here we have preferred a composite measure of total income, from all sources—as wage, as transfers, as study aid, as pensions, from capital[5]) but also the sum of taxed wealth and the type and size of housing registered for the individuals. Although this by no means exhausts the concept of economic capital, since only 'possessive' qualities of any capital are recorded in official data—that is, what people have, withholding all information on their disposition towards the production, distribution and consumption within different fields—yet a certain variety of economic statuses is maintained. There are, to give an example, important differences between income (for a dominant part related to

*Table 10.1* Active variables and categories in the analyses, absolute and relative frequencies

| *Heading* | *Variable* | *Category* | *n* | *%* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic capital | Income △ | Top 10 | 436,068 | 9.9 |
| | | Above average (AA) | 1,744,325 | 39.5 |
| | | Below average (BA) | 1,371,711 | 31.1 |
| | | Low | 781,922 | 17.7 |
| | | *No info* | *82,038* | *1.9* |
| | Wealth ▽ | Large | 219,464 | 5.0 |
| | | Average | 746,262 | 16.9 |
| | | Small | 1,164,115 | 26.4 |
| | | None | 2,258,420 | 51.1 |
| | | *No info* | *27,803* | *0.6* |
| | Ownership ◇ | Rent apt. | 1,083,567 | 24.5 |
| | | Own apt. | 538,321 | 12.2 |
| | | Own house | 2,517,665 | 57.0 |
| | | *No info* | *276,511* | *6.3* |
| | Size of home □ | Large | 606,466 | 13.7 |
| | | Average | 2,720,242 | 61.6 |
| | | Small | 829,203 | 18.8 |
| | | *No info* | *260,153* | *5.9* |
| Educational capital | Educational level ■ | Uni. Long | 452,228 | 10.2 |
| | | Uni. Short | 509,925 | 11.5 |
| | | Second. 2–3 y | 542,249 | 12.3 |
| | | Second. –2 y | 1,261,417 | 28.6 |
| | | Elementary | 1,413,286 | 32.0 |
| | | *No info* | *236,959* | *5.4* |
| | Educational field ◆ | *General* | *1,343,292* | *30.4* |
| | | Technology | 922,151 | 20.9 |
| | | Economics | 521,765 | 11.8 |
| | | Natural sciences | 210,822 | 4.8 |
| | | Humanities and social sciences | 480,253 | 10.9 |
| | | Health care | 635,967 | 14.4 |
| | | Services/other | 245,586 | 5.6 |
| | | *No info* | *56,228* | *1.3* |
| Demography | Gender × | Male | 2,250,362 | 51.0 |
| | | Female | 2,165,702 | 49.0 |
| | Age + | Age group 1 (youngest) | 871,480 | 19.7 |
| | | Age group 2 | 1,275,565 | 28.9 |
| | | Age group 3 | 1,385,708 | 31.4 |
| | | Age group 4 (oldest) | 883,311 | 20.0 |
| | Place of residence ○ | Big cities | 1,440,001 | 32.6 |
| | | Small cities | 1,396,009 | 31.6 |
| | | Other Sweden | 1,580,054 | 35.8 |

Note: Symbols in the column 'Variable' relate to the figures of the clouds of categories. Categories in italics are set as passive (i.e. not contributing) in the correspondence analysis.

activities in the labour market, thereby equipped with a certain tendency to fluctuate) and wealth (durable—and transferable—assets) (cf. Gustavsson *et al.*, 2009).

The second heading summons educational capital, what Bourdieu sometimes calls 'institutionalized cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1997: 50–51). In addition to attained educational level (or in this case, unfortunately, commenced level), the standard measure of educational stratification, we have also included rather aggregated information on field of study, of natural importance for Bourdieu (cf. 1996b) but increasingly of interest also in the mainstream of sociology of education (cf. van de Werfhorst *et al.*, 2001; Hällsten 2010). The latter is the closest this dataset gets to a more immediate indicator of cultural capital, since it gives a clue to position-takings within a field of possibilities, representing orientations (and dispositions) in different directions (e.g. scientific, technological or humanistic).

So far, we are in complete agreement with the similar approaches mentioned above, as for the choice of active variables in the correspondence analysis. And, moreover, the first two headings could unproblematically be labelled as forms of capital—with the above-mentioned reservations. The third heading, however, sets this approach apart from previous, similar ones, and does not gather information that, in a traditional sense, describes kinds of capital (however, see the discussion in Swartz, 1997: 154–156). We have followed Bourdieu literally in his descriptions of what characterises the location of certain positions in this space, what he calls the 'subsidiary characteristics' or properties, the most important of which are gender, age and geographical position (Bourdieu, 1984: 102, 112), and included these in the analysis under the heading 'demography' in Table 10.1.

Other studies (cf. Rosenlund, 2000: 96–98; Faber *et al.*, 2012: 79–81; Flemmen 2013b: 8–10) have complemented the more apparent kinds of capital with data on employment characteristics, such as professional sector and occupation. This option has not suited the purposes of the present study, because it to some extent conflates a general social space, built on the distribution of capitals and properties and the space of social positions, into one single space—and it is very important for us to keep them separated. Furthermore, since for starters we have included all individuals within a certain age-span (see below), not all of whom uphold a professional position and, more importantly, we are interested in the space of social positions—out of which *most* positions are built up around professional groups—it would be problematic to, on the one hand, include a type of information that some of the individuals out of necessity lack, and on the other hand, the use the same information for *explanandum* and *explanans* (or, to be a little technical, let the same data partake in both deciding the coordinates in the space and interpreting the meaning of the coordinates).

## *A total population under survey*

Finally, there is reason to return briefly to Table 10.1, to investigate the active population further. As can be seen, the population (see the fourth and fifth columns in Table 10.1) is substantial, comprising almost 4.5 million individuals ($n$ = 4,416,071) residing in Sweden in 1990. Nevertheless, this number is smaller than the whole population recorded in the census of that year ($N$ = 8,578,266). The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, in 1990 the youngest age at which more than three-quarters of an age-cohort were active in the labour market (what Statistics Sweden labels 'the age of establishment') was 21 years; secondly, 59 years was the oldest age-cohort of which more than three-quarters were still active in the labour market (what could be labelled 'the age of withdrawal'). Since the purpose of this study is to locate individuals in a multi-dimensionally structured social space, the individuals need, on the one hand, to occupy a position of their own (young people not yet having entered the labour market arguably do not, but are located primarily through the capital portfolios of their parents) and, on the other, to have a certain degree of uncertainty as to their position (retired people occupy a position that is structurally pre-defined, i.e. outside the labour market). For these reasons, the population has been cut down from its maximum size: all individuals younger than 21 years or older than 59 years have been excluded from the analysis.

No further restrictions have been placed on the population under study. That is, *all* individuals between 21 and 59 years of age have been included, with the intention also to retain the possibility of locating individuals in this age-span outside the labour market (students, unemployed, persons in early retirement or on sickness pension). For this choice, we have found support in the persuasive appeal by Rosemary Crompton not to reproduce what she calls the 'employment aggregate approach' and thereby exclude all those who—for a multiplicity of reasons—are not active on the labour market at the time of the survey from being analysed (Crompton, 1998, 2010; cf. Atkinson, 2009), an argument much in line with Bourdieu's concept of social space, based on the distribution of capital and property—that all within a population have, in lesser or greater amounts, regardless of their employment status—instead of a classification of occupations (cf. Savage *et al.*, 2005).

## The social space of Sweden in 1990

What was the structure of the Swedish social space in 1990? In this segment we aim to offer some answers to that question. To construct and analyse the space, we have used a specific MCA (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004, 2010). The MCA returns three sociologically relevant axes to interpret and analyse.[6]

From Table 10.2, it is clear that economic capital (again see Table 10.1 for the distribution of the variables and the categories sorted under each heading) contributes the most to the first axis of the correspondence analysis; that the second axis is very balanced between all three headings; and that the third is dominated by resources acquired through education. The main structure of this three-dimensional space is that axis 1, the most important for the structure in the material, shows an opposition in terms of volume, both of economic capital and of educational capital (left–right in Figure 10.1); axis 2 highlights oppositions based on two of the demographic variables, gender and geography (top–bottom in Figure 10.1); and axis 3 shows the impact of volume and composition of educational capital (top–bottom in Figure 10.2). Evidently, the space is not a photocopy of the social space in *Distinction*, but as we will show, there are resemblances with the French space in the plane of axes 1 and 3.

*Table 10.2* Contribution of the headings to the first three axes (percentages)

| *Heading* | *Axis 1* | *Axis 2* | *Axis 3* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Economic capital | 57.6 | 33.5 | 9.3 |
| Educational capital | 20.4 | 33.3 | 64.2 |
| Demography | 22.0 | 33.2 | 26.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

## *Axis 1: economic assets and overall volume of capital*

Focusing first on axis 1, the overall significance is the separation between indicators of 'much' to the right and indicators of relatively 'little' to the left (see Table 10.3 in Appendix for the contribution of the variables and categories to the axis). In other words, as just mentioned, this is a volume dimension of sorts. The most important heading—as shown in Table 10.2—is economic capital, and the most contributing economic variable is the combined income-measurement, with the highest incomes to the right (top 10 per cent) and below-average incomes to the left (a category containing individuals with an income from the median down to 60 per cent of the

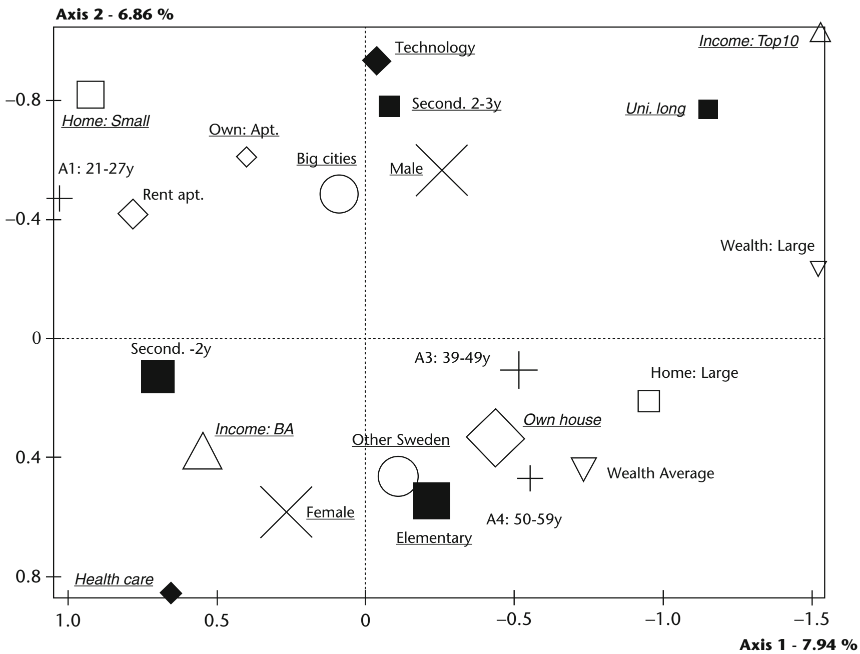


*Figure 10.1* Plane of axes 1–2: the 22 most contributing categories

Notes: The threshold value in this analysis (100/*q*, where *q* designates the number of active categories) is 2.9. Categories in standard typography contribute to axis 1; underlined categories to axis 2; underlined and italic categories to both axes 1 and 2.

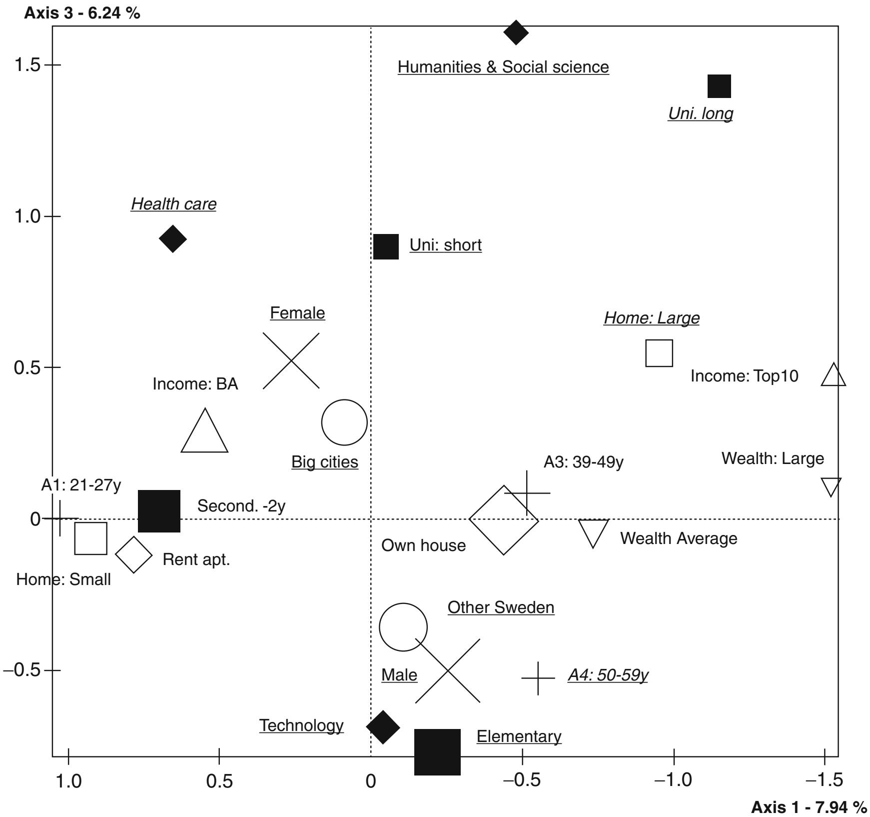


*Figure 10.2* Plane of axes 1–3: the 22 most contributing categories
Note: Categories in standard typography contribute to axis 1; underlined categories to axis 3; underlined and italic categories to both axes 1 and 3.

median—that is, below the median but above the recognised limit of relative poverty). The remaining indicators of economic power follow the same pattern (e.g. large wealth and large homes to the right; small and rented homes to the left). Volume of educational capital roughly follows the axis, with longer—theoretical—studies to the right and shorter—vocational—to the left.

At the same time, this opposition corresponds with age (the oldest age groups to the right, the youngest to the left), to the extent that age is the variable that contributes most to the axis. In other words, the categories to the left in the figure are associated with youth, and the categories in the other direction are associated with old age (properties that take time to accumulate, such as wealth and large homes).

## *Axis 2: gender*

In the second axis, differences related to gender are displayed (see Table 10.4 in Appendix for the contribution of the variables and categories to the axis). Looking at the categories, at the top men are associated with very high income, living in a small home, theoretical studies (at university or upper secondary school) and studies in technology, while small incomes, short education and studies in health are associated with women at the bottom. Furthermore, given the unequal spatial distribution of various kinds of capital, relative to the big cities, the more rural parts of Sweden have different—and smaller—capital assets (other Sweden at the bottom and big cities at the top). This reflects with some certainty the division of reproductive labour, and its gendered and geographical consequences, through the differences between, and rewards from, on the one hand, technical reproduction (located predominantly in city areas and mostly performed by men) and on the other human reproduction and sustenance (by necessity spread throughout the country and mostly performed by women).

This axis accentuates the advantages of including in the analysis not only capital *per se*, but also fundamental properties such as geography, age and gender. The asymmetric relation between Paris and the provinces is an often recurring theme in Bourdieu's studies, and the impact of age for the understanding of more complex patterns is touched upon in *Distinction* (cf. Bourdieu, 1984: 450; also Saint Martin, 2011: 13). Gender, however, was a category that Bourdieu really only turned to after *Distinction* (cf. Weininger, 2005: 110–113). One explanation for this, and a very strong reason for including it in the present analysis, is the substantial increase of female participation in the labour market taking place after the inauguration of the *Distinction* study in the 1960s, making it less problematic. The scope of the matter is readily expressed by the fact that the female labour market participation rate in France during the 1960s was hovering at 40 per cent, while in Sweden in the late 1980s it was double that, over 80 per cent (Sorrentino, 1983: 25; Sundström and Stafford, 1992: 207). The pattern that is visualised in axis 2—and to some extent in axis 3 below—sheds more detailed light on what others have demonstrated about Sweden having, beside the world's highest female employment rate, one of the most gender-segregated labour markets (Sjöholm, 1983: 299).

### *Axis 3: educational capital*

The third axis is heavily dominated by educational capital: moving from the bottom to the top, the educational level univocally rises (see Table 10.5 in Appendix for the contribution of the variables and categories to the axis). Here it is—given the data—unusually tempting to label the axis not only volume of educational capital, but also of cultural capital, because beside high and low educational levels it also opposes one of the most economic fields of study in the data (technology, at the bottom) and the most culture-related field (humanities and social sciences, at the very top). On this axis, there is a very weak interrelation between economic and educational assets, as no variables indicating differences in economic capital shape the structure. Demography, on the other hand, does partake in the structuring. Preceding the substantial political investments in regional universities in Sweden during the 1990s, this analysis of circumstances in 1990 shows a marked difference between the educational (and cultural) capital of the more rural areas (other Sweden, at the lower half) and more urban ones (big cities, being closer to the traditional universities, at the upper half). And reflecting the two major effects of the dramatic educational expansion in Sweden during the twentieth century, first, women are located upward and men downward (the average educational level of women has increased faster than men's); and second, the oldest age group are located in the bottom half (born in the 1930s and hence more likely to have 'missed out' on the first wave of rapid expansions of the entire educational system during the 1950s and 1960s).

## *Arriving at a space of social positions*

What we have done so far is to construct and analyse a space of 'primary' and 'subsidiary' characteristics of the whole Swedish population, aged 21 to 59 years, from a geometrical point of view. In that sense, we have already touched on the location of social position, as it is in this space that all such positions reside; their relative positions are based on the distribution of active variables in the analysis. But the positions have to be 'dressed', interpreted through aggregates that make sociological sense. In other words, the space of social positions—as we have argued, founded in the distribution of capitals and properties—has to be erected by making classes on paper. This could be done in different ways. One would be to make yet another analysis, within the space constructed by correspondence analysis and aligned with its geometrical logic, highlighting different zones or identifying groups sharing a large number of qualities. This has been the preferred choice in previous studies constructing the space on basis of the distribution of capital, instead of life-style variables (cf. more literal approaches—Rosenlund, 2000: 111–114; Harrits, 2005: 92–93; Faber *et al.*, 2012: 89–90; Flemmen, 2013b: 15–17; and more technical approaches, but not within the framework of correspondence analysis—Martin, 2009; Savage *et al.*, 2013). Another way, which we have followed in this chapter,[7] is to employ an existent social classification and project it into the space—that is, to show where the mean points for the categories in the classification are located, without them influencing its structure. This was the choice in the correspondence analysis in *Distinction* and has also been employed by subsequent life-style studies (cf. Bennett *et al.*, 2009: 52–6; Blasius and Winkler, 1989; Börjesson *et al.*, forthcoming), and has a more evaluating function. One decisive reason for this is to discern whether groups that are theoretically separated also are positioned at a distance from each other when located in an 'objective' space. To be able to evaluate if the dispersion in the space is sociologically revealing, it is advantageous to include a multitude of potentially distinctive positions. We have therefore employed a rather detailed occupation-based social classification.[8]

To keep the exposition short, we will describe only the dispersion on the plane of axes 1–3 (Figure 10.3), as this plane is most similar to the orientation of the space found in *Distinction*, although we arrive at two axes more similar to volume axes (horizontally of economic capital and vertically of education—and to some extent, as argued, culture) instead of one volume axis and one axis indicating variations in capital structure (we are hence looking at the same space as in Figure 10.2, but showing the location of groups instead of categories). Clearly, the groups are rather dispersed throughout this space, showing that many different kinds of configurations are possible. The picture that emerges is complex, as is often the case with results from MCA, but at the same time theoretically consistent and revealing.[9]

In this plane, the relative position of the social groups is best visualised when tilted 45 degrees. Through this space, a diagonal axis, running from the lower left quadrant to the upper right quadrant, indicating an increasing overall volume of capital, could be envisioned, with an orthogonal axis from upper left to lower right, expressing both a division in gender and geography (female- and urban-dominated to the upper left, male- and rural-dominated to the lower right) and educational/cultural assets (upper left) versus economic/technological assets (lower left). The bottom left quadrant contains groups defined by dominated positions within the labour market, or positions outside the labour market. Workers in industrial production, both skilled and unskilled, are located at the bottom of the quadrant; and at the top, and just outside the quadrant, are skilled and unskilled workers active in service production. In between we encounter both retired and unemployed groups, as well as lower-rank commercial employees and work supervisors in production (foremen). Opposing these, the top right quadrant assembles groups that have the highest volumes, to the far right of economic assets and at the very top of educational assets (and/or investments in more 'cultural' fields of study). The area where the extremes of two axes intersect, in the upper right corner, is populated by the classic professions, lawyers and

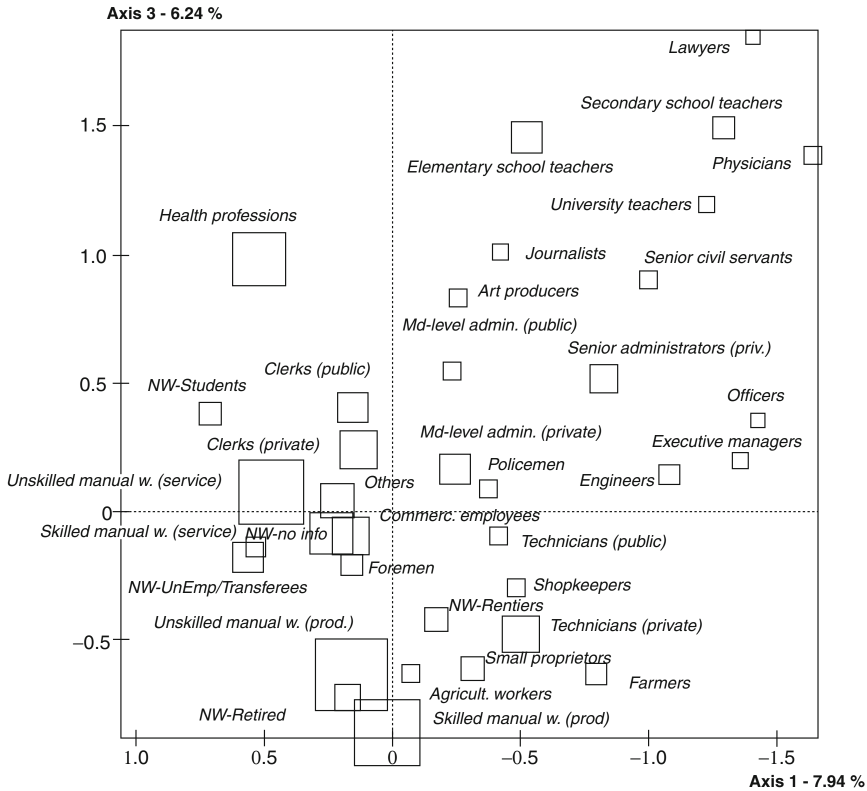


*Figure 10.3* Plane of axes 1–3: social groups as supplementary elements
Note: The size of the squares is proportional to the size of the groups.

physicians (engineers are positioned further down the third axis in the space by force of their investments in technological fields of study). But here, near the top of the space, we also find more cultural groups—teachers of various kinds, journalists and art producers—with some certainty, due more to their advanced education in specific fields, located in this area, than to their economic status.

Along the orthogonal axis, in the upper left quadrant, more female-dominated groups are located, having in common the feature that they do not gain much economic return from their educational investments, the upper extreme being those working in the health professions (nurses, health care assistants), but also students—a structural position defined by the accumulation of educational assets while postponing economic returns (they occupy the very extreme position to the left in the figure, indicating the lowest volume of economic capital, and youth). And, at the other side of this axis, in the bottom right quadrant, male-dominated and biologically older groups are found. Aside from the less qualified personnel maintaining the technical apparatus in the public and private sector (technicians), the area—characterised by small volumes of educational resources and larger volumes of economic—is populated by groups in particular employment situations, either living off capital (rentiers) or being self-employed (farmers, shopkeepers and small proprietors—occupying positions in the Swedish social space that indicate certain demographic challenges as to their reproduction).

Taken together, this shows that the gendered division is more evident at the bottom of the volume axis, increasingly diminishing going upwards, indicating a difference in the composition of the working class—and of the 'precariat' (cf. Standing, 2011)—where men are economically better off while women are better educated (and also the corresponding accentuated division within the working class between health care-employed women and industry-employed men). It also underscores the dependence on education for the positions found in the upper right corner, characterised by high incomes *and* high educational levels, where other groups at the extreme right of the economic capital axis—such as executive managers and military officers (positions of command)—have accumulated a very high economic standard on average, but without such an intense recourse to education. Read this way, the structure actually does approximate the social space and the relative position of groups in *Distinction* rather closely, but adding empirically that the opposition between economy and culture—although here economy and education—also contains oppositions between men and women, and between big cities and the countryside.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have attempted to fill the often theorised concept of the social space with empirical content, by focusing on the distribution of capitals and properties in Sweden in 1990 and employing a particular methodological strategy. The resulting cartography shows a social space principally structured in three dimensions. Axis 1 revealed social distances related to class in a broad sense, as distinguishing cumulative differences of a very compound nature. Axis 2 highlighted important differences related to especially gender, but also to geography, separating both the most typical female composites of resources from the most male, and the urban profiles from the rural. Lastly, axis 3 emphasised differences related to the distribution of education. When a space of social positions was introduced, based on this structure, the dispersion of positions—when projected over axes 1 and 3—indicated that the basic structure was in fact similar in orientation to that in *Distinction*: the weight of the total volume of resources together with the specific gravity of the types of resources pulled the agents in different directions. However, since we employed demographic variables as constituent elements in the analysis, we could also show that this structure is closely related to age as well as gender and geography, stressing the complex matter of interrelations between different forms of social domination. Thus the space assumed a clear structure from the distribution of capitals and properties. Moreover, within this structure it was possible to locate and differentiate several indicative groups, showing where objective and probable classes could be formed. What was demonstrated, in other words, says a great deal about vast social distances in Sweden—even at a time when the distribution of scarce goods is considered to have been historically and comparatively equal.

When compared with the famous graphs in *Distinction*, however, the space constructed and analysed in this chapter could cause some disappointment, as it displays certain differences in structure from *Distinction*. Notwithstanding the substantial social differences between France in the 1960s and Sweden in 1990, it is not entirely surprising that such differences should arise. The lack of a clearly visible chiastic structure—or the understating of such a structure—especially within the dominant class, which is a bearing element in the arguments of *Distinction*, can be explained on two levels. One explanation is based on the representation and location of specific social groups. While the position of physicians and lawyers (professions, the middle fraction of the dominant class), being prime examples of state-sanctioned social closure, is probably rather precisely represented in our graphs, due to their substantial homogeneity, important if not decisive groups at both the cultural pole and the economic pole are not. Admittedly, the kind of data on capital employed here is inadequate to fully grasp the sources of social power attributed to the cultural pole, since this is not contained in information on education or income, and the economic resources of the true economic elite are of such a magnitude that they fail to show up when using a division of groups employable for the entire population. Moreover, artists and intellectuals are located in the space by virtue of belonging to groups containing all individuals being registered as art producers, university teachers and journalists. But these groups are active in social areas that operate according to the logic of fields of cultural production—defined by the very fact that far from all active individuals are the ones defining the field and endowed with the power it bequeaths to its chosen representatives (cf. Melldahl, 2002). Hence the mean point of the entire group does not accurately represent the position of the socially recognised artists or intellectuals.

Second, there is a difference between how this study—and nearly all studies seeking inspiration in *Distinction*—constructs the space, and the manner in which Bourdieu actually constructed his social spaces, a difference that has significant repercussions for the retained structure of the space. In our case, as in most other studies, the social space is constructed on the assets of all individuals, regardless of their class position.[10]

In *Distinction*, this is not the case. Bourdieu introduced an elementary way of 'holding things constant' by performing the analyses on two sub-samples, one on the dominant class and one on the *petite bourgeoisie*, to enhance the structure and simplify interpretation. The consequence of this procedure was that especially the differences in volume of economic capital were somewhat evened out, its relative weight being suppressed, reaching a level where even more 'material' assets start to function as 'symbolic' assets, thereby augmenting the latter kind of capital's impact on the structure of the space. The resulting two analyses were then pasted one on top of the other to create the synthetic chart (cf. Rouanet *et al.*, 2000: 8–9; the different archaeological layers of the depiction in *Distinction* are described by Saint Martin, 2011). This is an operation that could be seen as springing out of Bourdieu's view of the real location of actual competition over social power—to a large extent enacted by well endowed agents, but endowed with different kinds of resources which can 'become active, effective, […] in the competition for the appropriation of scarce goods' (Bourdieu, 1987: 17), hence the need to clearly represent this fundamental cleavage graphically.

We will not, in this context, pick up the gauntlet Flemmen throws down, to 'scrutinize how the work of Bourdieu can provide a more foundational rethinking of class and stratification' based on a structural analysis (Flemmen, 2013a: 326), although we see the present approach as a step towards such a goal. But we are content with noting the resemblance of the structure when constructed in this manner, as compared with many social spaces constructed on life-style variables—including Bourdieu's own. No approach should trump the other, rather they are complementary, since the invocation of one inevitably brings forth assumptions about the other, through the argument of structural homologies. There is, however, potential trouble on the horizon if only one approach is practised at the expense of the other. If the actual volume and structure of capital attributed to some class, class fraction or social group—used to interpret and explain a structure of cultural practices and preferences—is never actively investigated, the material strings between the space of life-styles and the space of social positions are at risk of becoming untangled. And, the other way around, if the structure of more tangible assets is being overtly emphasised, the concept of habitus risks losing its meaning and empirical significance. One advantage of focusing the analysis on more tangible assets (such as economic capital and educational capital of different kinds) is that the contact surfaces towards other theoretical propositions concerning social distances—be they economic classes, status groups or vertical strata—are increased.

What is wanted from this analysis, and from all analyses paying attention only to circumvented distributions, is what *causes* these distributions. Although Bourdieu is clear on the point that a 'real' class, without reference to the position its alleged members occupy in social space, would have slim chances of being mobilised into subjectivity and action—a statement that strongly emphasises the urgency for class analysis to scrutinise the patterns of distribution—he is at least as clear on the point that the displayed structure of the distribution of capital is solely a freeze frame, capturing the current status of constant struggles; social space being 'a balance-sheet' of former struggles (cf. Bourdieu, 1984: 245; also Harrits, 2007: 20; Flemmen, 2013a: 336), signalling an obligation to also take agency and structural change into account. In other words, the relational imperative does not stop at a statistical position in a constructed social space, regardless of whether the distribution is of symbolic or material assets. These patterns are the result of constantly ongoing processes of accumulation, appropriation, imitation, exclusion and transformation, both in the hands and minds of the incumbents of the statistical positions, and at the institutions through which the different forms of capital are produced and reproduced. This is what is expressed through the third dimension of the social space in *Distinction*, a social dimension that is most often overlooked in subsequent treatments (also in this study). The relations between the forms of capital are power-ridden at the very outset, according to Bourdieu. Studies of this nature must therefore be complemented by studies at other, different, levels: into the struggles taking place within the state; into the social history of institutions partaking in the legitimisation of different forms of capital; and into the multitude of reproductive strategies of individuals and households, located at different positions in the social space.

## Notes

1 In other publications the perspective is focused on more situated entities, such as educational institutions (Bourdieu, 1996b; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979), cultural fields (Bourdieu, 1996a) and housing markets (Bourdieu, 2005).
2 It was arguably the publication of this study that popularised the concept (although it had been used before, by sociologists quite distant from Bourdieu in scientific matters, such as Sorokin in 1927 and Blau in 1977).
3 Roughly speaking, the information contained in the censuses (although it varies somewhat between different censuses) could be sorted into three headings: biographical and household information, labour market activity, and housing standard. The first heading includes fundamentals such as age, gender, civil status, geographic whereabouts and citizenship, and more elaborate data on the respondents' education. Labour market activity is measured, for example, through occupation, professional sector, income and time devoted to work. Lastly, there is a variety of information on the characteristics of the dwelling, from its size and owner to questions on the presence of a water closet.
4 These other sources are the LISA-registers (Longitudinal integrational database for studies of social insurances and the labour market, with detailed data on various sorts of incomes and labour market positions) of 1990 and 1991; and the IoT-register of 1989 (Incomes and taxations, with information on taxed incomes and wealth).
5 To minimise the inevitable contingency associated with measurements of income—they tend to vary quite substantially between different years—the sums from the various sources of income added in the incomes have been collected (where possible) for the year in focus (1990), the year before (1989) and the year after (1991), and then divided by three.
6 The first three axes comprise 74.5 per cent of the modified rates ($\lambda 1$: 0.2252, 37.2 per cent of modified rates; $\lambda 2$: 0.1946, 22.1 per cent; and $\lambda 3$: 0.1769, 15.1 per cent). The eigenvalue of the following, fourth axis is 0.1592, 9.5 per cent modified rates (on modified rates, see Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004: 200).
7 In future research, we are attracted by the possibility also to follow the first route.
8 The original version of the classification used, which distinguishes 32 different groups, has been used extensively by the research group Sociology of Education and Culture (e.g. Palme, 2008; Lidegran, 2009), and is described by Börjesson (2009). In Figure 10.3, however, the positions of 36 groups are projected, adding form groups of individuals within the age span of the study (21–59 years) but outside the labour market (and hence lacking a registered professional title), using their dominant source of income as a locator: *Students, unemployed and other welfare transferees, retired* and *rentiers* (with income from capital as their largest provision).

9 Due to overlapping and sometimes contradicting oppositions, groups do not have to share *all* statistical distinctions of a certain orientation, but can be pulled there by being heavily over-represented in one or two of them, but to a large extent lacking the third; in other words, groups can be located quite close to each other—on one plane of axes, crossing two dimensions—although being very much different—in another dimension.

10 The four exceptions to this rule, that we know of, focus on the German working class (Blasius and Friedrichs, 2008), the Norwegian economic upper class—using the same kind of official data as the present study (Flemmen, 2012), the Norwegian 'service class' (Flemmen, 2013b) and the elite segment of Swedish higher education (Börjesson *et al.*, forthcoming).

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# Appendix

*Table 10.3* Contributing variables and categories for axis 1

| *Variable* | *ctr* | *tot* | *Cat. –* | *ctr* | *Cat. +* | *ctr* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 18.29 | | 39–49 y | 4.13 | 21–27 y | 10.31 |
| | | | 50–59 y | 3.02 | | |
| Income | 16.93 | 35.22 | Top10 | 11.41 | BA | 4.58 |
| EduLevel | 14.39 | 49.61 | Uni. Long | 6.70 | Second. –2 y | 6.84 |
| Home size | 14.27 | 63.88 | Large | 6.16 | Small | 7.90 |
| Home own | 13.76 | 77.65 | Own house | 5.39 | Rent apt. | 7.41 |
| Wealth | 12.65 | 90.30 | Large | 5.68 | | |
| | | | Average | 4.49 | | |
| *EduField* | 5.99 | 96.29 | | | Health care | 3.04 |
| *Sex* | 3.36 | 99.65 | | | | |
| *Municipality* | 0.35 | 100.00 | | | | |
| | | | | 46.98 | | 37.04 |

Note: Mean value for variables 11.1 per cent; mean value for categories 2.94. Variables or categories in italics are below mean value.

*Table 10.4* Contributing variables and modalities for axis 2—global space

| *Variable* | *ctr* | *Tot* | *Mod. –* | *ctr* | *Mod. +* | *Ctr* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EduField | 19.60 | | Technology | 10.38 | Health care | 6.03 |
| Sex | 18.95 | 38.55 | Male | 9.29 | Female | 9.66 |
| EduLevel | 13.72 | 52.27 | Second. 2–3y | 4.25 | Elementary | 5.45 |
| | | | Uni. Long | 3.45 | | |
| Income | 11.66 | 63.93 | Top10 | 5.99 | BA | *2.53* |
| *Home size* | 9.33 | 73.25 | Small | 7.19 | | |
| *Municipality* | 8.79 | 82.05 | Big cities | 4.35 | Other Sweden | 4.43 |
| *Home own* | 8.63 | 90.67 | *Own. apt* | *2.58* | Own house | 3.61 |
| *Age* | 5.47 | 96.14 | | | | |
| *Wealth* | 3.86 | 100.00 | | | | |
| | | | | 47.48 | | 31.71 |

Note: Mean value for variables 11.1 per cent; mean value for modalities 2.94. Variables or modalities in italics are below mean value.

*Table 10.5* Contributing variables and categories for axis 3

| *Variable* | *ctr* | *Tot* | *Cat. –* | *ctr* | *Cat. +* | *Ctr* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EduField | 33.28 | | Technology | 6.22 | Humanities and social science | 17.63 |
| | | | | | Health care | 7.75 |
| EduLevel | 30.97 | 64.24 | Elementary | 11.93 | Uni. Long | 13.15 |
| | | | | | Uni. Short | 5.68 |
| Sex | 16.45 | 80.70 | Male | 8.07 | Female | 8.39 |
| *Income* | 5.35 | 86.05 | | | | |
| *Municipality* | 5.04 | 91.09 | *Other Sweden* | 2.87 | *Big cities* | 2.05 |
| *Age* | 4.97 | 96.06 | 50–59y | 3.49 | | |
| *Home size* | 3.05 | 99.11 | | | *Large* | 2.61 |
| *Home own* | 0.74 | 99.85 | | | | |
| *Wealth* | 0.15 | 100.0 | | | | |
| | | | | 32.58 | | 57.26 |

Note: Mean value for variables 11.1 per cent; mean value for categories 2.94. Variables or categories in italics are below mean value.

# 11

# Working with *Distinction*

## Scandinavian experiences

*Lennart Rosenlund*

### Introduction

This chapter has a methodological focus developed during many years working as a sociologist—not a mathematician or statistician; alone, and in cooperation with friends and colleagues—researching Bourdieusian social spaces. Throughout that time I have carried out multiple correspondence analyses (MCA) on numerous datasets describing lifestyles in the wide sense of the word. Most were of Scandinavian origin and collected at the national level. However, several of them informed about conditions at the community level, and one shed light on differentiation processes within a large engineering company.

All in all, the experiences gained give ample support to Bourdieu's claim about the general validity of the model he presents in *Distinction*: that it is applicable to the contemporary 'modern and differentiated society'. Even so, its relevance seems to have grown year by year. It seems as if the recent process of social change in our type of society is bringing it more and more into conformity with Bourdieu's model. Now it is not difficult to work out empirical evidences in support of it, which are more robust and solid than the ones Bourdieu himself presents in his book.

When starting this venture nearly two decades ago, and a decade after *Distinction* was published in English, there were almost no studies applying Bourdieu's model and methods to other societies. Bourdieu must have been impatient at the time.[1] Contrary to the general reception of the book, among quantitatively oriented sociologists it was rather luke-warm. Among some it was even hostile; they were angered by Bourdieu's harsh critique of the (mindless) uses of the traditional statistical methodology.

Today, however, this situation has changed radically, and empirical studies inspired by Bourdieu's work are proliferating.[2] There is now a rapidly growing interest in correspondence analysis and many are discovering its properties as a forceful analytic tool. However, in all the enthusiasm and joy of discovery, there is also some confusion as to how to use the method sensibly. The leading text books on the subject (Lebart *et al.*, 1984; Greenacre, 1993; Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004, 2010) should be kept in close reach.

There is also a need to consider what Bourdieu actually did in *Distinction*, in my view. To date I have not seen a single example that replicates in detail Bourdieu's best documented analyses in *Distinction* and thus that unveils structures that are in harmony with the model he proposed.

Further, many seem unaware of Bourdieu's critical analysis of indiscriminate use of mainstream statistical methods such as regression, path analysis and factor analysis. Paradoxically, there are now empirical studies that are addressing Bourdieu's ideas by bringing them into this methodological context, a framework of which Bourdieu himself was deeply suspicious. These methods are underpinning 'linear thinking' instead of the relational approach, and thereby promote 'intuitive half-understanding' (Bourdieu, 1984: 18ff., 107ff.). Bourdieu's epistemological antidote is to 'break with linear thinking' which, according to him, is distorting the analysis. In its place he advocates an idea of 'structural causality of a network of factors', clearly referring to the virtues of correspondence analysis. It should, however, be remembered that the use of correspondence analysis is by no means a guarantee against flawed analyses of the kind mentioned above. It is quite possible to apply correspondence analysis while thinking in terms of regression.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, in brief, I present Bourdieu's model, which is then connected to the analytic logic of MCA. There is a close affinity between this form of data analysis and Bourdieu's thinking. Then I examine the traces of Bourdieu's analytic moves. There are two such paths to follow, which are presented in two consecutive sections. One addresses the construction of the space of social positions (social space), while the other focuses on the construction of spaces of lifestyles. The analytic examples presented are collected from an ongoing project called 'Prism—rapid social change' presently being undertaken in Stavanger.[3] The chapter concludes by examining empirical evidence in support of Bourdieu's hypothesis about structural homology—that both the social space and the space of lifestyles are structured by the same set of principles: volume and composition of capital.

## Bourdieu's model

Bourdieu's book *Distinction* (1984 [1979]) explores the relationship between the objective conditions of existence on one hand (the distribution of assets of economic, social and cultural capital), and on the other lifestyles, that is, patterns of practices and preferences (and aversions) in cultural, moral and political matters in the broad sense. There exists an objective system of social positions where all of us are situated—*the objectivity of the first order* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 11). And there also exist social practices, or human symbolic activities—*the objectivity of the second order*. These separate universes of social reality have been conceptualised into Bourdieu's model, which consists of two interconnected space constructs: *the space of social positions* (abbreviated to *the social space*), and the *space of lifestyles*.

Theoretically, these two universes are coupled via the concept of the *habitus*. This 'structured, structuring (mental) structure' is cast and formed in a specific way by occupying certain positions in the social space, and it operates by giving form and content to lifestyles of various kinds.

Bourdieu's claim about *homology* is then an intrinsic property of the model; the two different universes of social reality are governed by the same principles of social differentiation. Both the 'objective' distributions of scarce resources (capital of various kinds, basically economic and cultural) and the structuration of the symbolic universe of lifestyles follow the same social logic. The two universes are swayed by the same social forces: *the overall volume of capital* and the *composition* or *structure of capital*. Volume of capital refers to the total amount of the various forms of capital that the social agents 'possess'. This social mechanism divides the population into various social classes. The capital composition principle of differentiation reflects the structure of the respondents' capital accounts; is it economic capital or cultural capital that dominates, or are they equally important (symmetrical)? This social mechanism differentiates the various social classes into different class fractions.

The model also has a time and change dimension referring to *the social trajectory* tracing the history of stability or mobility of class fractions in the space. In other words, the space of social positions has a history of change, and so has the space of lifestyles, although of a different tempo.

## Two types of MCA: Bourdieu's constructions

Lebart *et al.*'s (1984) *Multivariate Descriptive Statistical Analysis: Correspondence Analysis and Related Techniques for Large Matrices* appears to have been a major reference when Bourdieu worked on *Distinction*.[4] Although the tool Lebart and his associates present here has a singular title of MCA, there are two somewhat different approaches to its use—each evoking different types of problem. These are to be used in conjunction with each other; each provides a particular point of view. The 'visualized regression' analysis (Lebart *et al.*, 1984: 102) starts with the construction of a low dimensional space consisting of 'independent variables' (variables on the left-hand side of Figure 11.1). Respondents' profiles of their 'capital accounts' describing their specific conditions of existence then supply the 'raw material' of the analysis. This low dimensional space discloses the relationships among the categories (modalities) of the variables analysed and the underlying principles according to which these assets are distributed.

What are the procedures Bourdieu followed in constructing this model? *Distinction* is not a research report, and one looks in vain for detailed accounts of his deliberations and strategic choices. He is, however, not mute on the issue. In the preamble to his model (Bourdieu, 1984: 127ff.) he states that the double figure (including both the space of social position and the space of lifestyle, *ibid.*: 128–129, figures 5 and 6) does not originate from one particular correspondence analysis. It is instead a summary graph containing results from several such analyses containing elements from different surveys carried out by the INSEE (*Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques*) in the period 1967–72 as well from surveys by other investigators (SOFRES, CESP, SEMA, IFOP, Ministry of Culture).

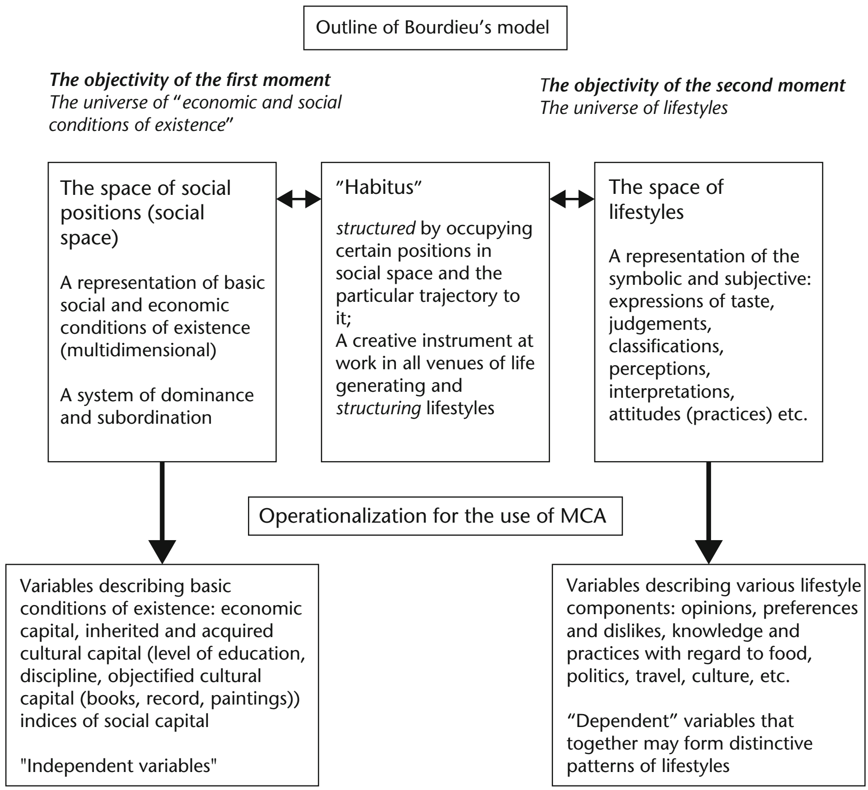



*Figure 11.1* An outline of Bourdieu's model and its relation to MCA

In so doing, he selected the following indicators for analysis: spare time, length of the working week, fathers' occupations (social trajectory) and their educational level (inherited cultural capital), respondents' educational level (scholastic capital), total income, property (rural and urban), shares, industrial and commercial profits, wages and salaries (all indicators of economic capital) in addition to possession of valuable household goods. Finally, the type of residential area was added. Altogether, 12 variables of 'independent' character can be identified in Bourdieu's text.

In the second step of analysis, this constructed space may then be utilised as an analytic frame to describe and explain patterns of dependent lifestyle variables. These are inserted in the space in the form of supplementary points after it has been established, and do not participate in its construction.

Most likely this is the method Bourdieu adopted constructing his well known map of the structure of social space where lifestyle components have been inserted. However, the most comprehensive and best documented analyses in *Distinction* are based on the other analytic approach: they are examples of MCA according to the '*reciprocal approach*' (Lebart *et al.*, 1984: 108). Here, the analysis is undertaken by using the respondents' profiles of lifestyles ('dependent variables', variables in the right-hand box in Figure 11.1) as the 'raw material' (as opposed to using the individuals' profiles of capital indicators, 'independent variables'). These analyses appear in *Distinction* as 'Variants of the dominant taste' (p. 262) and 'Variants of the petit-bourgeois taste' (p. 340).

Thus Bourdieu retained the following indicators for analysis: qualities of the home interior (12 adjectives), qualities of a friend (12 adjectives), style of meals served to friends (six possibilities), furniture purchase (six possibilities), preferred singers (12), preferred works of classical music (15), visits to Modern Art Museum, Louvre (unknown number of categories), knowledge of composers (four levels), opinions on art (five categories). Assuming that the indicator of museum-going consists of three categories, this overview suggests that the final analysis consisted of altogether about 75 categories. To be noted here is the diversity of universes of lifestyles that were analysed. Altogether, nine very different areas were brought together in Bourdieu's analysis.

In the graph presenting the results, the various variable categories are displayed according to their coordinates along the first and second axes. Thus the graph contains, to the left, an abundance of indices of highbrow culture (*Art of the Fugue*, *Well-Tempered Clavier*, *abstract painting*, and knowledge of *more than 12 musical works*, etc.). Conversely, indices of less worthy items are positioned to the right (*Guetary*, *Blue Danube*, *L'Arlésienne*, *Petula Clark*, etc.).

The social logic of the ordering of the lifestyle components has been identified with the help of so-called *supplementary* or *illustrative variables*. Bourdieu used the variables of age, father's occupation, qualification and income in this way to represent the resulting structure. Le Roux and Rouanet (2004, 2010) use the term *structuring factors* for this use of supplementary variables.

In both analyses, the capital composition principle is disclosed as the first and most important principle of differentiation. Thus for both social classes the main structuring principle depends on which main form of capital is the most important. Is it cultural capital (left side of the figure) or economic capital (right side) that dominates, or are the two kinds of capital equally important (symmetrical positions in the middle of the figure)? By homogenising social class in this way, Bourdieu 'controls for' the effect of volume of capital; all individuals analysed have approximately the same position on this dimension. Consequently, the second dimension of the space of social position emerges as the main principle of differentiation within these classes.

However—this particular research design has not yet been found in the growing body of Bourdieu-inspired empirical research.

## *Construction of the space of social positions—spaces of social positions in Scandinavia*

I now turn to Scandinavian examples supporting Bourdieu's general claim about this model, beginning with the construction of the local social space of Stavanger in 2009. This Norwegian example is fully presented here. A Danish example appears in the Appendix, without comments due to shortage of space. It presents the local social space and the space of lifestyles of Aalborg in 2004. The latter example is amply presented in an article in *Poetics*: ‘Cultural capital today. A case study from Denmark’.[5]

## The local space of social positions of Stavanger

Stavanger is a city community located on the south-west coast of Norway with some 300,000 inhabitants. For decades it has functioned as the on-shore centre for the exploration, production and administration of the nation’s most important and most expansive economic activity: the petroleum industry. In this period the city has undergone a rapid and multifaceted transformation process affecting many aspects of its life; in 2008 it celebrated its status as European Capital of Culture. To investigate the impact of this event on the life of the city, two lifestyle surveys were undertaken with randomly chosen respondents in the wider Stavanger area. The present analysis is based on answers from 1,267 respondents aged over 18 years from these two surveys.

Altogether, 11 variables were chosen to be included as active variables in the MCA. Four indicators of economic capital were included: household income, and ownership and value of summer house, of car(s) and of boat(s), with 16 categories in total. Four variables were indicators of cultural capital: the educational backgrounds of the respondents themselves (11 categories describing level and subject area), and of the educational backgrounds of fathers and the two best friends, with 21 categories in total. Three variables were related to work, consisting of 14 categories: the vocation of the father (social trajectory), the vocation of the respondents themselves, and their type of employment (public/private).

In all, 51 active categories were analysed.

Analyses of the chosen variable categories revealed that the two first axes extracted, which are our main concern in the following, together explain 72 per cent of the total variance. The calculations were based on ‘modified eigenvalues’.[6] These are preferred since they provide more realistic measures of true rates of explained variance.

The graphic results from the analyses are presented in two figures. Figure 11.2 contains ‘the space of individuals’, Figure 11.3 contains ‘the space of categories’. A glance at Figure 11.3 reveals the social logic of the first extracted axis (the horizontal): it has a hierarchical structure and reflects a capital volume dimension. Thus it is rotated 90 degrees clockwise compared with Bourdieu’s model.[7] When moving along it from left to right, all indicators of both cultural and economic capital increase in value. The lines that join categories belonging to the same variables highlight

*Table 11.1* Variances of axes, modified rates and cumulated rates

| | *Axis 1* | *Axis 2* | *Axis 3* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Variance of axes (eigenvalues) | 0.2242 | 0.1784 | 0.1478 |
| Modified eigenvalues (according to Benzécri) | 0.0215071 | 0.0092534 | 0.0039216 |
| Modified rates (%) | 50.55 | 21.75 | 9.22 |
| Cumulated modified rates (%) | 50.55 | 72.3 | 81.52 |

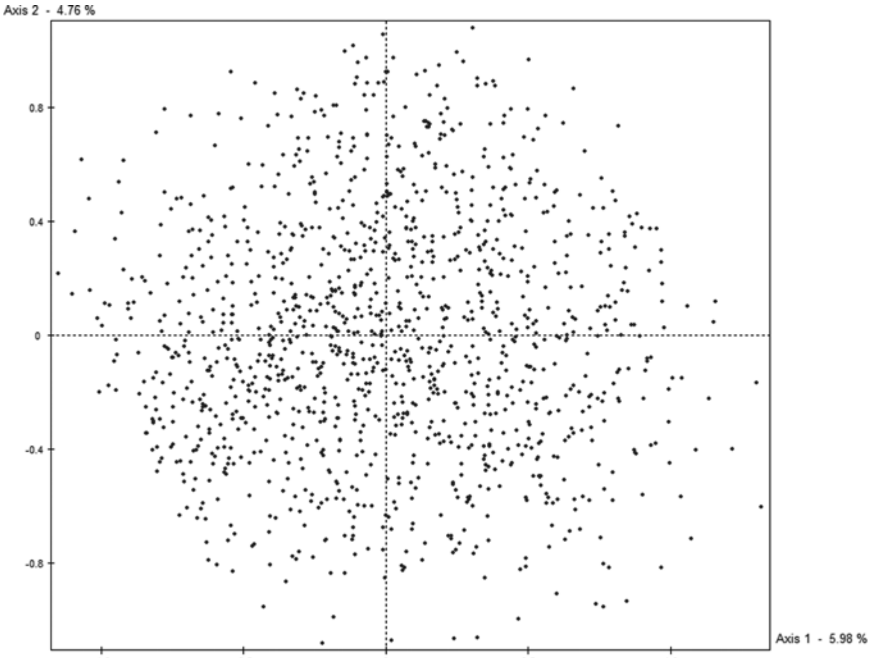



*Figure 11.2* The social space of Stavanger, the space of individuals—plane 1–2

this feature. Thus the variables *Father's education* and *Household income* both begin with their lowest values on the left-hand side. Then both increase when moving rightward and end to the right side with their highest value (*Household income > 1,000,000 NOK*, *Education of father univ. >4 years*). Further, attributes associated with low social positions are found to the left (*Father unskilled worker*, *Skilled worker*) and those common in high social positions are found to the right (*Manager*, *Top manager*, *Father manager*).

Table 11.2 displays the ranked contribution values to the first dimension. Overall, the three variables related to work have contributed by 12 per cent, the four variables related to economic capital by 22 per cent, and the four variables related to cultural capital by 66 per cent of the variance of the first extracted axis.

The logic of the second axis—the vertical one—is of a different nature. It discloses the capital composition dimension. This is a 'two-component' dimension that depicts the 'relative weight' of the two forms of capital. In the top domain of the space, cultural capital outweighs economic capital; in the bottom domain, the reverse is true: economic capital outweighs cultural capital. At the top end we find the highest values on the indicators of cultural capital (top right: *Education univ. >4 years (hum)*, *Education of father*, *Education of 1st and 2nd friend university >4 years*) together with the lowest on economic capital (top left: *Household income <399,000*, *No car*, *Car value <100,000*). At the bottom we find the opposite: the highest values of economic capital indicators (bottom right: *Household income >1,000,000*, *Value of boat(s) >400,000*,

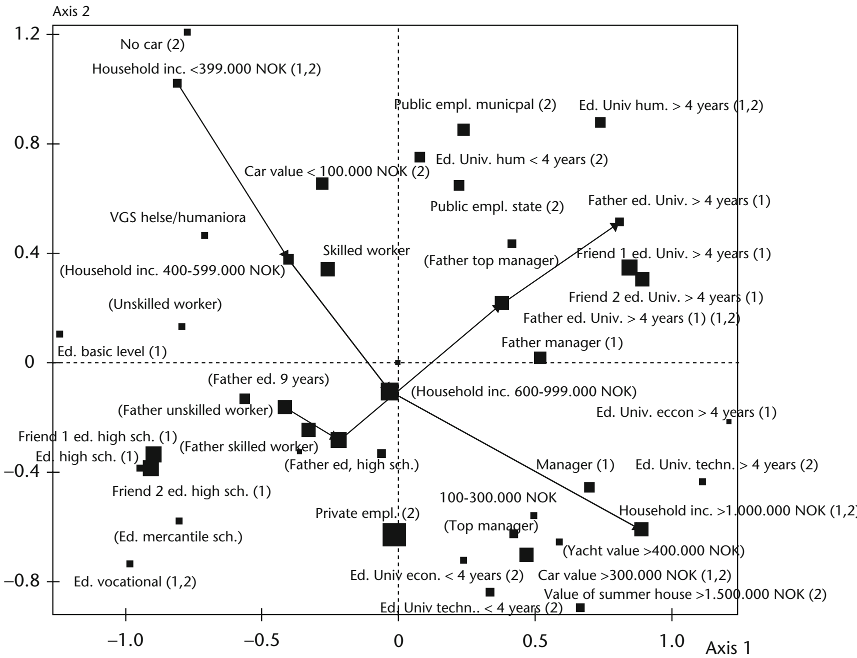



*Figure 11.3* The social space in Stavanger, the space of categories—plane 1–2

Note: Categories contributing the most to the two first axes (Ctr-values>2%). Numbers in parentheses (1 or 2, or both) indicate to which. The sizes of the markers are proportionate to the frequencies of the categories they represent.

*Table 11.2* Variables and categories contributing above average to axis 1

| *Variables* | *Contribution of variables %* | *Categories* | | *Contribution of categories (%)* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Left* | *Right* | *Left* | *Right* |
| Education of respondent | 22.41 | Basic level, High school | Univ2 (tech.), Univ2 (hum.), Univ2 (econ.) | 3.25, 2.29 | 3.73, 3.43, 2.48 |
| Education of first friend | 18.63 | High school | Univ. >4 years | 9.87 | 8.50 |
| Education of second friend | 17.85 | High school | Univ. >4 years | 9.28 | 8.40 |
| Household income | 12.41 | <399,000 NOK | >1,000,000 NOK | 3.38 | 7.90 |
| Father's education | 6.95 | High school | Univ. >4 years | | 3.23 |
| Father's vocation | 6.46 | | Manager | | 2.16 |
| Vocation of respondent | 4.87 | Unskilled worker | Manager | 1.84 | 3.22 |
| Value of car(s) | 4.38 | <100,000 NOK | >300,000 NOK | | 2.32 |
| Value of summer house | 2.62 | | >1,500,000 NOK | | 2.32 |

Note: Variables are ranked according to decreasing contribution. Contributions of variables and categories are in per centages.

*Table 11.3* Variables and categories contributing above average to axis 2

| *Variables* | *Contribution of variables* | *Modalities* | | *Contribution of modalities (%)* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Bottom* | *Top* | *Bottom* | *Top* |
| Education of respondent | 22.34 | Univ1 (tech.), Voc. school, Univ1 (tech.) | Univ2 (hum.), Univ1 (hum.) | 3.37, 2.43, 2.07 | 6.31, 4.98 |
| Sector of employment | 19.69 | Private | Publ. (Mun.), Publ. (State) | 9.21 | 7.37, 3.11 |
| Value of car(s) | 15.68 | >300,000 NOK | <100,000 NOK, No car | 6.61 | 4.80, 4.10 |
| Household income | 12.89 | >1,000,000 NOK | <399,000 NOK | 4.66 | 6.78 |
| Value of summer house | 6.79 | >1,500,000 NOK | No summer house | 4.12 | 2.00 |
| Education of second friend | 3.47 | High school | | 2.13 | |

Note: Variables are ranked according to decreasing contribution. Ctr of variables and categories are in per centages.

*Value of summer house >1,500,000*) go together with the lowest on cultural capital (bottom left: *Education vocational school*, *Education mercantile school*, *Education high school 1st and 2nd friend* (the lowest category)).

The printout of parameters from the analysis provides further details. The indicators of economic capital contribute 40 per cent of the total variance, cultural capital 33 per cent, while the variables related to work account for the remaining 27 per cent.

Thus the two extracted dimensions of this analysis fit very well indeed with the model of the social space presented by Bourdieu where, on each level of the capital volume dimension, there is a 'chiasmic' or inverse relationship between possession of the two forms of capital.

## A Danish space of social positions—similarities

A similar construction of the social space, of Danish origin, is presented in the Appendix. This is the social space of Aalborg. The Appendix includes a list of active variables for construction of the space, graphs of the cloud of individuals and of categories, and a graph displaying an outline of the constructed social space into which lifestyle components have been inserted.[8]

Some observations related to our two examples should be noted which are also valid for all the constructions I have undertaken, not presented here. First, the space constructions—as the social space of Stavanger above—are based on indicators of cultural capital, economic capital and variables related to working life. In many surveys the availability of economic indicators is a problem. Usually, when such indicators are represented, only household or personal income is included. A workable social space needs more 'weight' from economic indicators than that. It is a clear indication that salary alone poorly reflects economic standing. By including 'investments' in valuables such as cars, boats, vacation homes, bonds and stocks, we get a far better understanding of such standing.

The constructed spaces bear some important common secondary characteristics. First—and importantly—the capital composition dimension is related to gender: there are more women positioned in the top half of the graph where cultural capital is dominant, and more men in the lower half where economic capital dominates. On average, women and men have different positions according to the capital composition principle, something to remember when comparing the two sexes in general.

Similarly—and of equal importance—the capital composition principle of differentiation corresponds to the division between employment sectors, between those employed in the private and public sectors. Men dominate the private sector (where economic capital dominates); women dominate the public sector (where cultural capital dominates). My guess is that these findings probably reveal general traits in 'advanced and differentiated societies'. Finally, the characteristics of the social space are related to the age of the respondents: the oldest are situated in the low-volume domain to the left, and the youngest (among them many students) are concentrated close to the vertical axis in the top area, where cultural capital outweighs economic capital.

## Constructing spaces of social positions—one obstacle and one dilemma

The construction of the social space is an iterative, meticulous process; variables are coded and recoded and included (and excluded) in the construction, and the distribution of the variable categories is examined. Little by little, stable patterns then emerge where the relations between the categories remain the same and the clouds of individuals are reasonably symmetrical. I have had my hands on many datasets with different origins and scope. Each time it has been possible to construct a social space with the dimensions outlined above, provided the data include indicators of economic capital (four to five seems necessary) and of cultural capital—fathers' and respondents' education (two to three). In addition, variables related to work (two to three) are needed. All in all, between nine and 12 active variables are required.

However, two types of problem frequently emerge. One such occurs when two categories from different variables turn out to overlap too much. This creates disturbances; the shape of the cloud of individuals becomes asymmetrical and irregular, and the 'disturbing categories' receive disproportionately large contribution values. The problem can be solved either by recoding one of the 'disturbing categories': merging it with another related category, or simply putting the category as 'passive' (together with 'junk' categories such as 'no answer', 'other').

The other issue to take stock of is the following. Two basic types of solution are possible when undertaking MCA of this kind, provided the analysis is not hampered by problems of the above type. The first type of solution is one where the first extracted axis is a capital volume dimension, the second one is a capital composition dimension. This is Bourdieu's model and the one presented above. The other possible solution is one that clusters cultural capital indicators along the first axis (or second axis) and economic capital along the second axis (or first axis). This is not the model presented by Bourdieu (yet it is consistent with common misconceptions of it).

The final outcome of the orientation and content of the extracted dimension is the dependent of our choice of active variables. Figure 11.4 illustrates this.

Figure 11.4 displays variations of the social space of Stavanger, where the set-up of active variables has been varied. Figure 11.4A is a simplified, direct replica of the solution described above (Figure 11.3). This was based on the analysis of 11 variables (21 categories of cultural capital, 16 categories of economic capital, and 14 categories belonging to work-related variables). Lines have been superimposed that connect the categories belonging to *Father's education* and to *Household income*. These two sets of categories run along the diagonals of the graph and thereby roughly indicate vectors describing the distribution of the two forms of capital.

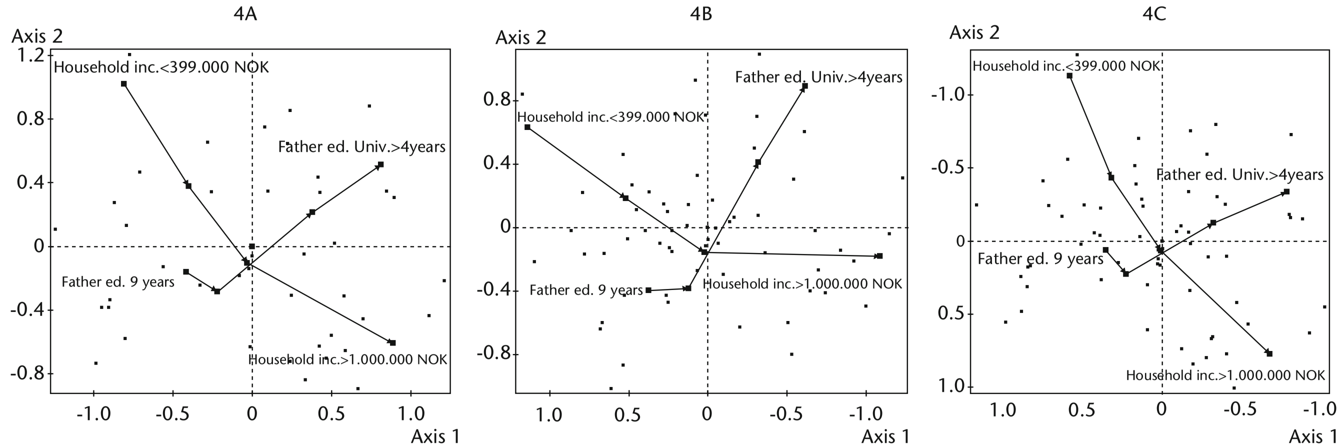
Figure 11.4B displays a solution where the variable *Education of 2nd best friend* has been excluded from the construction. The consequence of this modification is clearly visible. The displayed variable *Household income* has been more aligned to the first axis, while *Father's education* has similarly been more aligned to the second axis. The analysis of the values of contribution reveals that the first axis is more saturated by economic capital and the second by cultural capital.

Figure 11.4C displays another alteration of the original solution. Here another variable of cultural capital has been added: *Education of 3rd best friend*. Here the configuration has been twisted (somewhat) clockwise compared with Figure 11.4A; cultural capital has become more aligned to the first axis and economic capital to the second. The contribution values confirm this.

The exercise above intends to show that the construction of spaces of social positions involves important choices. We have chosen to develop the solution presented above, unnervingly knowing that we are close to breaching Benzécri's second principle of data analysis: 'the model should follow the data, not *vice versa*'. We have disregarded a methodological recommendation regarding the use of MCA. When undertaking MCA on data that represent different social domains, one should strive to construct the analysis so that the domains analysed are represented by an equal number of variables (and categories). Following this advice, the construction represented in Figure 11.4B should be the 'best' solution. However, we have let Bourdieu's theory override our choice; we have chosen the solution—Figure 11.4A—that sticks to his model.

## The history of the social space—differences

The present Prism project in Stavanger draws on an earlier study of the city's cultural life and change, which included constructions of the social space and spaces of lifestyles and a separate study of the history of the social space.[9] The latter was based on census data from 1970, 1980 and 1990 that included indicators of economic and cultural capital (*Folke-og boligtellingene* [Norwegian census of inhabitants and dwellings], *Statistisk sentralbyrå* [Statistics Norway]). This was the period when the city was




Original solution with 11 variables:

*Cultural capital:* 21 categories

*Economic capital:* 16 categories

*Variables related to work:* 14 categories

Solution with 10 variables (excluding "Education of 2nd best friend")

*Cultural capital:* 21 – 3 = 18 categories

*Economic capital:* 16 categories

*Variables related to work:* 14 categories

Solution with 12 variables (including "Education of 3rd best friend")

*Cultural capital:* 21 + 3 = 24 categories

*Economic capital:* 16 categories

*Variables related to work:* 14 categories

*Figure 11.4* Spaces of individuals and spaces of categories with three different collections of active variables; father's education and household income connected with lines undergoing a profound process of social and cultural change; earlier it had been a poor backwater township with a stagnating economy (canning industry). Following the discovery of North Sea oil in the late 1960s, it was transformed into an important hub in the capital-intensive worldwide petroleum industry and became the most affluent city in Norway.

This analysis revealed two interconnected developmental traits or change patterns related to the social space. First there was a major re-shaping process of the social hierarchy defined in terms of volume of capital. On the average, the '*siddis*' (local epithet for the inhabitants of Stavanger) had become 'richer' with regard to both forms of capital.[10] The construction of the space using 1970 data showed a small dominant class, a relatively small intermediate class and a large popular segment. The one using 1990 data indicated that the dominant and intermediate classes had grown substantially in relative size, while the working classes had diminished correspondingly. Further, there were signs of decrease in force of the hierarchical principle of social differentiation. This aspect of the social change process corresponds to the views expressed by many commentators at the time, which indicate that the traditional class differences were fading in the late twentieth century.

The second developmental trait identified was one not noted elsewhere. This was the emergence and growing strength of the capital composition principle, the second main dimension of the social space. This was identified and examined through a series of successive analyses of the dominant class in 1990, 1980 and 1970. The inverse relationship between indices of cultural and economic capital, which is the hallmark of this dimension, grows in clarity by the decade, the 1990 analysis being the one where this pattern is most evident. Similar studies of the intermediate classes were undertaken which showed that this principle of social differentiation has also penetrated this segment of the social structure.

There are differences between the constructed spaces of Aalborg and Stavanger that may be related to different structural histories, particularly related to differentiation in the working classes. Differentiation according to the capital composition principle in the low-volume area seems to be stronger and more effective in Stavanger than it is in Aalborg. This is true when comparing the graphs displaying the cloud of individuals in the two cities (Figures 11.2 and 11.10), and when comparing subsequent separate analyses of lifestyles in each city, not considered here. The working class in Aalborg is clearly less differentiated in Aalborg compared with Stavanger.

There are several signs that differentiation in the working classes also represented a problem for Bourdieu while working on *Distinction.* His chapter 7 analysing 'The Taste of the Necessity' is rudimentary compared with the analyses of lifestyles of the dominant and intermediate classes. Further, there are deficiencies in the text; in several places he promises analyses of the working class similar to the ones presented on the dominant and intermediate classes, but these never materialise.[11] My guess is that he was unsuccessful; the French working class was not—at the time—differentiated according to his expectations.

These findings give rise to a hypothesis about the general transformation process between 'industrial' and 'post-industrial' society on a local level: that it is connected to the fading of traditional class differences (according to volume of capital) and the emergence of the capital composition principle as a major force of social differentiation, that penetrates the whole social structure from top to bottom. In that case Bourdieu's model is even better adapted to study social phenomena now than it was at the time when it was first launched some 30 years ago.

## Constructions of spaces of lifestyles

### *The Stavangerian space of lifestyles based on 'visualised regression'*

The Stavangerian space of lifestyles using the social space as a 'predictive map' is presented below. In the Appendix, a similarly constructed space from the city of Aalborg (2004) is presented.

The space of lifestyles is a theoretical system of distinctive signs, having no meaning in themselves, only in relation to each other. Lifestyle features frequently occurring together will be situated close to each other, while those unlikely to occur together will be situated far from each other, in opposite domains of the space. On the right side, respondents are characterised by high levels of both cultural and economic capital. On the left side, respondents are characterised by low levels of the two forms of capital. The vertical axis separates the fractions with a capital composition dominated by cultural assets in the upper region from those with a capital composition dominated by economic capital in the lower region of the map. In Aalborg, as shown in the space of lifestyles (Figure 11.12), the orientations of both axes are inverted (high volume, left, low volume, right on the horizontal axis; economic capital dominates, top, cultural capital dominates, bottom).

### *Lifestyle oppositions along the volume of capital dimension*[12]

Positions in the social space reflect differences in access to scarce resources and differences in typical habitus(es). The following are summarised findings from analyses of many datasets of lifestyles related to the two dimensions of the space. In many cases these patterns are related to both dimensions. For the sake of simplicity, I disregard such interactions in the following and start with patterns that seem structured by volume of capital. These oppositions are concurrent with the class contradiction of the industrial society. In contemporary surveys their presence is a prominent feature shown in many universes of lifestyles.

### Participation versus non-participation

In any construction of space of lifestyles, there is a conspicuous contrast related to level of participation between respondents positioned in the high-volume domain compared with those situated in the low-volume area. The people in the high-volume area are active, while the more passive are found in the low-volume area. This goes for almost any type of activity. (*Go regularly to the theatre*, *art galleries*, *symphony concert* on the right-hand side of Figure 11.5.)

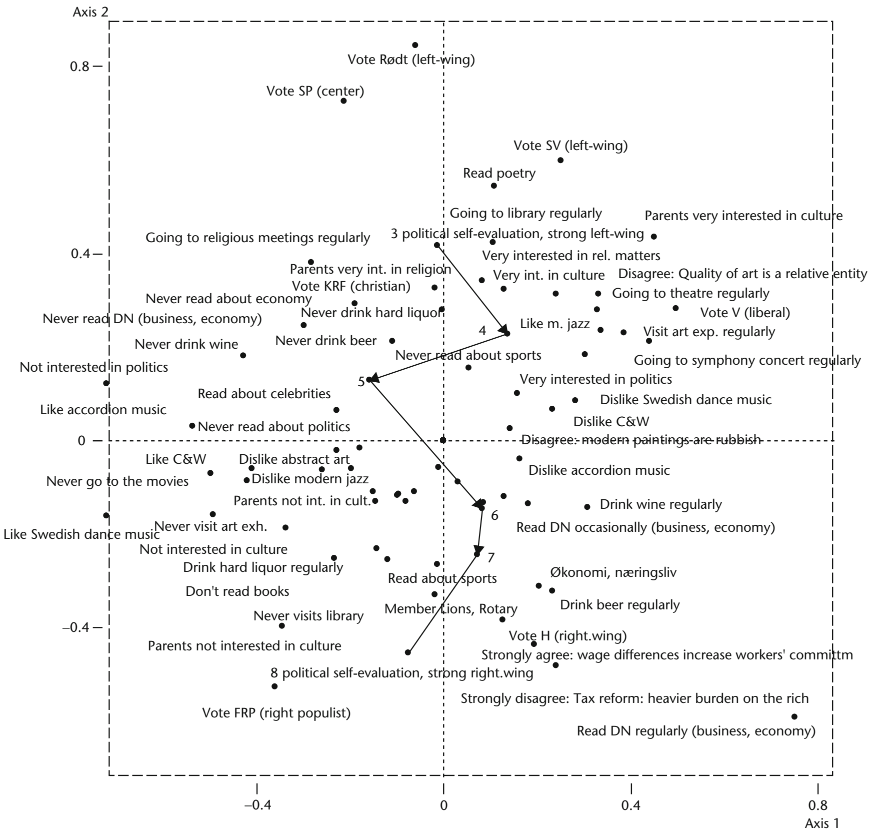



*Figure 11.5* The Stavangerian social space (2009) and (a derived) space of lifestyles—political self-evaluation; six categories (3–8) are connected by arrows

## Knowledge versus ignorance

The same principle is applicable to almost all universes of legitimate knowledge—politics, economy, culture. The knowledgeable respondents are found in the high-volume area and the less so in the low-volume positions. However, this principle is not necessarily applicable to other non-legitimate areas such as carpentry, DIY, gardening, fishing, sports, etc.

## Value orientations

There are strong contrasts along the volume dimension with regard to what value sets are predominant. One such dimension can be labelled *sense of control/power versus fatalism*. In the analysis of the 1994 Stavanger survey, an index was constructed based on answers to questions related to perceived possibilities for making one's voice heard, affecting political decisions, sense of power, etc. Similarly, another value index was constructed including answers to questions related to *liberalism versus anti-liberalism*. These questions focused on themes such as abortion, immigration, homosexuality, etc. (This dimension has close affinity to the dimension of 'New Politics' in the contemporary political science literature.)

The most fatalistic and the most anti-liberal attitudes are found in the low-volume area. Moving along the volume dimension, these views gradually become less pronounced. The most liberal attitudes are found in the cultural elite (high volume, cultural capital dominates), while those who express the strongest *sense of power* are found in the economic elite (high volume, economic capital dominates). There seems to be a direct correspondence between 'objective' positions of power and the subjective experiences of them.

## Cosmopolitanism versus localism

The way people orient themselves generally towards the world is clearly related to their position along the volume dimension. People in high-volume positions tend to orient themselves globally with regard to TV preferences, musical tastes, foods, news and political attitudes. They *read foreign papers*. They use the internet to seek information and communication; they support aid to developing countries. Among respondents situated in the low-volume domain, the opposite is true—their orientation is local.

## Abstract and intellectually demanding versus concrete and relaxing

This dimension is clearly traceable when examining tastes and expressions related to the arts (*prefer figurative art*), literature, TV preferences, music, film, newspapers, etc. Those who appreciate intellectual challenges are found in the high-volume domain, while more relaxing entertainment tastes are more prominent in the low-volume area.

## Rare and/or expensive versus ordinary and/or cheap

Activities, tastes and artefacts that are demanding, in the form of investments in either cultural capital and/or economic capital, and therefore rare or/and expensive, are found among respondents having well endowed capital accounts in the high-volume area, while the less capital endowed favour what they can afford and what therefore is common.

## Rejection of the popular versus popular

As a general principle, one could say that tastes, activities, brands and other artefacts liked, favoured and loved in the low-volume areas are ignored, shunned, avoided or despised in the high-volume domain (*Do not like C&W* and *Swedish dance-music* to the right in Figure 11.5). Our analyses do not support any of the currently fashionable ideas of the tolerant omnivore in this domain of the space.

The opposite principle may also be true: for instance, in Stavanger it is among people in the low-volume area where we find those who are negative to the idea of living in the most popular neighbourhoods, where the affluent and/or cultured predominate.

### *Lifestyle oppositions related to the capital composition dimension*

Lifestyle oppositions along the capital composition dimension derive their social energy, form and content from the undulating struggle focused on the 'value' of the two forms of capital and the types of 'profit' they entail for their beholder. What is cultural capital worth? And what is economic capital worth?

### General interest: culture versus economy

On the superficial level, such lifestyle oppositions are easily noted when it comes to what people are interested in. Those who occupy positions in the economic domain—at the bottom in Figure 11.5—are oriented towards the world of economics [*Read DN* (*Dagens Næringsliv*—a daily newspaper devoted to economy) and *Read about economy*, *business* in other newspapers]. They share this interest and they are knowledgeable. Towards the world of culture, they are basically indifferent (sometimes hostile). Similarly, those who occupy positions in the cultural domain—at the top in Figure 11.5—are oriented towards the world of culture; they love it, know of it and participate in it (*They*, as well as *their parents are very interested in culture*). Here indifference, sometimes hostility, towards values related to economic wealth often goes together with a cultural orientation.

### Ethical values

Differences and oppositions related to the capital composition go deeper than just focus of interest. They relate to more deep-seated ethical dispositions. In the Stavanger project in 1994 the respondents were presented to eight personages from whom they were asked to choose the three that they could think of becoming friends with (if it were up to them), and the three that they would not. Four of these types were particularly contested along the capital composition dimension. 'A successful businessman who started with two empty hands' was popular in the economic domain, but detested in the cultural domain. The same was true for the least popular figure, 'an influential politician from a party with which one sympathises'.

For two other figures, these patterns were reversed. 'A person who give large parts of his/her income to charities' was a possible friend in the cultural domain (particularly in the low-volume area—those who are the least affluent). The same was true for 'a person who spent a lot of time helping asylum-seekers in church asylum'. These two were disliked in the economic domain.

### Politics, attitudes and voting—right versus left

These oppositions related to the capital composition principle have their counterpart in a parallel universe: voting and political values and orientation. We find *vote H* *(right wing)* and *vote FRP (populist right-wing)* at the bottom of Figure 11.5 in the economic domain, and at the top we find *vote Rødt* and *vote SV* (both left-wing). Further, the respondents' self-evaluation of their political position (on a scale from 3 to 8) follows the second dimension nicely. In fact, this is a domain of research for which Bourdieu's model is of particular importance; it probably has better 'explaining power' than any other model that tries to relate social positions to political sympathies/antipathies and voting. The division between right and left in contemporary, post-industrial Scandinavian societies is strongly correlated to the 'horizontal' division between dispositions found in the economic and the cultural domains of the social space. In the industrial society it was related to the 'hierarchical' class-division.

### Decent and orderly versus bohemian lifestyle

Finally, there are heaps of oppositions linked to universes of lifestyles in a more superficial sense that are related to the capital composition principle. Being married, describing one's home as 'clean and tidy', preferring stylish or copies of classical furniture, living in a villa in affluent suburbs are aspects of lifestyles found in groups whose capital account are dominated by economic capital; co-habitation without being married, in an area close to the city centre, describing one's home as *imaginative* and somewhat *untidy* are opposing characteristics found among groups whose capital account is dominated by cultural capital.

Even seemingly insignificant features related to personal appearance (in Stavanger 1994)—clothes at work, hair style (long, medium, short), facial hair (moustache versus beard), the use of make-up by women—seem to be structured by the composition of capital.

## Construction of the space of lifestyles based on the 'reciprocal approach'

### *The Stavangerian space of lifestyles according to the reciprocal approach*

This analysis is based on 44 variables grouped into seven different domains of lifestyle expressions. The first covers readership of named daily newspapers. In all, this group contains seven variables (three categories each). The second group contains six variables describing areas of interest in the newspapers (dichotomised). The third group consists of seven variables describing preferences with regard to literature (dichotomised). The fourth group describes attitudes toward art; six dichotomised variables were used. Membership of six different types of organisation makes up the fifth group of variables (dichotomised). The sixth group consists of answers to whether or not the respondents agreed/disagreed with six statements reflecting general attitudes. Finally, the respondents were invited to give their responses to six statements about the development of the city of Stavanger (dichotomised). These constitute the seventh variable group.

These 44 variables (92 categories) were subject to MCA, which produced the results shown in Table 11.4.

The first two extracted axes that we are to interpret account together for 72 per cent (54 + 18) of the total variance. The third and fourth axes are left to be considered in other contexts.

Table 11.5 gives a rough overview of the content of the two first dimensions.

The first axis has received its content from oppositions related to three areas in equal amounts: general attitudes, preferences with regard to literature, and areas of interest when reading newspapers, about 20 per cent from each. Attitudes towards art also influences the first axis, although to a somewhat lesser degree.

The second axis is heavily influenced by divisions related to what newspaper one reads—more than 40 per cent—and what one is interested to read in them, almost 30 per cent. The second axis is almost entirely influenced by these two variables: what newspaper(s) one chooses to read and what in them one is interested in. Together, the two blocks of variables account for 70 per cent of the variance of the second axis. We note that attitudes related to the development and characteristics of Stavanger have little influence on the two first axes. They are much more present on the third and fourth axes, which we will not comment on further here.

Figure 11.6 and Table 11.6 give the information necessary to interpret the two extracted dimensions.

Figure 11.6 and Table 11.6 clearly indicate that the first extracted dimension, which accounted for 54 per cent of the total variance, is heavily influenced by interest/

*Table 11.4* Variances of axes, modified rates and cumulated rates

| | *Axis 1* | *Axis 2* | *Axis 3* | *Axis 4* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variance of axes (eigenvalues) | 0.0866 | 0.06 | 0.0503 | 0.0456 |
| Modified eigenvalues (according to Benzécri) | 0.00427 | 0.00145 | 0.0008 | 0.00055 |
| Modified rates (%) | 53.7 | 18.3 | 10 | 6.7 |
| Cumulated modified rates (%) | 53.7 | 72 | 82 | 88.7 |

*Table 11.5* Contributions (%) from six blocks of lifestyle components to the two first axes of the MCA

| *Contributions* | *Axis 1* | *Axis 2* | *Axis 3* | *Axis 4* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Readership of newspapers | 10.8 | 41.7 | 19.0 | 12.1 |
| Areas of interest in newspapers | 22.0 | 28.7 | 2.0 | 15.8 |
| Preferred type of literature | 21.3 | 10.7 | 19.7 | 8.1 |
| Attitudes towards art | 14.0 | 0.6 | 18.5 | 9.1 |
| Membership of organisations | 7.0 | 5.5 | 6.2 | 10.6 |
| General attitudes | 22.1 | 7.4 | 11.0 | 13.2 |
| Attitudes towards Stavanger | 2.8 | 5.4 | 23.6 | 31.2 |

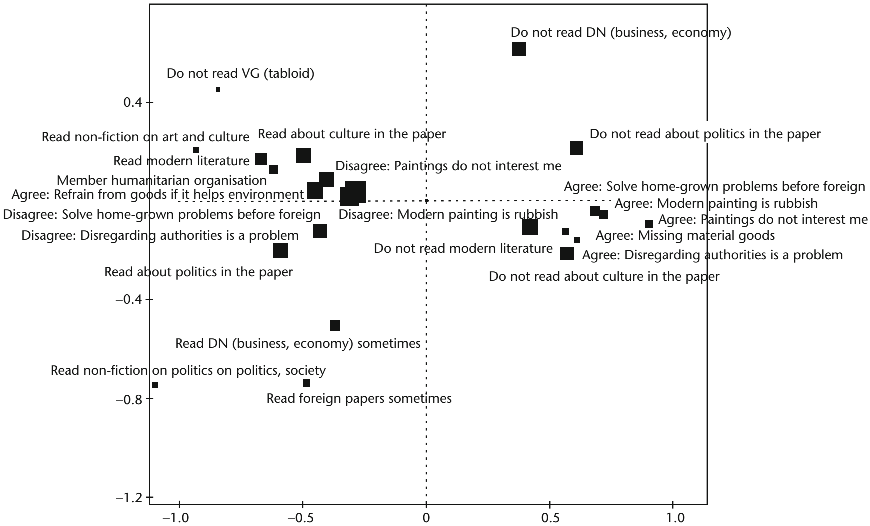



*Figure 11.6* A space of lifestyles—categories contributing above average to axis 1 (horizontal); the sizes of the markers are proportional to the frequencies of the categories they represent

*Table 11.6* Variables contributing above average to axis 1: variables are ranked according to decreasing contribution (%)

| *Variables* | *Contribution of variables* | *Categories* | | *Contribution of categories (%)* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Left* | *Right* | *Left* | *Right* |
| Read about politics in the paper | 9.44 | Yes | No | 4.63 | 4.81 |
| 'Solve home-grown problems before foreign' | 7.68 | Disagree | Agree | 3.14 | 4.54 |
| Read modern literature | 7.43 | Yes | No | 4.55 | 2.89 |
| Read about culture in the paper | 7.39 | Yes | No | 3.42 | 3.97 |
| 'Paintings do not interest me' | 6.56 | Disagree | Agree | 1.59 | 4.97 |
| 'Modern painting is just rubbish' | 5.64 | Disagree | Agree | 1.72 | 3.92 |
| 'Refrain from goods and services provided it helps the environment' | 5.53 | Agree | Disagree | 2.57 | 2.96 |
| Read non-fiction on politics | 4.64 | Yes | | 4.05 | |
| Read non-fiction on art and culture | 4.51 | Yes | | 3.76 | |
| Read DN (business, economy) | 3.93 | Sometimes | Never | 1.17 | 1.69 |
| 'Disregarding authorities is a problem' | 3.90 | Disagree | Agree | 2.30 | 1.59 |
| Member humanitarian organisation | 3.57 | Yes | | 2.61 | |
| 'Missing material goods to be able to live the way I wish' | 2.81 | | Agree | | 2.04 |
| Read VG (tabloid) | 2.53 | Never | | 1.43 | |
| Read foreign newspapers | 2.33 | Sometimes | | 1.67 | |

non-interest in culture and in politics. To the left in the graph, we find those respondents who read articles on these subjects in the newspaper, as well as non-fiction literature on them. These interests go together with a bundle of attitudes. They are seemingly combined with an open mind toward the arts (interest in paintings and appreciation of modern art). Further, there is a cosmopolitan component attached (disagree with priority to home-grown problems, sometimes read foreign papers) and anti-authoritarian attitudes (will not problematise the disregard of authorities). Socially engaged (member humanitarian organisation) and sensitivity towards the environment (expressed willingness to sacrifice goods and services for it). To the right we find those who have the contrasting lifestyle profiles: non-interest in culture and politics; no appraisals of modern art; locally oriented and prone towards traditional or authoritarian attitudes. We recognise this dimension caught by the first axis as one that characterises the well educated elite on the one hand, and the less educated, authoritarian, traditional, parochial segments of popular classes as their counterpart.

The second axis, which accounted for 18 per cent of the total variance, was constituted primarily of variables describing habits with regard to choice of daily newspaper and what type of articles one is interested to read in them.

The first axis caught a dimension where a combined interest in culture and in politics was an important feature. The second axis is characterised by another combination: a heavy interest in economy and (a lesser) in politics. This is found on the negative side of the axis, at the bottom of the graph. Thus the strongest contributions come from *reading regularly DN* (*Dagens Næringsliv*) and choosing to *read articles on economy* in the newspapers more generally. These two variables contribute together to the constitution of this dimension with more than a fourth of its variance.

Reading one or both of the Norwegian tabloids *VG* and *Dagbladet*, and reading (sometimes) *foreign newspapers* are also important components in this second dimension. Further, responses to two attitude statements add a distinct ideological flavour to this dimension. Those who *disagree* with a statement about *support for a tax reform that is putting heavier burden on the rich and the large corporations*, and those who *agree that differences in wages increase the commitment among workers* are found at the bottom of the graph. The responses to these statements disclose that a right-wing, neo-liberal inclination is a prominent component caught by the second dimension (at the bottom of the graph).

At the top of the graph we notice another feature of this dimension: there is a clear religious component which is opposed to the economic neo-liberal pole at the bottom. At the top we find those who are *members in religious organisations* and those who regret the *demise of Christianity in the life of Stavanger.*[13]

A final characteristic that may fit the religious orientation at the top of the graph is a kind of orientation towards the intimate and personal. One *reads family news* in the papers and *letters to the editor*, and one reads *non-fiction on psychology*.

## Bourdieu's hypothesis of homology

To end this chapter, we address Bourdieu's homology hypothesis. In fact, the support for it presented below (and in other contexts) is statistically stronger than what

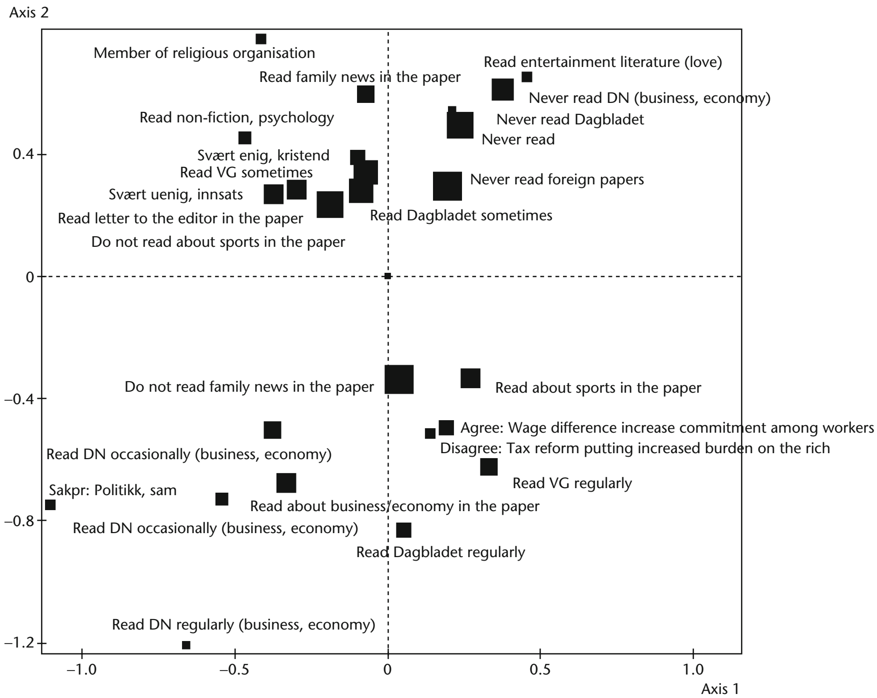



*Figure 11.7* Categories contributing the most to axis 2 (vertical); the sizes of the markers are proportionate to the frequencies of the categories they represent

Bourdieu himself presents in *Distinction*; it implies homology in a very strict sense: regardless of whether the spaces are constructed on the basis of capital indicators of the respondents, or if they are constructed on the basis of their lifestyles, we are basically dealing with the very same structure. In terms of the respondents, this means they have very similar relations to each other regardless of the construction principle, that is, whether their profiles of capital indicators or their profiles of particular lifestyles have been used as the raw material in the analyses.

In order to be able to demonstrate this homological relationship, we need a procedure that may help us to transpose information from one construction into the other. A brute way of doing this is to utilise the social space to construct class fractions on the basis of the respondents' positions in this space. Figure 11.8 spells out the procedure.

Two vertical lines have been inserted in the projection of the individuals in the space of social positions (Figure 11.2). These divide the respondents into three separate classes according to their positions along the capital volume dimension, into a high-volume class, an intermediate class and a low-volume class. Each class contains a third of the respondents. Then two horizontal lines have been inserted which divide each of the three classes into three class fractions according to the respondent's

*Table 11.7* Variables contributing above average to axis 2: variables are ranked according to decreasing contribution (%)

| *Variables* | *Contribution of variables* | *Categories* | | *Contribution of categories (%)* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Bottom* | *Top* | *Bottom* | *Top* |
| Read *DN* | 15.04 | Regularly, sometimes | Never | 5.33 3.19 | 6.51 |
| Read about economy in the paper | 12.81 | Yes | No | 7.37 | 5.44 |
| Read *Dagbladet* (tabloid) | 9.83 | Regularly, sometimes | Never | 6.88 1.60 | 1.35 |
| Read *VG* (tabloid) | 7.90 | Regularly, sometimes | | 4.49 2.35 | |
| Read family news in the paper | 7.68 | No | Yes | 2.75 | 4.93 |
| Read foreign newspapers | 6.68 | Sometimes | Never | 4.57 | 2.10 |
| 'Wage differences increase workers' commitment' | 3.77 | Agree | Disagree | 2.60 | 1.16 |
| Member religious organisation | 3.41 | | Member | | 2.90 |
| Read entertainment (love) literature | 3.51 | | Yes | | 2.90 |
| Read non-fiction on politics, society | 3.09 | Yes | | 2.70 | |
| Prefer reading about sports in the paper | 2.87 | Yes | No | 1.68 | 1.18 |
| Read non-fiction on psychology | 2.43 | | Yes | | 1.85 |
| 'Support tax reform, heavier burden on the rich' | 2.31 | Agree | | 1.82 | |
| Read letters to the editor in the paper | 2.23 | | Yes | | 1.29 |
| 'Regret Christianity has lost influence in Stavanger' | 2.13 | | Yes | | 1.47 |

position on the vertical axis, the capital composition dimension. In each constructed class there is one fraction whose capital assets are dominated by economic capital, one which has a symmetrical capital account, and one whose capital assets are dominated by cultural capital. These two horizontal lines do also divide the respondents into three groups of equal size; however, because of the somewhat irregular shape of the cloud, the nine constructed fractions differ in size. In Figure 11.9 these nine class fractions have been inserted as supplementary points in the previously constructed Stavangerian space of lifestyles.

The categories that represent the nine class fractions make up a roughly rectangular shape (the fraction *Low volume, symmetrical* capital composition somewhat breaches this pattern by being positioned too far on the right-hand side). The three class fractions dominated by cultural capital all point towards the top left corner, while the three fractions dominated by economic capital point towards the bottom right corner. The three fractions of the high-volume class are all positioned on the left hand side, pointing towards the bottom left corner. Similarly, the three fractions constituting the low-volume class are all positioned to the right, pointing towards the

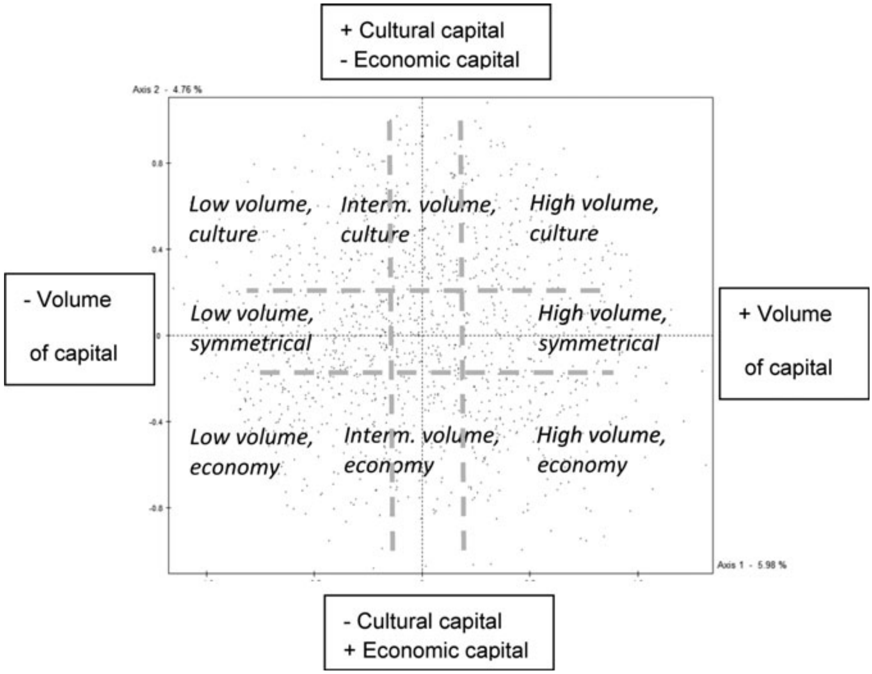



*Figure 11.8* The Stavangerian social space—the space of individuals, construction of nine class fractions

top right corner. In between these two classes are positioned the three fractions of the intermediate class.

The pattern that emerges of the nine class fractions indicates that our constructed space of lifestyles based on the 44 variables has caught the two main dimensions of the social space along its diagonals. These dimensions have been superimposed by dotted lines in the graph. The capital volume dimension runs along the diagonal from the first quadrant top right to the third quadrant bottom left. The capital composition dimension run along the other diagonal, from the bottom right quadrant, where all fractions whose capital accounts are dominated by economic capital are positioned, to the fourth quadrant, where all fractions whose capital accounts are dominated by cultural capital are found. The two spaces are structured by the very same social forces of social differentiation.

These strong indications of homology or congruence between the structures of two very different social universes have been reproduced again and again with an astonishing force in my work.[14]

## Conclusions—moving beyond the social space

When leaving the universe of my own and my close collaborators' research bubble, and examining other scholars' recent contributions to the growing body of

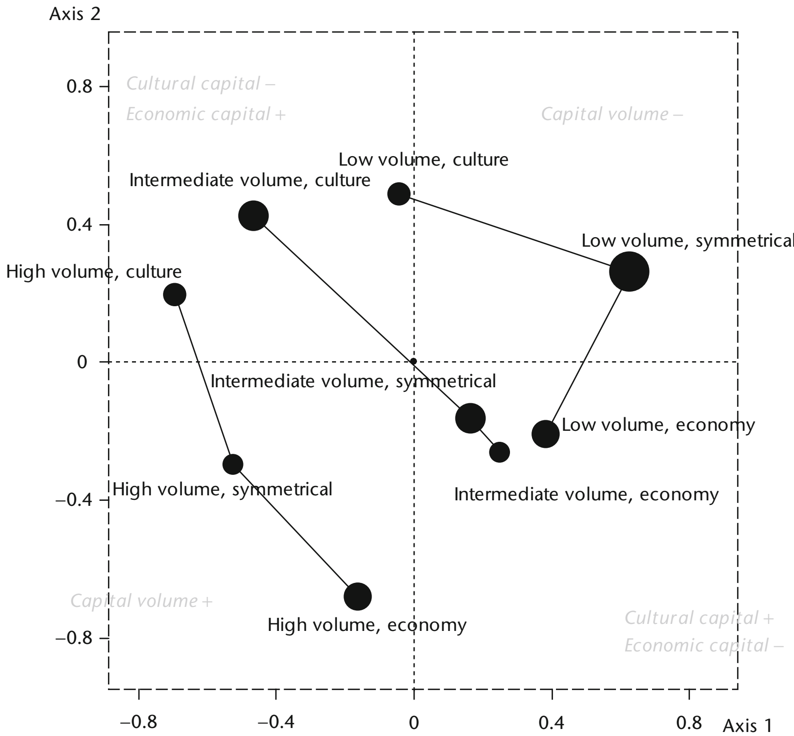



*Figure 11.9* The Stavangerian space of lifestyles—class fractions derived from the social space are inserted as supplementary points; dotted lines representing the dimensions of the social space are superimposed

Bourdieu-inspired research, I note that there certainly are doubts about the general validity of Bourdieu's model. There are quite a few examples of analyses that seem to contradict his claims, and of direct refutations—saying that Bourdieu's model does not apply.

This author nourishes a strong suspicion that such conclusions are flawed because of ignorance of Bourdieu's model: either the question about it is not posed, or an inappropriate methodological approach is applied to disclose it.

In particular, the existence of the capital composition principle seems to be the problem. If one thinks in terms of variables, one may be blind to this principle. It disappears between the fingers like water. The capital composition principle of social differentiation is not a variable that describes a person, but a relational property belonging to a structure which may be disclosed by the help of correspondence analysis.

I challenge those of my colleagues who have undertaken lifestyle analyses and tried in vain to reveal the capital composition principle: reconsider your analytic design. Examine your data again and see if your data contain enough indicators of economic capital (four to five), cultural capital (two to three) and a couple of variables related to work. Then try to construct the space of social position based on these. This can be utilised in its own right by way of 'visualised regression', and it can be used as a referential structure to compare with spaces of lifestyle, as we did above, to demonstrate the extraordinary relation of homology that exists between the two spaces.

If these capital indicators are missing, do your lifestyle analysis again and apply Bourdieu's approach on subsamples of your data consisting of respondents with approximately similar class positions, as we have seen Bourdieu did. The results you will obtain will be very similar to your original (based on the whole sample) solution, but now the first axis is most likely the capital composition dimension.

All in all, this has been written in the hope that my experiences and those of my colleagues may help to re-establish the research front where Bourdieu left it; that the model he proposes in *Distinction* is not an end result of research, but may function as a fruitful starting point for future research. That will enable us to take advantage of Bourdieu's scientific legacy.

## Notes

1 In a lecture introducing *Distinction* to the Japanese audience, Bourdieu expresses his hope that it will be read generatively; that the model it contains will be applied to other societies. He is convinced that, with some modifications, it will work (Bourdieu, 1998).
2 This was a very evident during a recent conference in Paris commemorating the publication of *Distinction* ('Thirty Years After *Distinction*', Paris, 4–6 November 2010). More than 300 researchers and scholars participated.
3 The project is carried out as a joint venture between IRIS (International Research Institute of Stavanger) and the University of Stavanger, and is funded by the the Research Council of Norway.
4 See, for instance, Bourdieu (1984: 580 n.2).
5 *Poetics*, 36(1), February 2008, 45–71.
6 See Le Roux and Rouanet (2004: 200); also Greenacre (1993: 145).
7 This is a choice of convenience; the SPAD software used in the analyses proposes to show the first principal axis as the $x$-axis, the second as the $y$-axis, as the default option.
8 The material originates from the framework of COMPAS—Contemporary Patterns of Social Differentiation—a research project at Aalborg University. The research group consisted of Stine Thiedeman Faber, Annick Prieur, Jakob Skjøtt-Larsen and myself. I was attached to the group as a guest professor in the period 2004–07. The COMPAS-project is documented in English by Rosenlund and Prieur (2007); Prieur *et al.* (2008); Harrits *et al.* (2010); Prieur and Savage (2010); Skjøtt-Larsen (2012). In Danish it is documented by Faber (2008); Skjøtt-Larsen (2008); Faber (2009–10); Prieur (2009); Prieur and Rosenlund (2009, 2010a, 2010b); Faber *et al.* (2012); and in French by Faber and Prieur (2012).
9 See Rosenlund (2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2008, 2009).
10 In the period, the proportion of the workforce holding certificates from institutions of higher education (any level) increased from 11.7 per cent to 27.2 per cent. The proportion with 9 years of formal education or below, found in the lowest level, decreased from 55.6 per cent to 17.6 per cent. In the same period, the average gross income increased by a factor of 1.41 in real terms.
11 See, for instance, Bourdieu (1984: 261).
12 The items in this paragraph are further developed by Prieur and Savage (2010).
13 Stavanger was the centre for Norwegian missionary activities from the last part of the nineteenth century well into the twentieth.
14 See, for instance, Rosenlund (2002: 171–176, 2009: 164–174) and Prieur *et al.* (2008).

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## Appendix: The space of social positions and the space of lifestyles, Aalborg 2004

*Table 11.8* Variables used for the construction of the Aalborgian social space

| *Economic capital* | *N of categories* | *Cultural capital* | *N of categories* | *Work-related variables* | *N of categories* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Possession of shares, bonds, art collection | 2 | Respondent's education | 7 | Respondent's vocation | 15 |
| Household income | 5 | Father's education | 5 | Father's vocation | 4 |
| Value of summerhouse | 3 | **Total** | **12** | Type of employment | 2 |
| Ownership of house | 3 | | | **Total** | **21** |
| Value of car(s) | 6 | | | | |
| **Total** | **18** | | | | |

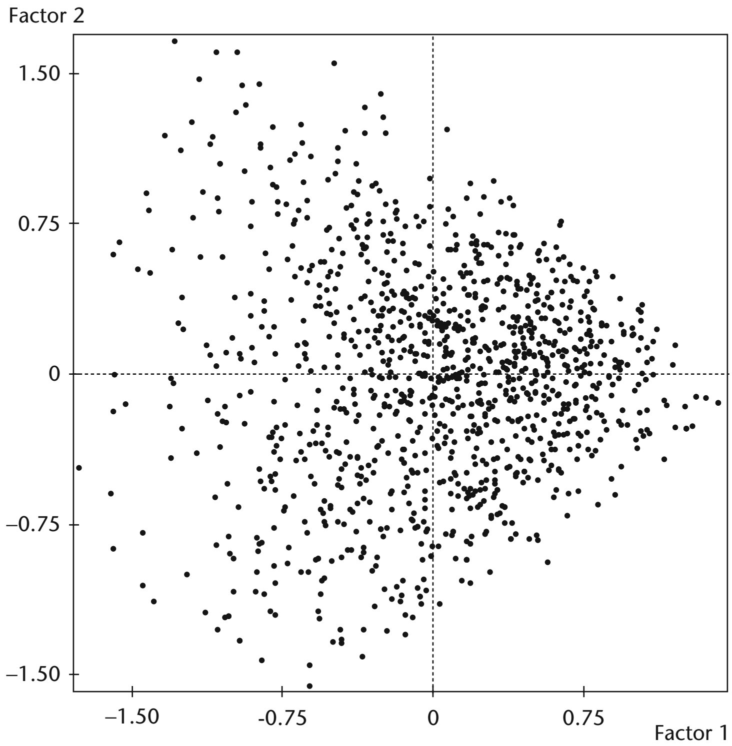


*Figure 11.10* The social space in Aalborg, the space of individuals—plane 1–2

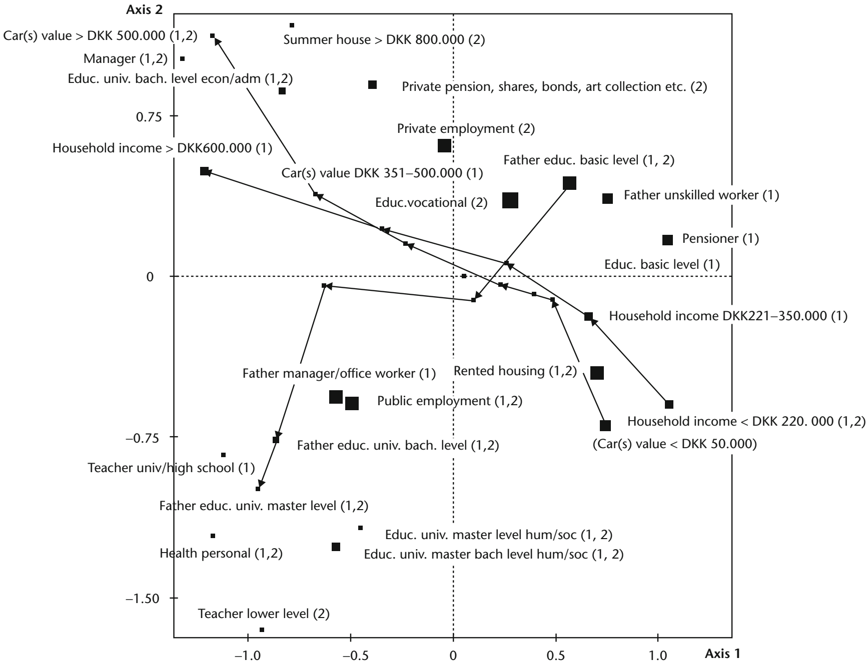


*Figure 11.11* The social space in Aalborg—plane 1–2

Note: Categories contributing the most to the first two extracted axes (Ctr-values >2%). Numbers in parentheses (1 or 2, or both) indicate to which axis they contribute most. The sizes of the markers are proportionate to the frequencies of the categories they represent.

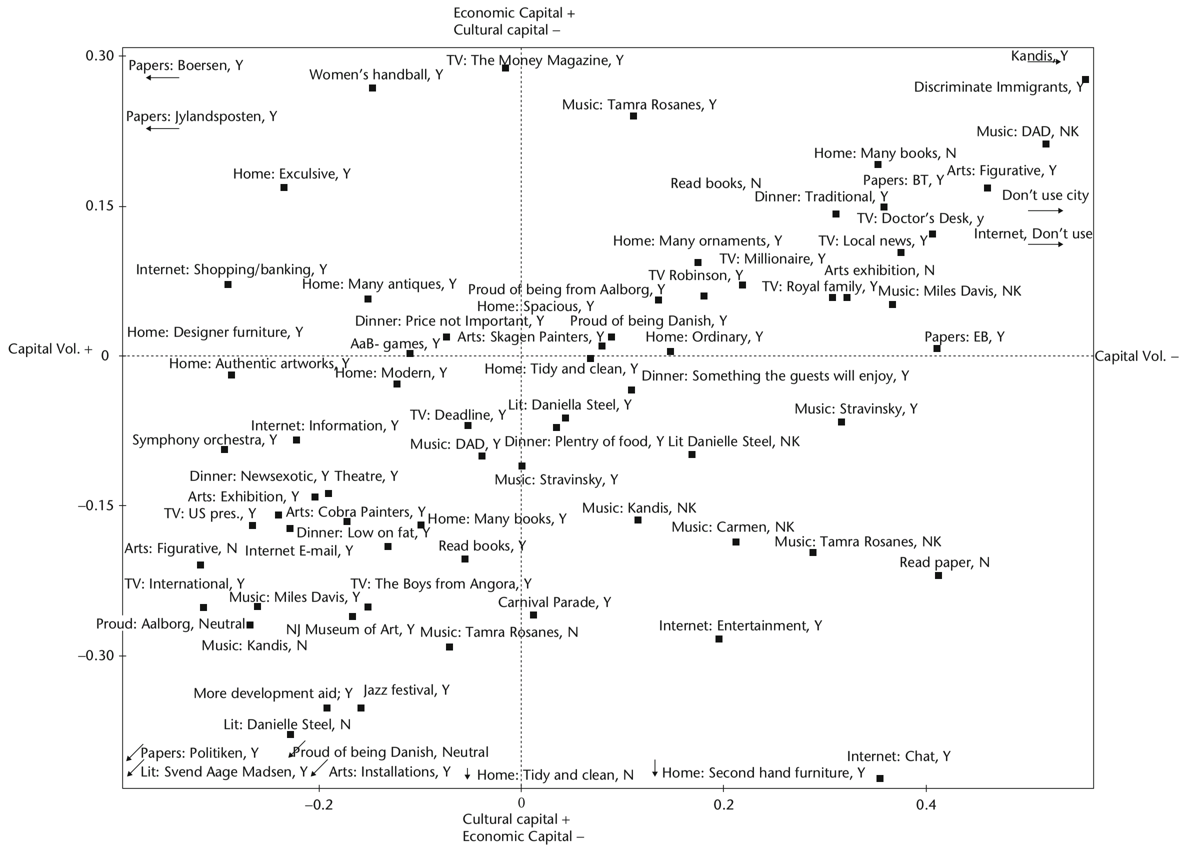


*Figure 11.12* The social space in Aalborg, the space of lifestyles—plane 1–2 (graph designed by Jakob Skjøtt-Larsen)

# 12

# Cultural distinctions in an 'egalitarian' society

*Johs. Hjellbrekke, Vegard Jarness and Olav Korsnes*

Since its publication, Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984 [1979]) has been considered *the* authoritative work in sociological studies of the relationship between class and lifestyle differentiation. As Frédéric Lebaron (2012) points out, this work is not only the quintessential expression of Bourdieu's oeuvre, but also his most cited, his most widely read and one of his most discussed and contested books. Whether for the purpose of praise or rejection, *Distinction* has been pivotal for scholars concerned with class, culture and lifestyles.

One of the most contested issues in contemporary debates concerns Bourdieu's proposed model—formulated in *Distinction* and elsewhere (e.g. Bourdieu, 1985, 1989, 1991a)—of the social distribution of lifestyle properties, especially those regarding cultural knowledge, participation and tastes. The crux of this model is that a system of class differences corresponds to a system of lifestyle differences, and that this 'homologous' relationship amounts to (1) symbolically significant boundaries between groups of people located in different classes and class fractions; (2) a classed distribution of an embodied form of 'cultural capital', a scarce resource which implies advantages and privileges in social life, for instance in and through the education system; and (3) largely misapprehended relations of domination between the upper and lower classes, for instance expressed in the latter's compliance with the order of things. Thus Bourdieu claims that class-structured lifestyle differences underpin both status group formation and institutionalised exclusion processes, i.e. what neo-Weberians call non-formalised and formalised social closure (e.g. Murphy, 1988; Manza, 1992; Jarness, 2013).

While (parts of) Bourdieu's argument has been reiterated in several studies of lifestyle differences in other empirical cases (e.g. Prieur *et al.*, 2008; Bennett *et al.*, 2009; Rosenlund, 2009; Coulangeon, 2011), it has also been criticised for being historically outdated and/or of little relevance outside France (e.g. Alexander, 1995; Peterson and Kern, 1996; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007a; Chan, 2010). In this chapter we engage in the debate about the applicability of a Bourdieusian framework in exploring lifestyle differences in a different context than that for which it was originally designed. Focusing empirically on the case of Norway, structural relations between different lifestyles are mapped by subjecting survey data on cultural participation to different forms of geometric data analysis (GDA) (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004).

The chapter proceeds as follows: first of all, the analysis is situated in debates about the significance of cultural distinctions in an 'egalitarian' context. Second, we discuss theoretical–methodological issues tied to assessments of the social distribution of cultural tastes. Third, we report the findings from our analysis of survey data on cultural participation by way of specific multiple correspondence analysis (MCA). Fourth, these results are expanded on by focusing on internal lifestyle differences amongst a subsample of teenage respondents. We do this by way of class-specific analysis (CSA) (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010), a newly developed statistical device for analysing subgroup internal differences. Finally, in the light of our findings, we address substantial and theoretical–methodological issues related to the debate about the applicability of Bourdieu's framework.

## Cultural distinctions, egalitarianism and historical change

In recent debates in Scandinavian sociology, scholars have discussed the relevance of Bourdieu's work for studying societies in which egalitarian and even anti-hierarchical sentiments are prevalent. Against this background, several critics have contended that the 'French' model advanced in *Distinction* does not apply to a Norwegian context (e.g. Danielsen, 1998; Skarpenes, 2007; Skarpenes and Sakslind, 2010). A recurrent objection is that egalitarian values deeply embedded in social democratic Norway modify the stratifying effects of lifestyle differentials compared with countries like France and its highly centralised state apparatus, remnants of an aristocratic past, its valorisation of pageantry and so forth. It is recurrently asserted that Norway is an exceptional case, in the sense that cultural practices and attitudes perceived as 'elitist' or 'snobbish' elicit suspiciousness and even outright contempt.

Results from surveys on perceptions of and attitudes towards social inequalities support the notion that there are clear differences between Norway and France. Whereas a majority of Norwegians perceive their society as one 'where most people are in the middle', French respondents generally perceive their country in far more hierarchical terms (see Table 12.1).

Extensive non-hierarchical societal perceptions do not, however, necessarily indicate a non-hierarchical society. Egalitarian values can be compatible with quite severe social hierarchies and an 'egalitarian ideology' can conceal, and even help to maintain, the hierarchical structures of society. According to Gullestad (1992), Norwegians have adopted an interactional style whereby sameness between the participants of an encounter is emphasised, while differences are tactfully concealed. This does not imply *actual* sameness, but rather a way of under-communicating differences. From this follows a crucial methodological point that perceptions of, and attitudes towards, social differences should be treated as analytically distinct from the social distribution of differences itself. In

*Table 12.1* Varieties in societal perceptions, ISSP2009 Social Inequality IV

| | *Norway* | *Sweden* | *Germany (West)* | *France* | *USA* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| An elite at the top, few in the middle, many at the bottom | 2.1 | 7.1 | 17.0 | 16.4 | 17.1 |
| A society that looks like a pyramid, with an elite at the top, more in the middle, and most at the bottom | 10.8 | 23.3 | 33.8 | 53.6 | 38.9 |
| A pyramid, but with few people at the bottom | 23.6 | 29.8 | 24.9 | 16.3 | 15.0 |
| A society where most people are in the middle | 56.4 | 37.9 | 20.1 | 12.1 | 26.0 |
| Many people near the top, only very few at the bottom | 7.1 | 1.9 | 4.1 | 1.6 | 2.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

other words, processes of social closure (Parkin, 1979; Murphy, 1988) originating in a differential distribution of lifestyles may be at work without social actors' acknowledgement of such processes taking place. Indeed, such misapprehension of closure processes is part and of parcel of Bourdieu's (1984, 1991b) notion of 'misrecognition'.

The mapping of lifestyle differences in Norway has been rather scarce, though there have been some attempts to empirically assess the relationship between class and cultural practices and tastes (e.g. Gripsrud and Hovden, 2000; Danielsen, 2006; Rosenlund, 2009; Gripsrud *et al.*, 2011; Mangset, 2012; Birkelund and Lemel, 2013; Jarness, 2013; Hjellbrekke *et al.*, 2014). While these contributions differ in methodological approach, they all point to at least some concurrences between class relations and lifestyle differences. There are, however, disagreements about how these findings are to be interpreted. While some scholars argue that the social distribution of lifestyle differences by and large fits the model outlined by Bourdieu, others point to important discrepancies from it.

In recent years, notions about the rise of the 'cultural omnivore' have intensified the debate about Bourdieu's work (for overviews, see Peterson, 2005; Warde *et al.*, 2007; Ollivier, 2008). According to Bourdieu's critics, the emergence and increasing pervasiveness of the cultural omnivore—a figure marked by a 'broad' cultural taste and/or a propensity to straddle 'old' hierarchical divides between 'brow' categories of cultural goods—renders his analytical framework less relevant for understanding contemporary lifestyle differentiation.

The notion of the cultural omnivore is, however, highly controversial. As several contenders have pointed out, there are a number of serious problems inherent in the omnivore thesis, regarding both the crudeness of measurement of cultural practices and tastes, and the ways in which the empirical findings have been pitted against Bourdieu's model of taste distribution (e.g. Holt, 1997; Atkinson, 2011; Prieur and Savage, 2011; Savage and Gayo, 2011; Savage, 2012; Rimmer, 2012; Jarness, 2013). Indeed, the tendency for upper- and middle-class people to exhibit 'broad' tastes, and/or to straddle symbolically significant boundaries in their cultural consumption, does not necessarily imply a breakdown or a radical reconfiguration of class-related cultural distinctions, as proponents of the omnivore thesis presume. This point is explicitly stressed by Bourdieu. As regards the deployment of the model in other empirical contexts, he warns against what he calls a 'substantialist' or 'naively realist' reading of his work:

> Some would […] consider the fact that, for example, tennis or even golf is not nowadays as exclusively associated with dominant positions as in the past, or that the noble sports, such as riding or fencing […], are no longer specific to nobility as they originally were, as a refutation of the proposed model. […] An initially aristocratic practice can be given up by aristocracy – and this occurs quite frequently – when it is adopted by a growing fraction of the bourgeoisie or the petit-bourgeoisie, or even the lower classes (this is what happened in France to boxing, which was enthusiastically practiced by aristocrats at the end of the nineteenth century). Conversely, an initially lower-class practice can sometimes be taken up by the nobles. In short, one has to avoid turning into necessary and intrinsic properties of some groups […] the properties which belong to this group at a given moment in time because of its position in a determinate social space and in a determinate state of the *supply* of possible goods and practices. Thus, at every moment of each society, one has to deal with a set of social positions which is bound by a relation of homology to a set of activities (the practice of golf or piano) or of goods (a second home or an old master painting) that are themselves characterised relationally.
>
> *(Bourdieu, 1998: 4–5)*

Bourdieu further insists on a 'relational' or 'structural' reading, which implies that a homologous relationship between the system of class differences and the system of lifestyle differences may be quite similar across different contexts, even though the particular goods and activities which constitute the distributional oppositions may vary considerably. The notion of homology does *not* imply that people of the upper classes exclusively appropriate a fixed set of 'highbrow' culture (e.g. classical music, ballet and opera), while shunning all things 'lowbrow' (e.g. country and western, blues and gospel music). What it *does* imply is that oppositions between more or less unitary sets of preferences and tastes correspond to oppositions between different class positions. One might, in other words, find homologies between the system of class relations and the system of lifestyle differences in contemporary societies, even though the particular goods and activities constituting the distributional oppositions differ considerably from Bourdieu's analyses of French society in the 1960s and 1970s.

Thus we do not accept the premises underlying the approach advocated by, for instance, Chan and Goldthorpe (2005, 2007b, 2007c, 2007d), in which the pervasiveness of 'highbrow' culture is made to look like a litmus test for deciding whether Bourdieu's claims still hold true. Instead, we follow Bourdieu's preferred methodology in mapping lifestyle differences by way of GDA, i.e. without unnecessary and unfortunate ahistorical pre-notions of what constitutes distinguishing practices that underpin social closure.

A second theoretical challenge tied to the mapping of taste differentials is the problem of age. A frequently encountered result in studies of cultural consumption and participation using GDA is that the main divisions are related to class and the capital volume principle of social differentiation, while secondary divisions are related to age (e.g. Bennett *et al.*, 2009; Faber *et al.*, 2012). In this regard we emphasise the pitfalls associated with applying a crude 'variable sociology' in the standard causal analysis tradition, in which interaction effects are typically treated as secondary (Blumer, 1956; Abbott, 2004: 37–38). In this tradition, variables like age and class are viewed as *competing* independent, explanatory variables in the analysis of cultural consumption and its pertinence to social inequality. At its extreme, such methodology can lead to the highly questionable view that, because of strong 'effects of age', class is somewhat less important in the structuring of lifestyle differences. Instead, following Mannheim's (1993) work on generations and generation units, we find it more fruitful to focus both on lifestyle differences *between* different age groups and on the differences *within* them. In this way, the analysis can reveal whether, and if so how, class differences might be expressed differently within different generations.

## A space of cultural practices

The data used in this analysis stem from The Culture and Media Survey 2012 on cultural participation and media preferences, distributed to a representative sample of all Norwegians in the age-span 9–79 years (Revold, 2013).[1] The sample of the following analysis is restricted to respondents aged 18–70 ($N$ = 1,366). Three interrelated research questions are addressed.

1. What is the dimensionality of the space of cultural practices and preferences, and how are these dimensions to be interpreted?
2. In what ways are the distributional oppositions in this space related to social inequality in general, and to class relations in particular?
3. Are the younger respondents' practices and preferences different from those of the older respondents? Can generation-specific oppositions be found amongst the young? In what ways are these related to the respondents' social background?

The survey does, however, have its limitations. First of all, a majority of the variables reflect state-subsidised cultural activities, i.e. *politically consecrated* cultural forms. Data on other fields of consumption (e.g. the universe of material goods) is not included in the survey. Thus it has to be borne in mind that the data used in this analysis are limited in scope. Second, most of the questions are about widely defined genres. More fine-grained distinctions existing *within* these genres might thus have been obscured due to the make-up of the questionnaire. This will necessarily result in measurement error for some of the variables. Third, as the survey covers only what types of cultural goods and activities the respondents do or do not prefer or participate in, data on their modes of consumption (i.e. *how* the goods are appreciated) is not directly accessible. Finally, the data set contains relatively poor indicators of the respondents' capital endowments. This limits the potential for exploring structural homologies, especially of those tied to what Bourdieu (1984) refers to as the capital composition principle of social differentiation. Despite its deficiencies, however, this is the most comprehensive data set on cultural practices available in Norway, and it does allow for the assessment of at least some aspects of lifestyle differentiation and its correspondences to class relations.

We have selected 39 active variables, organised in six blocks, for constructing a space of cultural and media practices and preferences. After recoding, there are 85 active categories (see Table 12.2).

A specific MCA (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010) of the active variables yields three axes for interpretation, summarising 81.1 per cent of the total variance in the cloud. As we can see from Table 12.3, axis 1 is clearly the most important dimension, summarising 50.9 per cent of the total variance. Axes 2 and 3 summarise 19.2 per cent and 11.0 per cent, respectively.

While axis 1 is the main opposition in the space, it cannot, however, be interpreted as a general opposition across the *whole* set of active variables. On the contrary, the results in Table 12.4 show that the contributions from the six blocks to the first three axes are unevenly distributed. Axis 1 receives the highest contribution from the variables on frequentation of cultural institutions, as well as the variables on library visits and reading books. Axis 2 receives the highest contributions from the variables on

*Table 12.2* Active variables in the analysis, organized in six main blocks

| | |
|---|---|
| TV preferences: $Q = 10$, $K = 23$<br>TV channels: NRK1, NRK2, TV2, TV Norge, TV3, Other TV<br>TV programs: TV sports, TV InfoSoc, TV film, TV series<br>All variables except 'Other TV' coded 'Yes'/'No'<br>Other TV: 'None', '1', '2' (p), '3' (p), '4+' (p) | Participation in/frequentation of various cultural activities last 12 months: $Q = 8$, $K = 24$ (4 p)<br>Theatre ('5+' = p), Concert, Art exhibition, Museum, Cinema, Sports events, Opera ('5+' = p), Festival ('5+' = p): '0', '1–4 times', '5+ times' |
| Radio preferences: $Q = 5$, $K = 10$<br>Nrk P1, Nrk P2, Nrk P3, P4, Radio Norway<br>All variables coded 'Yes'/'No' | Genres and types, Music and culture: $Q = 2$, $K = 7$ (2 p)<br>Types of music listened to: '0', '1', '2+'<br>Exhibition type 'None' (p), '1 type of art', '2 types', '3+ types' (p) |
| Library/literature: $Q = 4$, $K = 10$ (1 p)<br>Library visits last 12 months: '0', '1–4 times', '5+ times'<br>Library books last 12 months: 'None' (p), '1–4', '5+'<br>Read book last 7 days: 'Yes'/'No'<br>Read book yesterday: 'Yes'/'No' | Newspapers/media: $Q = 10$, $K = 20$<br>Newspapers read: National, Regional, Local, Niche, Local-large cities, Local-smaller municipalities: 'Yes'/'No'<br>Dagbladet Internet, Aftenposten Internet, VG Internet, Nettavisen: 'Yes'/'No' |

Note: 39 variables, 85 active and 9 passive categories (denoted p). $Q$ = variables/questions; $K$ = categories.

*Table 12.3* Variance of axes, modified and cumulated rates

| | *Eigenvalue* | *Percentage* | *Modified rates* | *Cumulated modified rates* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Axis 1 | 0.0903 | 7.42 | 50.9 | 50.9 |
| Axis 2 | 0.0648 | 5.33 | 19.2 | 70.1 |
| Axis 3 | 0.0549 | 4.51 | 11.0 | 81.1 |

*Table 12.4* Contributions from main groups of variables to axes 1–3

| | *Contribution to* total *inertia* | *Contribution to axis 1* | *Contribution to axis 2* | *Contribution to axis 3* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TV preferences, $Q = 10$ | 23.3 | 6.6 | 18.4 | 53.6 |
| Radio preferences, $Q = 5$ | 10.6 | 8.3 | 10.5 | 8.4 |
| Participation in cultural activities, $Q = 8$ | 27.7 | 43.3 | 21.9 | 13.0 |
| Library/literature, $Q = 4$ | 10.8 | 23.2 | 1.9 | 3.6 |
| Newspapers and magazines, online news services included, $Q = 10$ | 21.3 | 10.7 | 40.0 | 17.7 |
| Genres and types: music and culture, $Q = 2$ | 6.3 | 7.9 | 7.3 | 3.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

online news services, followed by TV preferences and frequentation of cultural institutions. Finally, axis 3 receives by far the highest contribution from the variables on TV preferences.

Figure 12.1 depicts categories with the highest contributions to axis 1. This axis is primarily a participation axis which separates the culturally engaged from the less engaged respondents. Categories indicating active participation in cultural activities, as well as frequent use of cultural institutions, are located to the right in the factorial plane. More specifically, we find frequent attendance at institutions such as museums, libraries, art exhibitions, theatres, opera and music concerts, as well as frequent reading of books and newspapers. Thus the positive pole of the axis indicates engagement with what is typically considered to be 'intellectual' spheres of cultural consumption and preferences for canonised, state-subsidised and institutionally recognised cultural forms.[2]

Categories indicating no use of cultural institutions and state-subsidised cultural forms, as well as categories indicating no interest in books and niche papers, are located to the left in the plane. Here we also find categories indicating preferences for commercial television channels with a self-proclaimed 'popular' entertainment appeal (TVN and TV3).[3] The negative pole of the axis thus indicates little or no engagement with the canonised cultural forms at the opposite pole of the axis, and a more pronounced interest in entertainment through audio-visual media. Thus axis 1 not

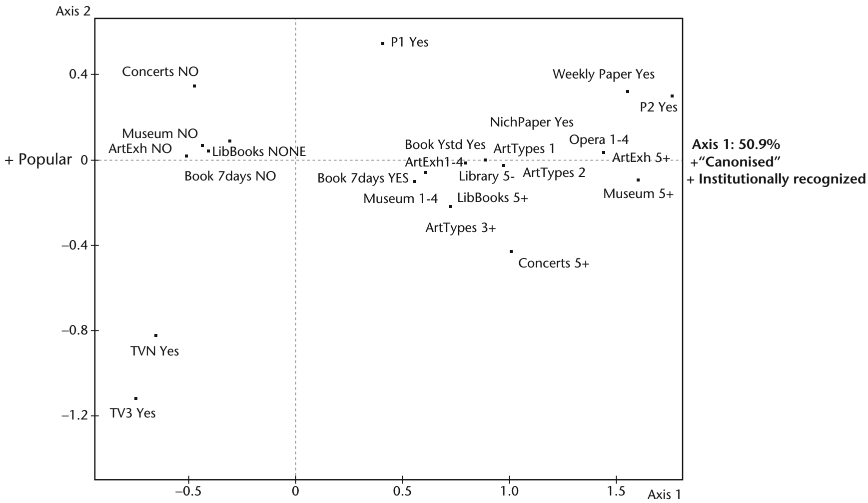


*Figure 12.1* Categories with contributions to axis 1 >1/*K*, factorial plane 1–2

only separates the engaged and the less engaged respondents: it also separates those who practise canonised and institutionally recognised activities and those we may call 'entertainment-seekers'. We here see contours of an opposition between what sociologists usually refer to as 'highbrow' and 'lowbrow' cultural forms, though we stress the importance of viewing these terms as contingent historical artefacts that should not be treated as static, reified analytical categories (see Savage and Gayo, 2011: 340; Savage, 2012: 565).

Figure 12.2 depicts categories with the highest contributions to axis 2. This is an axis that primarily separates the frequent users of a broad range of audio-visual media (the 'voracious' media users) from those who report a far narrower scope of media usage (the 'abstemious' media users). Categories indicating an active use of online news services, as well as a reported interest in commercial TV channels, TV series, films, sports and music are located at the bottom of the plane. The negative pole of axis 2 thus indicates a broad and active engagement in different forms of media, perhaps with a commercial and 'youthful' tint to it. At the top of the plane, by contrast, we find categories indicating no interest in online news services, cinema, music, concerts and festivals. Interestingly, we do find a reported interest in P1, a radio channel run by the state-controlled and commercial-free broadcasting company NRK, which until the early 1990s had a national broadcast monopoly in Norway. Thus the positive pole of axis 2 indicates a narrower scope of media usage, as well as an explicit non-interest in commercial media.

Figure 12.3 depicts categories with the highest contributions to axis 3. This axis primarily contrasts those who seek out cultural activities taking place outside the confines of the home, on one hand, and those who appear to spend considerably more time in front of the television screen, on the other. Categories indicating high frequentation of cinema, concerts and festivals, accompanied by a reported

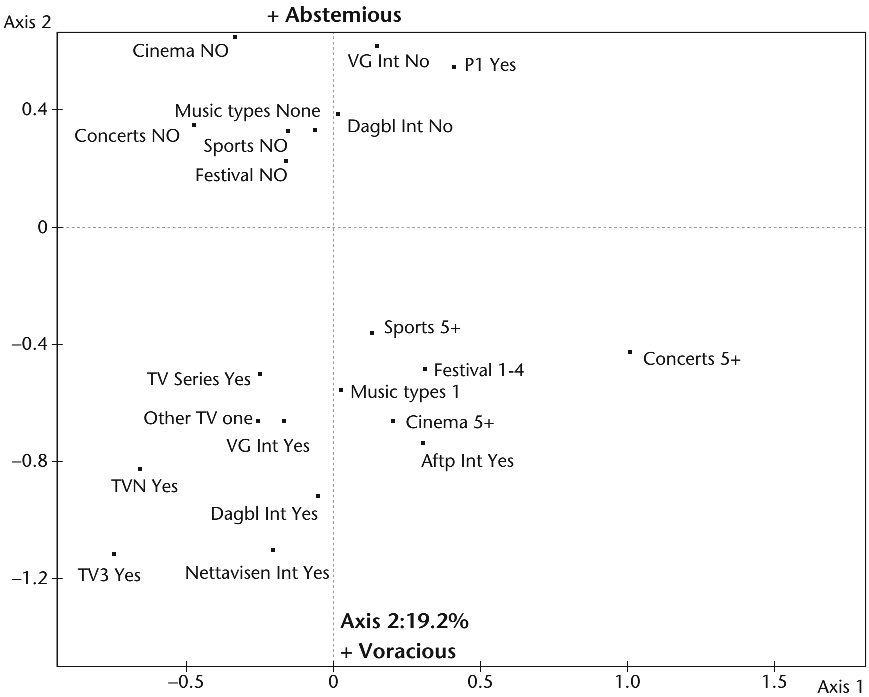


*Figure 12.2* Categories with contributions to axis 2 >1/*K*, factorial plane 1–2

non-interest in certain TV and radio channels, are located in the bottom of the plane. By contrast, categories indicating an interest in a broad range of TV channels (both commercial and state-controlled), as well as online news services, local newspapers and books, are located at the top of the plane. Axis 3 can, in other words, be depicted as an axis that distinguishes the 'homebodies' from the 'sociables', those who to a much greater extent tend to seek their cultural adventures outside the confines of the home.

To summarise, the most important distributional opposition revealed in this analysis is that between the highly engaged consumers of canonised and institutionally recognised cultural forms and those who report being far less interested in such matters, and instead seek out more commercial and 'popular' alternatives. Secondary oppositions concern the scope and intensity of media usage, as well as between the 'homebodies' and the 'sociables'. The results reported so far do not, in other words, indicate that Norway is an exceptional case as regards patterns of cultural practices and preferences, nor that egalitarianism significantly affects such patterns. On the contrary, both the strong contrast between the engaged and the less engaged, as well as the clear opposition between practitioners of institutionally recognised cultural forms and practitioners of more 'popular' cultural forms, are found in several countries not particularly renowned for egalitarianism, such as France and the UK (see e.g. Lemel and Coulangeon, 2007; Bennett *et al.*, 2009).

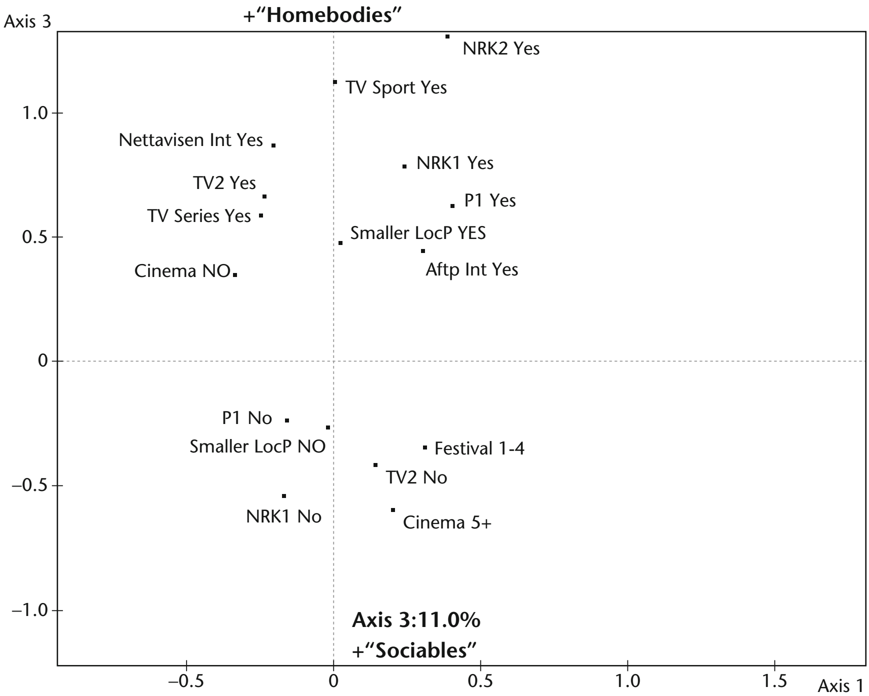


*Figure 12.3* Categories with contributions to axis 3 >1/*K*, factorial plane 1–3

## Structural homologies: structured data analysis

In what ways are the oppositions outlined above related to social inequality in general, and to class relations in particular? In the following analysis we deploy structured data analysis (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004, 2010) in assessing how possible explanatory factors are related to the distributional oppositions revealed in the previous analysis. We proceed by projecting variables on the respondents' class position, education, household income and age onto the constructed space as supplementary variables.

As previously noted, the data set contains suboptimal information for constructing proper indicators of different forms of capital, a crucial task in the assessment of Bourdieu's (1984) homology thesis. As a second-best solution, we deploy the newly developed Oslo Register Data Class Scheme (ORDC) (Hansen *et al.*, 2009), a Bourdieu-inspired class scheme that differentiates classes and class fractions both 'vertically' and 'horizontally'. By proxy, it thus renders possible an assessment of what Bourdieu (1984) refers to as the capital volume and capital composition principles of social differentiation.

As depicted in Figures 12.4 and 12.5, axis 1 is clearly structured according to the capital volume principle of social differentiation. Moving from the 'popular' pole towards the 'canonised' pole of the axis, the number of years of education and the household income of the respondents increase systematically. An opposition between

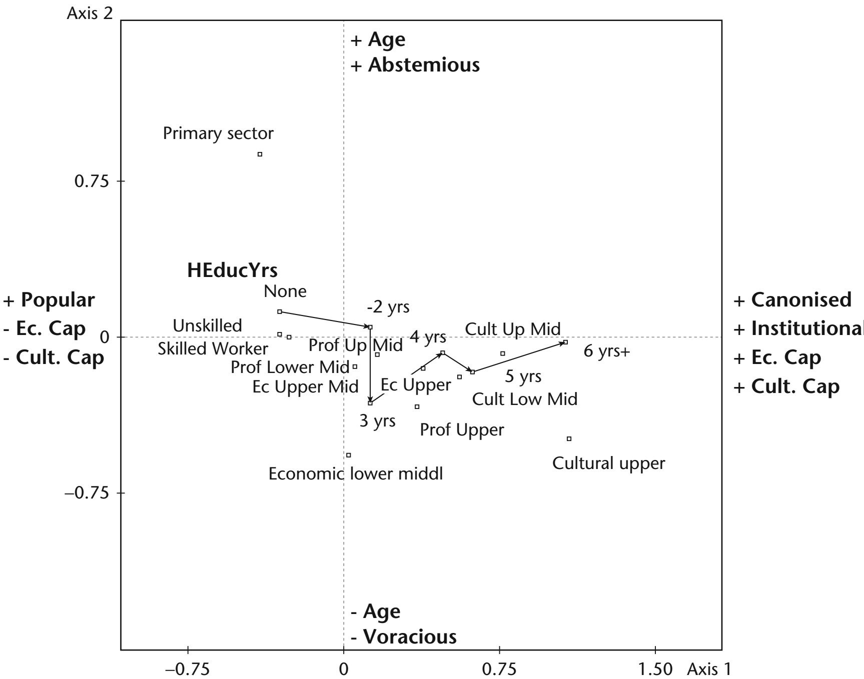


*Figure 12.4* Supplementary variables on education and class projected onto factorial plane 1–2

engagement with canonised and institutionally recognised cultural forms and engagement with more 'popular' cultural forms is, in other words, homologous to an opposition between high and low volumes of capital.

This interpretation is further strengthened by an inspection of the location of, and the relative distances between, the various class categories in Figure 12.4.[4] The lower-class categories are drawn towards the 'popular' pole of the axis, while the upper- and middle-class categories are systematically drawn to the 'canonised' pole. Interestingly, we also see contours of the capital composition principle of differentiation along this axis, indicating a horizontal internal division *within* the upper and middle classes. While most of the class fractions in these classes are located at the positive side of the axis, we can clearly see that the cultural fractions (those with a preponderance of cultural capital) are more drawn towards the canonised pole than both the economic fractions (those with a preponderance of economic capital) and the professional fractions (those with balanced capital profiles). So while axis 1 is structured primarily according to the capital volume principle of differentiation, we also see traces of the capital composition principle *within* the upper and middle classes. This indicates that respondents endowed with high volumes of capital, combined with a preponderance of cultural capital, are those who are most likely to have an orientation towards the canonised and institutionally recognised cultural forms.

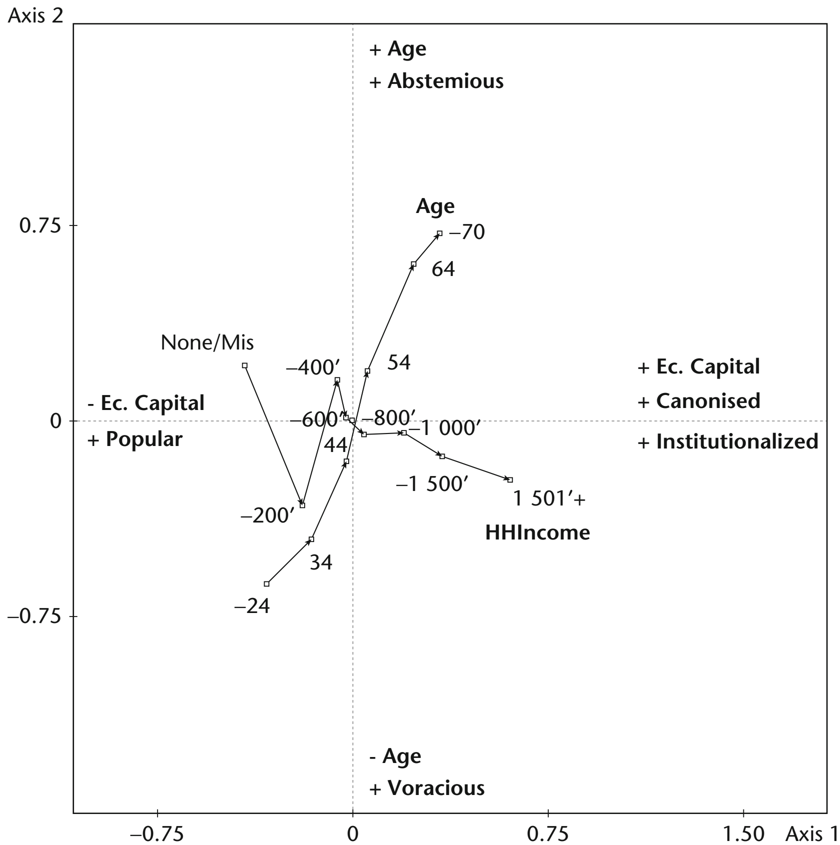


*Figure 12.5* Supplementary variables on age and household income projected onto factorial plane 1–2

Figure 12.5 also reveals a strong age opposition along axis 2, with a perfect ordering of the age groups along the axis. Given that this axis describes an opposition between different scopes and intensities of media usage, this is perhaps not a surprising result. The most voracious users of online news services and commercial TV and radio channels are typically young, while the more abstemious media users are typically older. A clear age opposition can also be found along axis 3 (not shown)—the axis that contrasts the 'homebodies' and the 'sociables'. Staying at home watching television or reading books are more likely among the older respondents than the young, while the opposite is true for activities like cinema, festivals and concerts.

## Acquiring adult tastes: a class-specific analysis of teenagers

As we have seen in the previous section, age is an important structuring factor along axes 2 and 3. There are, in other words, notable differences between the younger and older respondents in terms of their cultural practices and tastes, especially when it comes to audio-visual media and use of the internet. When such age-related differences are simply seen as an 'effect of age', as they tend to be when analysed within the framework of standard causal analysis (Abbott, 2004), they are not, from a stratification research point of view, particularly interesting.

It has to be borne in mind that all age groups' cultural practices and tastes are internally differentiated, and that lifestyle differences may manifest themselves in age group-internal oppositions, i.e. between what we, following Mannheim (1993), might call antagonistic generation units, as people of the same generation may both prefer different cultural goods and activities and relate differently to them. Taste oppositions between generation units in one generation may differ from those in another generation (e.g. in the case of music, between fans of The Beatles and fans of The Rolling Stones amongst the youngsters of the 1960s, and between fans of Oasis and fans of Blur amongst the youngsters of the 1990s). Such oppositions may also manifest themselves differently within different genres (e.g. opera and hip-hop). A recorded age-related distributional opposition at a given point in time might therefore obscure complex generation-internal oppositions. Insofar as such oppositions can be established, the interesting question from a stratification research point of view would be whether, and in what ways, these oppositions are structured along class lines.

It is this question that we will pursue in the following analysis, deploying the newly developed statistical tool CSA (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010) to investigate generation-specific differences. CSA allows for assessments of a given category or subgroup of individuals in a *separate* analysis, while at the same time retaining the individuals' coordinates in the global low-dimensional space constructed by way of MCA. In this case, we focus on the internal divisions amongst respondents aged 15–17 ($N$ = 135). We use respondents defined as *supplementary cases* in the original analysis in assessing (1) their differences from, and similarities with, respondents in the MCA (i.e. those aged 18–70); and (2) their internal differentiation. As the original space was constructed on the basis of the adult sample, the CSA thus renders possible a comparison of 'teenage' and 'adult' tastes.

Following Bourdieu's initial usage of the term, the education system constitutes the institutional basis for cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 1990). It also presupposes that class differences in child-rearing and parenting styles affect a differential distribution of cultural competences which, in turn, affect the educational performances of the offspring. While several studies have demonstrated that there are clear links between class and parenting styles on one hand (Devine, 2004; Lareau, 2011), and between class background and educational performance on the other (Andersen and Hansen, 2012), very few studies have actually focused on the cultural preferences and tastes of the young (for a notable exception, see Mercklé, 2010). Moreover, following Mannheim, formative events and processes are crucial to the potential formation of generations and/or generation units. Thus it is particularly interesting to focus on differences amongst those who are still in their formative school years.

The first results of the CSA are summarised in Table 12.5. We find stronger, if not necessarily more clear-cut, oppositions amongst the teenagers than in the adult

*Table 12.5* Original eigenvalues and eigenvalues from the CSA

| | *Original eigenvalues* | *Class-specific eigenvalues* | *Cosines, angles between old axes and new axis 1* | *Cosines, angles between old axes and new axis 2* | *Cosines, angles between old axes and new axis 3* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Axis 1 | 0.0903 | 0.0904 | –0.2784 | –0.6967 | 0.1762 |
| Axis 2 | 0.0649 | 0.0846 | 0.4084 | 0.0104 | –0.1944 |
| Axis 3 | 0.0549 | 0.0755 | –0.0945 | 0.2106 | –0.0812 |

sample: the eigenvalues in the CSA are higher, indicating that stronger polarities are at work amongst the teenagers. Moreover, the cosine values for the angles between the old and new axes show that axis 1 in the CSA and axis 1 in the original space are not identical.[5] The internal division amongst the teenagers is, in other words, distinct for this age group. However, axis 2 in the CSA shows a higher degree of similarity to axis 1 in the original space.[6] So, even though the teenagers do have some differences that are distinct for this age group, their differences nevertheless resemble differences that can be found amongst the adults. This is confirmed when the contributions to the axes are examined. Categories with the highest contributions to axes 1 and 2 are shown in Figure 12.6.

While axis 1 mainly depicts an opposition between the engaged and the less engaged respondents, as was the case with axis 1 in the MCA, the categories with the highest contributions nevertheless stem from different variables than in the original analysis. Axis 1 in the CSA does not depict a clear opposition between 'popular' and

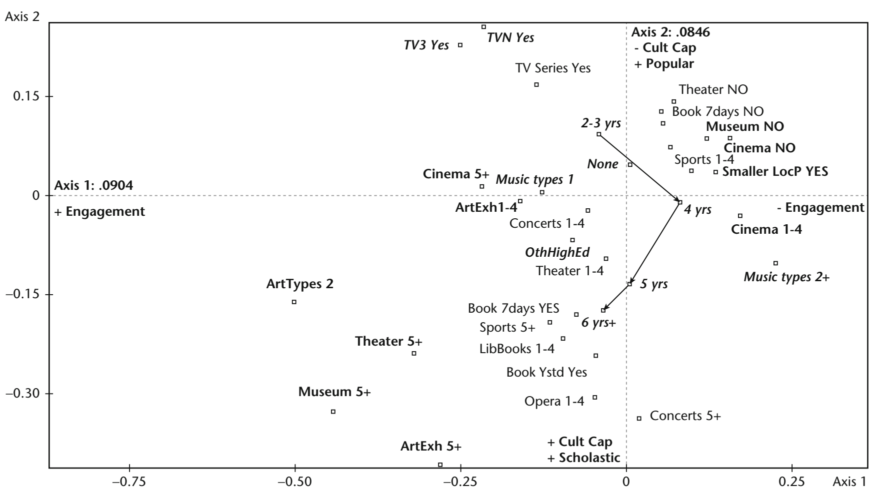


*Figure 12.6* Results from class-specific analysis
Note: Contributions >2% to axes 1 and 2, Higher education, Main breadwinner in household as supplementary variables. Contributions >2% to axis 1 in bold, to axis 2 in regular font, to both axes in bold italics; Higher education categories joined by trajectory. Presented in the cloud of individuals.

canonised/institutionally recognised cultural forms, though there are some traces of it between those who report frequent visits to art exhibitions and museums and those who do not. The opposition along axis 1 seems to be an internal, generation-specific opposition related to music and film in particular. It also resembles the opposition along axis 2 amongst the adults (i.e. the opposition between 'the voracious' and more 'abstemious' media users), though the voracious teenagers span both 'popular' media (commercial TV channels) and some selected canonised cultural forms (art and museum), while 'the abstemious' teenagers have a special interest in music and cinema.

A variant of the main opposition in the original MCA is, however, much clearer along axis 2 in the CSA, as it separates teenagers highly engaged in literature, theatre, opera, museums and art exhibitions, on one hand, and teenagers who watch TV series on commercial TV channels, on the other. Axis 2 thus separates what we may call the scholastically oriented from those who are more oriented towards the popular domains of cultural goods and activities. When the variables on the parents' education are projected onto the plane, it is clear that this opposition is homologous to an opposition between different social backgrounds. Moving from the 'scholastic' towards the 'popular' pole of the axis, the educational level of respondents' parents (measured by number of years) increases almost systematically, with a distance between '2–3 yrs' and '6+ yrs' of 0.9 standard deviations.[7] The CSA of the teenagers does, in other words, indicate that there are important links between backgrounds from 'educated' homes and the acquisition of certain 'adult' preferences and tastes, especially those tied to the 'scholastic' or 'intellectual' domains of cultural goods and activities. So, while the main opposition along axis 1 indicates generation-specific differences, axis 2 nevertheless indicates an intergenerational transmittance of cultural orientations. Our findings thus point to both stability and change in lifestyle differentiation.

The finding of intergenerational transmittance is understandable in the light of studies of class differences in parenting styles. As demonstrated by Devine (2004), middle-class parents in both the UK and the USA use cultural resources to instil favourable attitudes, competences and manners in their children. Similarly, Lareau (2011) shows how American middle-class parents engage in 'concerted cultivation', i.e. extensive verbal engagement and devoted involvement in their offspring's organised activities. Such cultivation, Lareau argues, produces a 'robust sense of entitlement' in middle-class children, in sharp contrast to the 'sense of constraint' typical amongst their working class counterparts. As such orientations are consistent with success criteria in the education system, they result in a transmittance of institutionally secured advantages. Norwegian studies of parenting styles largely support Devine's and Lareau's conclusions (Stefansen and Farstad, 2010; Stefansen and Aarseth, 2011). Moreover, in a recent analysis of register data on Norwegian pupils' school grades, Andersen and Hansen (2012) show how class backgrounds systematically affect educational performances. Not only are there clear differences between upper- and lower-class backgrounds, but also between different class fractions *within* the upper and middle classes. Backgrounds from the cultural fractions (those with a preponderance of cultural capital) seem to be the most favourable in terms of educational success, a pattern that becomes even clearer when analysing grades from oral exams compared with written exams. Linguistic competences acquired in 'cultured' and 'educated' homes thus seem particularly favourable.

The findings pointing towards generational differences, on the other hand, are understandable in the light of historical development in the supply-side of cultural consumption: as the number of possible aesthetic choices has expanded tremendously in recent times—particularly in and through rapid technological development—such changes might have affected younger generations more fundamentally than older generations, who had their early formative experiences in different structural contexts. We should, however, be very cautious when taking intergenerational differences as an indication of a marked historical shift for the basis of cultural distinctions. Following Bourdieu's (1984) notion of a 'paper-chase game' of cultural distinctions—a game in which the rules of the game themselves are at stake—one can expect that the influx of young 'heretics' is steady, potentially challenging the aesthetical canon of the day. Refusals of cultural styles regarded as 'clichéd' or 'outdated', and a corresponding embracement of the 'not-yet-consecrated' is, according to Bourdieu, crucial to strategies of the cultural '*avant-garde*'. Indeed, in the game of cultural distinctions, it is a quintessential feature of a successful heterodox position-taking to challenge the orthodoxy with new aesthetics (or, in this age of 'retromania'—Reynolds, 2011—to recuperate old and forgotten styles). So, while the cultural goods that constitute the distributional oppositions within different generations may very well be different, each generation's cultural *avant-garde* may nevertheless be marked by a 'heretic' or heterodox *modus operandi* that is remarkably steadfast across contexts.

To suggest that a classed structuring of lifestyle differences prevails in contemporary societies is not, however, the same as suggesting that lifestyle differences are historically static. At any rate, following Prieur and Savage's (2011, 2013) line of reasoning, changes in the form and content of lifestyle differentiation should by no means be taken as a cue for rejecting Bourdieu's analytical framework. A proper comparative-historical analysis is, however, required to assess questions regarding stability and change in lifestyle differentiation.

## Concluding remarks

The results of our analysis address key issues in the debate about the applicability of a Bourdieusian framework in exploring lifestyle differentiation. First of all, they do *not* support the claim that a Bourdieusian framework is inapplicable outside France due to its incapacity to identify nation-specific cultural orientations; nor do they support the claim that the empirical model proposed by Bourdieu is historically outdated. The relationships between class relations and patterns of cultural practices and preferences in contemporary 'egalitarian' Norway do not seem radically different from 'elitist' France of the 1960s and 1970s, as some scholars contend. While Norwegians may very well be more egalitarian in their societal perceptions compared with other Europeans, the patterns of their cultural consumption nevertheless indicate a class-structured differentiation which is quite similar to other countries.

Our contention is that the crucial question regarding the assessment of the Bourdieusian homology thesis should be whether there are affinities in the ways in which lifestyle differences are structured across time and space, and not whether the content of these differences is exactly the same. What types of cultural goods are considered 'high' or 'low' by cultural consumers may vary considerably in different contexts, and *a priori* depicting certain goods as intrinsically belonging to fixed and ranked categories of taste can lead to highly questionable claims about the social distribution of cultural practices. Though it would be interesting to compare the social trajectories of certain cultural goods in different social contexts (e.g. the fate of Johann Sebastian Bach's *The Well-Tempered Clavier* or Johann Strauss II's *Blue Danube*, to use two examples from *Distinction*), it would imply a highly reductive view if the litmus test for assessing the homology thesis was whether cultural goods once predominantly appropriated in certain class fractions, in a certain country, at a certain point in time, still function as markers of social distinction. This crucial methodological point was repeatedly underscored by Bourdieu, and, following his line of reasoning, we see no reason why contemporary explorations of lifestyle differentiation should favour a 'substantialist' approach over a 'relational' approach, as several proponents of the omnivore thesis continue to do.

Nevertheless, our analysis reveals that the respondents with the highest capital volumes are the most likely to report engagement in canonised and institutionally recognised activities, indicating that the connection between upper-class positions and what sociologists usually refer to as 'highbrow culture' is far from eradicated. Even amongst the teenagers, such patterns are detectable, suggesting prevailing processes of class reproduction in the cultural sphere.

## Notes

1 $N$ = 1999. The response rate was 59%.
2 See Jarness (2013) for an analysis of the classed ways in which people classify and evaluate various cultural goods and activities.
3 TV3, for instance, provides 'entertainment for everybody' (www.tv3.no/om-tv3/om-tv3).
4 Unfortunately, the space available to us in this chapter does not permit a detailed examination of the cloud of individuals.
5 The closer the cosines are to +/–1, the closer are the axes in the new subspace to the axes in the original space. If the cosine is close to 0, the axes are orthogonally angled.
6 Axis 2 in the CSA thus stands at an angle of 45.8 degrees to the old axis 1.
7 The distance between 'None', a much wider category summarising 75% of the total sample, and '6 yrs+' is 0.75 SD.

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# 13

# Bourdieu's space revisited

## The social structuring of lifestyles in Flanders (Belgium)

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### Introduction

We are currently witnessing a renewed interest in Bourdieu's empirical conception of the social space. After decades of relative obscurity, multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) has been put forward again as an appropriate method for assessing and visualizing the structuring dimensions of cultural tastes and their proximity to social background indicators (Coulangeon and Lemel, 2007; Blasius and Friedrichs, 2008; Prieur *et al.*, 2008; Bennett *et al.*, 2009; Blasius and Mühlichen, 2010; Roose and Vandenhaute, 2010). For Bourdieu, central concepts such as homology, field, or habitus imply that behaviour is always understood as informed by a person's position and historical trajectory in social space. Such positions derive their meaning from their relative location *vis-à-vis* others. Bourdieu strongly advocated correspondence analysis as a procedure that 'thinks in relations, as I try to do with the concept of field' (Rouanet *et al.*, 2000: 8).

One way of thinking of culture in terms of relations is by using an MCA framework, as in our current analysis: we map the space of lifestyles in Flanders (Belgium) and, subsequently, plot socio-economic characteristics in the derived lifestyle space. By using MCA, results transcend the individual level. It is exactly by positioning individuals *vis-à-vis* one another that the structuring principles emerge, making up the social space. A thorough mapping of these dimensions requires detailed information on respondents' lifestyles. The possibility to deal with a large number of variables is therefore another feature that makes MCA very suitable for mapping this dimensionality. In addition, there are no specific requirements as to measurement levels.

This research is inspired by the idea that a relational approach to lifestyles is likely to provide additional insights into the social embeddedness of cultural life—insights that complement results provided by traditional correlational techniques. The reasons for this approach—addressed in more detail below—pertain to the notion that cultural tastes and activities may increasingly have multiple meanings or uses (Swidler, 1986; Abbott, 1988; Holt, 1997; Lahire, 2008) and that different structuring principles seem to be at play simultaneously in lifestyle formation, as indicated by more recent empirical findings (Holbrook *et al.*, 2002; Chan, 2010).

## The Bourdieusian social space of lifestyles

The impact of Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984) on cultural theory can hardly be overestimated. Yet, in terms of empirical analyses, his approach has been less adhered to. Some have criticized Bourdieu's data and analyses for being flawed in a number of respects (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007; Prieur *et al.*, 2008). More importantly, however, his conception of social reality as a system of relations and differences instead of a set of absolute attributes has not been understood or translated adequately in most Bourdieu-inspired studies outside France. Bourdieu's thinking on the processes by which habitus is related to social structure is indeed rather complex. By focusing on the dialectical relationship between the 'objectivist' and the 'subjectivist' moment in the structuring of social space, Bourdieu (1989) intended to overcome the opposition between these 'paired concepts'. Tastes, values or thought constructs are simultaneously structured by objective positions *and* used to legitimate or re-structure these positions. There is a sort of mutual emergence or structuration going on that, according to Bourdieu, does not lend itself very well to a methodological approach that makes a sharp distinction between, for example, class and lifestyle in terms of independent and dependent variables, as is common in the mainstream sociology of stratification and cultural consumption. Bourdieu's relational approach in fact makes him very wary of using class categories, which are always constructed by the scholars studying them. Classes of people belonging to similar statistical or definitional categories are no real groups. Classifications should not be conceived as mere operational partitions representing objective discontinuities (Bourdieu, 1989: 15; Weininger, 2005). More generally, classification processes are crucial throughout Bourdieu's work because of their huge, yet largely non-explicit, impact on perception and evaluation. MCA as used by Bourdieu avoids this dilemma by not starting out from pre-defined class categories and by displaying relative rather than absolute positions in the multidimensional cultural space that is constructed. Hence, from both a theoretical and an analytical point of view, Bourdieu argues that social reality is about relations, not substances.

One of the difficulties in communicating this conception to the outside world, he argues, is that the graphs showing, for example, 'the different fractions of the dominant class will be read as a description of the various lifestyles of these fractions, instead of an analysis of locations in the space of positions of power' (Bourdieu, 1989: 16). When considered in this manner, Bourdieu believes that the visible hides the invisible which determines it (Bourdieu, 1989: 1). Indeed, the bulk of lifestyle studies inspired by Bourdieu take the more substantialist approach, where demarcated social categories are linked to specific dependent variables representing elements of cultural taste or cultural activity.

This relational conception calls for a mapping of social space without resorting to objectified categories of socio-economic indicators. Bourdieu maps the space of lifestyles independently of any objectified social structure. Social positions or occupations are added to the picture only at a later stage without affecting the structuring of the cultural indicators (Rouanet *et al.*, 2000). The homology between the space of culture and the social space is thus no artefact of the analysis; both are constructed empirically as if they were autonomous. The concept of homology is highly contested, as many believe the match between the social and the cultural space to be less tight than Bourdieu argues (Pakulski and Waters, 1996; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Empirical studies, however, demonstrate that cultural life is still very much socially stratified (DiMaggio and Mukhtar, 2004; Van Eijck and Bargeman, 2004; Chan, 2010). Although people may nowadays experience a growing sense of individual freedom, old and newer socialization processes still structure people's lives to a large extent (Elchardus, 2009).

## Changing lifestyles

For Bourdieu, the central axes making up the social space of France in the 1960s were capital volume (economic plus cultural capital), capital composition (economic versus cultural capital), and the change in these two properties over time (social trajectory). While overall capital volume is the primary axis, this must not conceal the significance of capital composition. Within the classes defined by total capital volume on a vertical axis, class fractions can be discerned based on the relative weight of the cultural and economic capital that add up to this total capital volume. Thus Bourdieu observed a distinction between those whose reproduction depends on economic capital versus those whose reproduction depends mainly on cultural capital. From comparisons of intergenerational mobility rates between class fractions, Bourdieu concluded that those rich in economic capital are dominant over those who owe their position to cultural capital. He argued that the larger degree of 'closure' in the economic class fractions is largely due to 'the capacity of these fractions [...] to transmit their powers and privileges without mediation or control' (Bourdieu, 1984: 120)—a privilege that makes this group rather autarchic. Unlike the cultural elite, or the non-owners, they do not rely on the education system for their reproduction. But this has changed, as Bourdieu notes, in that the class fractions richest in economic capital increasingly come to rely on the education system to ensure social reproduction. Academic qualifications have become indispensable in what he called interclass competition, generating 'a general and continuous growth in the demand for education and an inflation of academic qualifications' (*ibid.*: 133). Thus the social order to be observed at a certain point in time is always also a temporal order. So much so, according to Bourdieu (*ibid.*: 163), that the 'competing groups are separated by differences which are essentially located in the order of time'.

Conceiving of the dynamics of lifestyle formation as a rat race for economic and, most notably, cultural capital may suggest that social change has a predictable direction. However, Bourdieu also noted that age differences, related to his third axis of seniority in a certain class fraction, mark generational shifts in the relation to the educational system. Social mobility—one of the consequences of the increasing reliance of social reproduction on the educational system—implies an interrupted trajectory and the concomitant effort to extend or re-establish one's relation to culture and the social world (*ibid*.: 357). Thus the new (*petite*) *bourgeoisie* form a new ethical *avant-garde* opposing the old morality of duty and the idea that pleasure, or anything that is immediately charming or attractive, is bad. This new generation sees self-expression and having fun as its core 'duties'. The fact that they often work in emerging service-sector jobs implies they are 'making their profession rather than entering ready-made professions' (*ibid*.: 370). Their lifestyles can be seen as 'a refusal to be pinned down in a particular site in social space', or as an odd set of activities that Bourdieu read as 'an inventory of thinly disguised expressions of a sort of dream of social flying, a desperate effort to defy the gravity of the social field' (*ibid*.: 370).

The idea—or, indeed, dream—that lifestyles defy the gravity of the social field is an increasingly common conception among scholars. The ethical *avant-garde* of which Bourdieu speaks strongly resemble Peterson's (1992) cultural omnivores. In addition, the strong sense of agency in shaping one's personal lifestyle without perceiving much antagonism between 'the good' and 'the pleasant' can be found in Schulze's (1995) *Selbstverwirklichungsmilieu* ('self-fulfilment milieu', see Van Eijck and Lievens, 2008). With the advent of the cultural omnivore, popular culture can no longer be considered to belong exclusively to the lower social strata. Omnivores are the more avid consumers of both highbrow and popular culture, which means that (cultural) capital volume is no longer negatively related to engagement in popular culture. In fact, Peterson proposed to reconceptualize the space of culture, where the main dimension does not range from highbrow to lowbrow/popular, but from a broad, omnivorous taste to a narrow, univorous taste. Translating this to a depiction of social space, we would expect to find a dimension that can be interpreted as opposing a high participation level in many diverse activities against a low participation level in few.

If an omnivore–univore dimension emerges in our MCA, this finding would be in line with much of current lifestyle research. It would also agree well with the suggestion by Hughes and Peterson (1983) that the clusters of leisure patterns they found were probably structured by an underlying dimension ranging from active on the one hand to passive or alienated on the other. In fact, Bennett *et al.* (2009) find the opposition between engagement and disengagement to define the first axis in their comprehensive MCA on British lifestyles. This axis accounts for about half of the variance. Both economic and cultural capital are likely to be responsible for positions on this axis and both have been found to encourage activity *per se* rather than engagement in certain cultural segments. Income is not a strong predictor of taste differences, but it does affect actual behaviour outside one's own home (see also Van Berkel and De Graaf, 1995; Bihagen and Katz-Gerro, 2000; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007; Kraaykamp *et al.*, 2007). Similarly, education has been found to encourage cultural behaviour in a broad sense (Peterson and Kern, 1996; Van Eijck and Bargeman, 2004; Van der Stichele and Laermans, 2006; Roose and Van der Stichele, 2010). This omnivore–univore dimension then reflects the strong relation between overall capital volume and frequency of cultural participation in both highbrow and lowbrow activities. This suggests that Bourdieu's capital volume is still a key structuring principle, but that a broad, inclusive taste offers more symbolic capital than a legitimate or highbrow taste.

This does not, however, make the distinction between highbrow and lowbrow irrelevant. The second axis Bennett *et al.* (2009) discern is more related to taste, contrasting established or legitimate cultural forms with activities and preferences that are more commercial or contemporary. It is more closely related to cultural capital, or generation-based differentiation in manifestations of cultural capital, as it turns out that it is primarily associated with age and not with education or class. It differentiates traditional highbrow taste from popular culture appreciation, and of course this is a very familiar distinction (e.g. Gans, 1974; Schulze, 1995; Bellavance, 2008). It is an element of lifestyle differentiation that is also central in *Distinction*, where it is thought to relate to both cultural capital and seniority in the *bourgeoisie* (the 'temporal' order mentioned earlier). In line with these notions, age has repeatedly been found to have a large impact on lifestyles (Schulze, 1995; Van Eijck and Knulst, 2005; Scherger, 2009). For Schulze, it is the dimension that, together with education, structures the space in which he positions his five *milieu* groups. Older age is related to a preference for highbrow art (contemplation) or cosiness (folk), while younger generations prefer action (pop). Thus, if age is becoming more relevant in lifestyle formation, we might find an axis ranging from contemplation to action, or from expressive participation in popular culture to a more homebound, placid lifestyle.

Gender emerges from the research literature as another highly relevant lifestyle determinant (Bihagen and Katz-Gerro, 2000; Kane, 2004; Lizardo, 2006). Bennett *et al.* (2009) find that the third axis in their MCA is most closely related to gender. It largely reflects differentiation in tastes (rather than in participation), distinguishing between what the authors refer to as inward and outward dispositions. Indicators of the former (e.g. liking soap operas, romantic fiction, television dramas) are more prevalent among women, whereas indicators of the latter (nature and history documentaries, sports, war films, news on TV) are much more enjoyed by men.

Both the capital volume dimension and the one distinguishing between traditional and contemporary tastes are related to a boundary deemed crucial by Prieur *et al.* (2008). They argue that today's elites, or members of the upper-middle class, draw a boundary between themselves and others in terms of mobile, open-minded, creative and reflexive versus stuck, narrow-minded, traditional and non-reflexive. At least, these are the terms favoured by the upper-middle class, as the counter party would probably prefer to describe itself in terms of 'loyalty, stability, authenticity, having roots, choosing family over career' (*ibid.*: 68). This terminology must also be kept in mind when interpreting our results. It is, in fact, describing the openness that is characteristic of today's upper-middle class lifestyles (see also Peterson, 1997; Florida, 2002; Ollivier, 2008). It is related to trying new things and enjoying diversity, which is thought to be characteristic of cultural omnivores, Bourdieu's *petite bourgeoisie*, and Schulze's self-fulfilment *milieu*. As these social segments are argued to be on the rise, their way of life may become more relevant, and so does positioning oneself *vis-à-vis* this style. This might result in a greater prominence of the dimension described by Prieur *et al.* in the structuring of the social space of lifestyles.

## Data and method

We use data from the survey 'Cultural participation in Flanders 2003–2004', a large-scale survey conducted among a representative sample of the Flemish population. Flanders is the densely populated and highly urbanized Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. The survey is based on a stratified cluster sample with municipalities as primary ($n$ = 189) and individuals as secondary sampling units. It contains questions on participation in, experience with, and attitudes towards a broad range of cultural practices and leisure activities (Lievens *et al.*, 2006). In this way, the survey is similar to the 'Survey of Public Participation in the Arts' in the United States (Bradshaw, 1998), or to 'Taking part' in England (Oskala and Bunting, 2009). Data are collected by means of computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI), resulting in a sample size of $n$ = 2,849 with a response rate of 61.0%.

The method we apply is multiple correspondence analysis. MCA is a geometric modelling technique that discloses underlying structures in categorized data by representing both modalities of questions as well as individuals as points in a multi-dimensional Euclidean space—it is very similar to principal component analysis for nominal data. MCA is primarily associated with the work of the French mathematician Jean-Paul Benzécri (1992) and has been further popularized in the social sciences by various statisticians (Blasius and Greenacre, 1998; Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004, 2010; Greenacre, 2007).

We include 64 variables in the analysis amounting to 173 active modalities (or categories of the variables). The variables can be subdivided into two broad categories. The first category of variables represents participation in a number of cultural activities ranging from lowbrow to highbrow and situated both in the public and private sphere, such as watching television, reading poetry, going to the movies, going to a pub or restaurant, travelling, doing sports and attending concerts. The reference period covers six months preceding the interview, except for television watching (one month). Variables are dichotomized, except for television watching which includes three categories. The second set of variables aims to get at dispositional aspects of cultural behaviour either through the inclusion of genres for listening to music and channels for watching television, or through a focus on how people do things, which criteria they find (un)important for a certain type of activity—rather than what they actually do. For example, when discussing movies, people are asked whether an original style or special effects are important to them, or whether they like violent scenes. For travelling, people can indicate whether they travel to learn about other cultures, whether they seek adventure, whether they are interested in sun and beach, etc. Each variable has three categories: 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree'; or 'like', 'neutral', 'dislike'. Tables 13.1 and 13.2 show the relative frequencies for the different categories of variables.

## Results

In order to reveal meaningful patterns in the data and to relate cultural practices to both social positions and socio-demographic variables, we use specific MCA, which allows for dealing with missing data (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010: 203–213). We

*Table 13.1* Relative frequencies for participation variables ($n$ = 2,849)

| | *Yes* | *No* | | *Often* | *Once in a while* | *Never* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Going to the movies | 0.472 | 0.528 | Listening to pop/rock | 0.539 | 0.174 | 0.286 |
| Watching movies at home | 0.819 | 0.181 | Listening to dance | 0.342 | 0.272 | 0.384 |
| Reading | 0.535 | 0.465 | Listening to folk/ traditional music | 0.104 | 0.360 | 0.535 |
| Reading: prose/poetry | 0.373 | 0.627 | Listening to *chanson* | 0.124 | 0.411 | 0.463 |
| Reading: comics | 0.291 | 0.709 | Listening to jazz/ blues/soul/funk | 0.120 | 0.352 | 0.526 |
| Attending concerts | 0.141 | 0.859 | Listening to classical music | 0.118 | 0.331 | 0.550 |
| Visiting museum fine arts | 0.154 | 0.846 | Listening to opera | 0.032 | 0.148 | 0.818 |
| Visiting museum contemporary arts | 0.130 | 0.870 | | | | |
| Shopping | 0.833 | 0.167 | | 0–1 h | 2–3 h | 4+ h |
| Going to a pub | 0.775 | 0.225 | Frequency watching television | 0.181 | 0.483 | 0.330 |
| Going to a restaurant | 0.854 | 0.146 | | | | |
| Doing sport | 0.604 | 0.396 | | | | |
| Travelling | 0.740 | 0.260 | | | | |
| Watching TV: TV1 | 0.485 | 0.515 | | | | |
| Watching TV: Canvas | 0.148 | 0.852 | | | | |
| Watching TV: commercial station (VTM) | 0.316 | 0.684 | | | | |
| Watching TV: KA2 | 0.099 | 0.901 | | | | |
| Watching TV: VT4 | 0.111 | 0.889 | | | | |
| Watching TV: music channel | 0.062 | 0.938 | | | | |

construct a Euclidean space based on the two groups of variables: both the participation and dispositional variables contribute to the construction of the cultural space and its dimensionality. The indicators of social positions, age, and gender are included as so-called supplementary variables: they are plotted into the space without contributing to its structure, but add contextual meaning and facilitate interpretation. They enable an exploration of our expectations.

Table 13.3 presents eigenvalues, raw and modified inertia rates for the first five axes. The modified rates are better indicators of the relative importance of the first axes than the raw rates, especially when the dimensionality is high—as is the case here (Benzécri, 1992: 412). With 53% the first axis is by far the most important one. The second and third axes add another 24% and 9%, amounting to a total of 86%. We retain three axes for two reasons. First, there is a statistical levelling of the differences in percentage of inertia rates from the third to fourth axis—like in a scree plot. Second, a straightforward theoretical interpretation of the fourth axis is impossible, which suggests it is redundant. As a guide for interpreting the axes, we select

*Table 13.2* Relative frequencies for dispositional variables ($n$ = 2,849)

| | *A*[1] | *N* | *DA* | | *A* | *N* | *DA* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Film: 'original in form and style' | 0.284 | 0.529 | 0.176 | Food: 'do not spend much money' | 0.259 | 0.508 | 0.229 |
| Film: 'makes you laugh' | 0.538 | 0.399 | 0.055 | Food: 'good food important in life' | 0.371 | 0.483 | 0.145 |
| Film: 'uses a lot of special effects' | 0.128 | 0.473 | 0.387 | Food: 'familiar fare' | 0.357 | 0.403 | 0.240 |
| Film: 'contains action and adventure' | 0.338 | 0.502 | 0.152 | Food: 'try new recipes' | 0.428 | 0.409 | 0.163 |
| Film: 'contains violent scenes' | 0.067 | 0.330 | 0.596 | Food: 'steak and french fries' | 0.306 | 0.367 | 0.326 |
| Film: 'is romantic' | 0.284 | 0.542 | 0.164 | Food: 'eating at home is the best' | 0.438 | 0.413 | 0.147 |
| Film: 'critical comment on society' | 0.146 | 0.563 | 0.280 | Sport: to stretch limits | 0.238 | 0.403 | 0.358 |
| Arts: (post-)impressionism[2] | 0.243 | 0.551 | 0.243 | Sport: team spirit | 0.326 | 0.381 | 0.293 |
| Arts: Flemish primitives | 0.249 | 0.376 | 0.372 | Sport: kick | 0.142 | 335 | 0.522 |
| Arts: surrealism | 0.178 | 0.389 | 0.432 | Sport: a beautiful body | 0.190 | 0.461 | 0.348 |
| Arts: baroque portraits | 0.193 | 0.435 | 0.368 | Sport: friendship | 0.426 | 0.408 | 0.166 |
| Arts: abstract expressionism | 0.133 | 0.349 | 0.516 | Travel: meet new people | 0.287 | 0.513 | 0.189 |
| Arts: landscapes | 0.325 | 0.480 | 0.193 | Travel: sea and beach | 0.319 | 0.421 | 0.251 |
| Arts: conceptual art/ Dadaism | 0.067 | 0.300 | 0.630 | Travel: visit culture | 0.240 | 0.466 | 0.283 |
| Arts: late-renaissance/ baroque | 0.223 | 0.416 | 0.359 | Travel: party and fun | 0.230 | 0.429 | 0.333 |
| Arts: abstract art | 0.108 | 0.340 | 0.459 | Travel: adventure | 0.264 | 0.440 | 0.287 |
| Clothing: 'new clothes every season' | 0.241 | 0.361 | 0.397 | Travel: other cultures | 0.339 | 0.456 | 0.196 |
| Clothing: 'clothes reflect personality' | 0.371 | 0.473 | 0.152 | Travel: hiking and trekking | 0.353 | 0.406 | 0.231 |
| Clothing: 'dressed properly' | 0.518 | 0.351 | 0.130 | | | | |

[1]A = agree, N = neutral, DA = disagree or like, neutral, dislike.
[2]For 'Arts: …' respondents are shown three works considered 'iconic' for each style. For (post-) impressionism: Claude Monet 'La cathédrale de Rouen' (1894) and 'The Thames at Westminster Bridge' (1871), Georges Seurat 'Vue de Fort Samson, Grandcamp' (1885); Flemish primitives: Jan van Eyck 'Het echtpaar Arnolfini' (1434), Hans Memling 'The virgin and child with angel' and 'Saint George and a donor' (1470–80); surrealism: Salvador Dalí 'The burning giraffe' (1936–37), Paul Delvaux 'Ode to Jules Verne' (1971), René Magritte 'Le faux mirroir' (1928); baroque portraits: Hendrik Verbrugghen 'A laughing bravo with bass violin and a glass'; abstract expressionism: Karel Appel 'Cry for freedom' (1948), Jackson Pollock 'The key' (1946), Pierre Alechinksy 'Roland Garros' (1988); nineteenth-century landscapes: Wauter van Troostwijk 'Braampoortje in Amsterdam' (1809), Barend Koekkoek 'Winterlandschap' (1838); conceptual art/Dadaism: Joseph Beuys 'Wirtschaftswerte' (1980), Marcel Broodthaers 'Grande casserole de moules' (1960), Marcel Duchamp 'Fountain' (1917); late-renaissance/baroque: Pieter Paul Rubens 'St.-Serge and the dragon' (1606–07), Caravaggio 'Supper at Emmaus' (1601); abstract art: Pieter Cornelius Mondriaan 'Compositie nr. 2, lijn en kleur' (1913), Malevich 'Self-portrait in two dimensions' (1915), Mark Rothko 'Untitled'.

*Table 13.3* Eigenvalues, raw and modified inertia rates for the first five axes

| *Axes* | *1* | *2* | *3* | *4* | *5* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Eigenvalues ($\lambda$) | 0.1245 | 0.0885 | 0.0617 | 0.0492 | 0.0348 |
| Raw inertia (%) | 7.19 | 5.11 | 3.56 | 2.84 | 2.01 |
| Modified inertia (%) | 53 | 24 | 9 | 5 | 2 |

all modalities of the variables that contribute more than average to each axis—the average contribution is 100/173 = 0.578.

## *Axis 1 ($\lambda_1 = 0.125$)*

(See Figure 13.1 and Table 13.4.)

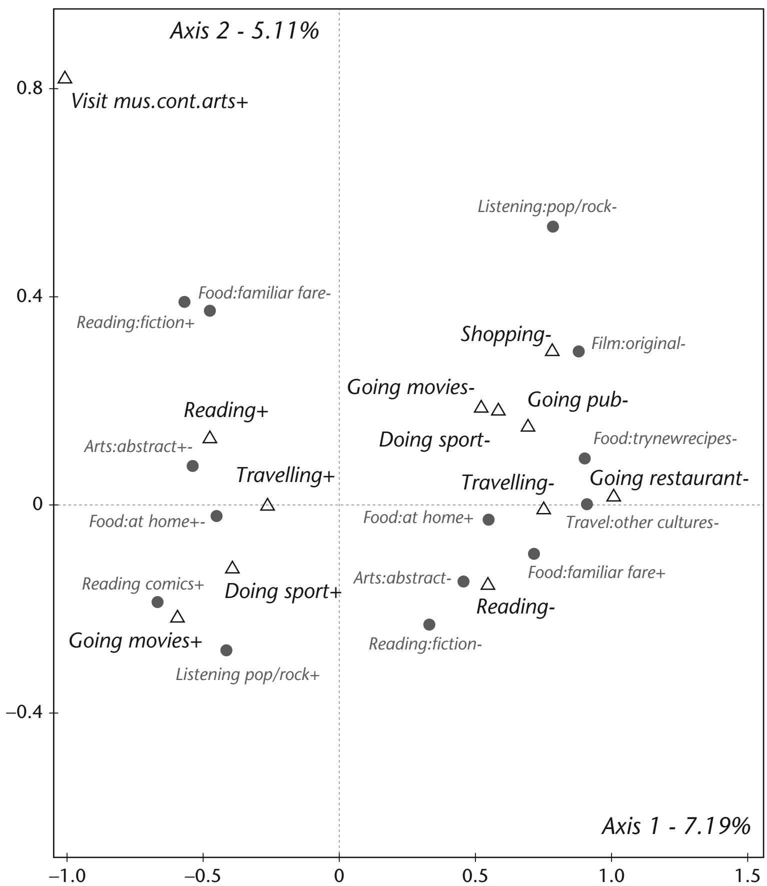


*Figure 13.1* Plane 1–2, interpretation of axis 1: modalities most contributing to axis

*Table 13.4* Axis 1: engagement–disengagement dimension, contributions

| *Variables* | *Contribution of variables* | *Modalities* | | *Contribution of modalities* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Left* | *Right* | *Left* | *Right* |
| Going to the movies | 3.91 | Yes | No | 2.07 | 1.84 |
| Food: familiar fare | 3.63 | Disagree | Agree | 0.66 | 2.31 |
| Listening to pop/rock | 3.39 | Often | Never | 1.13 | 2.26 |
| Arts: abstract | 3.32 | Neutral | Dislike | 1.21 | 1.47 |
| Reading | 3.26 | Yes | No | 1.52 | 1.74 |
| Arts: abstract expressionism | 3.20 | Neutral | Dislike | 1.03 | 1.52 |
| Listening to jazz/blues | 3.01 | Once/while | Never | 1.13 | 1.42 |
| Food: eating at home | 2.97 | Neutral | Agree | 1.04 | 1.66 |
| Doing sport | 2.89 | Yes | No | 1.15 | 1.74 |
| Arts: surrealism | 2.81 | – | Dislike | – | 1.53 |
| Travel: other cultures | 2.77 | Agree | Disagree | 0.58 | 2.07 |
| Clothing: dressed properly | 2.50 | Neutral | Agree | 0.88 | 1.20 |
| Travelling | 2.49 | Yes | No | 0.65 | 1.84 |
| Reading prose/poetry | 2.39 | Yes | No | 1.50 | 0.89 |
| Reading comics | 2.26 | Yes | No | 1.61 | 0.66 |
| Going to a restaurant | 2.18 | – | No | – | 1.86 |
| Film: original style | 2.16 | – | Dislike | – | 1.72 |
| Listening to *chanson* | 2.02 | Once/while | No | 0.87 | 1.06 |
| Watching VTM | 2.00 | No | Yes | 0.60 | 1.39 |
| Food: try new recipes | 2.00 | – | Disagree | – | 1.67 |
| Travel: adventure | 1.95 | – | Disagree | – | 1.32 |
| Visiting museums of contemporary arts | 1.90 | Yes | – | 1.65 | – |
| Listening to dance | 1.82 | – | Never | – | 1.12 |
| Going to a pub | 1.78 | – | No | – | 1.38 |
| Arts: conceptual art/Dadaism | 1.72 | Neutral | Dislike | 0.72 | 0.61 |
| Sport: beautiful body | 1.62 | Neutral | – | 1.42 | – |
| Listening to classical music | 1.58 | Once/while | Never | 0.79 | 0.69 |
| Shopping | 1.55 | – | No | – | 1.29 |
| Arts: nineteenth-century landscapes | 1.52 | – | Like | – | 1.01 |
| Food: steak and french fries | 1.29 | – | Agree | – | 0.89 |
| Attending concerts | 0.91 | Yes | – | 0.78 | – |
| Total | 72.80 | | | 22.99 | 40.16 |

There are 49 modalities that meet the criterion of contributing above average to the orientation of the first axis. These categories stem from 31 variables—including both cultural participation indicators and dispositional characteristics—and account for about 73% of the variance of this axis. The left side depicts modalities that indicate involvement in cultural activities of various sorts, private as well as public, highbrow as well as lowbrow, e.g. visiting contemporary art museums, going to the movies, reading, doing sports and travelling. It also includes a number of dispositions that point at an inclination to be confronted with new things, at an openness to aesthetic or novel experiences such as reading comics and other fiction, listening to pop/rock music, preferring other food than the familiar fare, and not watching the largest popular commercial Flemish television station (VTM). The modalities on the right side show exactly the opposite: not being involved in activities like shopping, going to a pub or restaurant, doing sport, going to the movies or reading. The preferences listed here also point in the direction of a disposition that is oriented towards things that are personally familiar or generally widespread, such as a preference for familiar fare, eating at home, watching VTM, or being dressed properly, combined with a neglect of or even distaste for new or unfamiliar things, as can be deduced from the absence of any interest in other cultures when travelling, or in trying out new recipes. These habits endorse a matter-of-fact, conservative or traditional stance, disregarding the symbolic or aesthetic realm, as is obvious from the distaste for abstract, surrealist or Dadaist art. Thus the interpretation of the first axis in terms of dispositional variables closely fits the one based on behavioural characteristics. Behaviourally, the first axis is an engagement–disengagement dimension: an active, outward-oriented lifestyle with relatively high participation levels in the public sphere is opposed to a more passive, domestic leisure pattern (see Bennett *et al.*, 2009). In terms of dispositions, axis 1 differentiates between an open-minded versus a more narrow-minded, traditional lifestyle—reminiscent of the opposition sketched by Prieur *et al.* (2008).

### *Axis 2 ($\lambda_2$ = 0.0885)*

(See Figure 13.2 and Table 13.5.)

The second axis is characterized by 45 modalities from 26 variables—accounting for a total of 78.3% of the variance in this dimension. This axis is characterized mainly by dis/likes and preferences, with variables referring to preferences in visual arts, motives for travel and sports, and aesthetic dispositions towards movies. The left side depicts a preference for active, adventurous practices—including a disposition towards exploring limits and seeking kicks—together with an aversion for more contemplative, reflective practices such as listening to classical music or reading prose/poetry. The active, kick-seeking disposition is exemplified by a preference for listening to dance music, enjoying parties, sun and beach, and adventure when travelling, enjoying special effects and violent scenes in movies, and watching music channels like MTV or TMF (The Music Factory). The dislike for visual arts, and especially for arts from consecrated, classical periods such as baroque portraits, renaissance or impressionist paintings and works by Jan van Eyck and Hans Memling, illustrate the aversion to contemplation and classical, established works of art. The right side depicts modalities that show a preference for visual arts—obvious both from liking a number of visual arts genres and from museum visits—an interest in literature, a preference for listening to opera and classical music, cultural motives for travelling and a preference for a television channel with high cultural content (Canvas). This dimension opposes an active interest in more consecrated, highbrow art forms with an interest in non-consecrated, active, adventurous and kick-generating practices. It shows a strong resemblance to

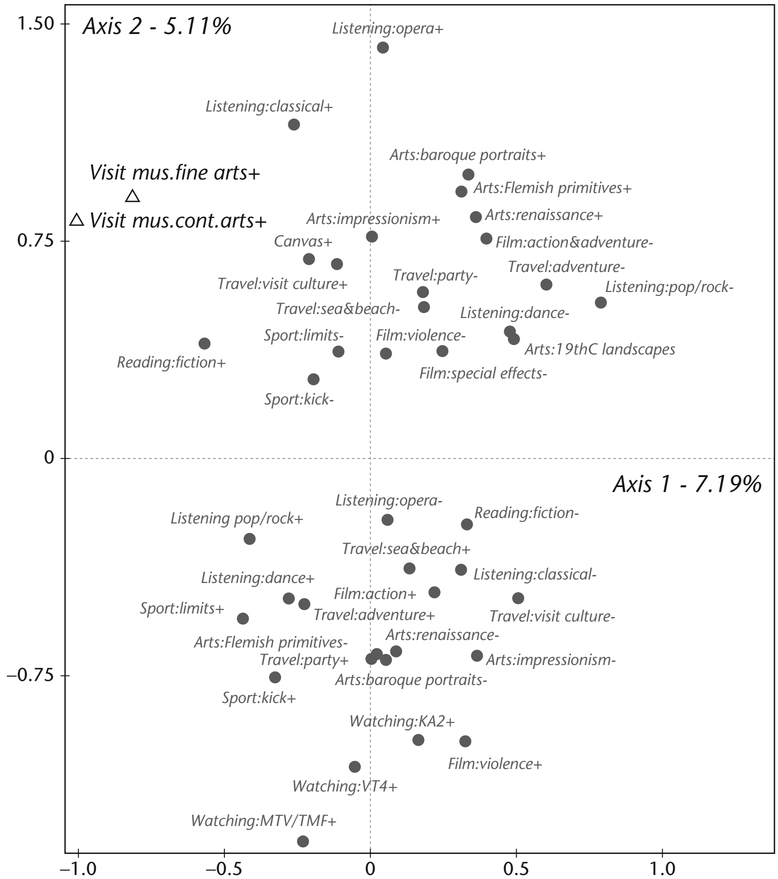


*Figure 13.2* Plane 1–2, interpretation of axis 2: modalities most contributing to axis

Schulze's (1995) distinction between the highbrow versus pop scheme, or Bennett *et al.*'s (2009) second axis contrasting a preference for legitimate culture versus commercial, contemporary and action-oriented culture. Therefore the axis is considered as a contemplation versus action dimension.

## *Axis 3 ($\lambda_3 = 0.0617$)*

(See Figure 13.3 and Table 13.6.)

Axis three is characterized by 27 variables and 46 modalities accounting for about 75% of the variance in this dimension. Contrary to the previous two axes, the contribution of the modalities to axis 3 is unbalanced: it is especially the right side that accounts for the orientation of this dimension—and hence its interpretation should take this into account. Characteristic for this right side is a pronounced openness to new things—as opposed to a more neutral stance. Thus, for aesthetic dispositions towards film, we observe a preference for action and adventure, special effects,

*Table 13.5* Axis 2: contemplation—action dimension, contributions

| *Variables* | *Contribution of variables* | *Modalities* | | *Contribution of modalities* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Left | Right | Left | Right |
| Arts: Flemish primitives | 6.74 | Dislike | Like | 3.03 | 3.67 |
| Arts: baroque portraits | 6.64 | Dislike | Like | 3.18 | 3.27 |
| Arts: renaissance | 5.69 | Dislike | Like | 2.84 | 2.72 |
| Listening to classical music | 4.52 | Never | Often | 1.46 | 2.73 |
| Arts: (post-)impressionism | 4.25 | Dislike | Like | 1.67 | 2.51 |
| Travel: party | 3.91 | Agree | Disagree | 1.96 | 1.91 |
| Listening to opera | 3.83 | Once/while | Often | 2.03 | 1.13 |
| Film: violent scenes | 3.63 | Like | Dislike | 1.15 | 1.33 |
| Travel: visit culture | 3.10 | Disagree | Agree | 1.20 | 1.88 |
| Travel: adventure | 3.05 | Agree | Disagree | 1.20 | 1.79 |
| Film: action and adventure | 2.86 | Like | Dislike | 1.29 | 1.52 |
| Listening to dance | 2.70 | Often | Never | 1.44 | 1.25 |
| Visiting museums of fine arts | 2.64 | – | Yes | – | 2.23 |
| Watching VT4 | 2.47 | Yes | – | 2.23 | – |
| Sport: kick | 2.21 | Agree | Disagree | 0.99 | 0.45 |
| Listening to pop/rock | 2.20 | Often | Never | 0.76 | 1.44 |
| Watching MTV/TMF | 2.05 | Yes | – | 1.94 | – |
| Travel: sea and beach | 2.02 | Agree | Disagree | 0.83 | 1.19 |
| Film: special effects | 1.96 | Like | Dislike | 0.90 | 0.91 |
| Sport: limits | 1.86 | Agree | Disagree | 0.89 | 0.59 |
| Watching KA2 | 1.83 | Yes | – | 1.68 | – |
| Visiting museums cont. arts | 1.79 | – | Yes | – | 1.55 |
| Arts: nineteenth-century landscapes | 1.78 | Dislike | Like | 0.79 | 0.94 |
| Reading prose/poetry | 1.59 | No | Yes | 0.59 | 1.00 |
| Arts: surrealism | 1.53 | – | Like | – | 1.08 |
| Watching Canvas | 1.45 | – | Yes | – | 1.20 |
| Total | 78.30 | | | 34.05 | 38.29 |

comedy and romance—primarily associated with entertainment and diversion—but also an interest in movies with original direction and critical comments on society, which are characteristic for highbrow art movies. The same openness goes for travel motivations, such as being interested in other cultures, or visiting culture combined with motives like adventure, parties and fun. Furthermore, an interest in sociability is apparent in the desire to meet new people when travelling, or in deeming friendship and team spirit important when doing sports. This dimension adds to the 'openness' of axis 1 in that it introduces a dimension that represents a high level of openness in a number of domains without being linked to particular activities. It is not the

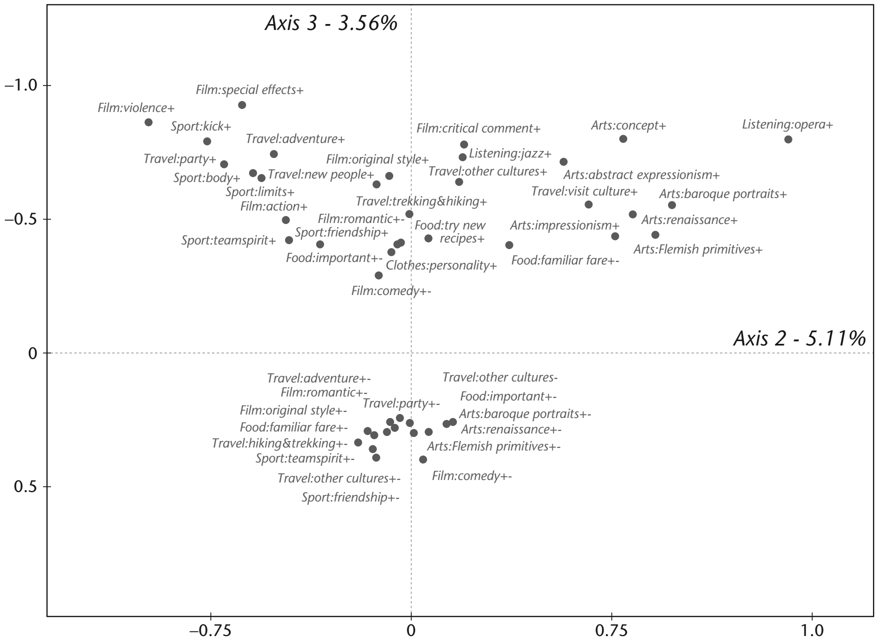


*Figure 13.3* Plane 2–3, interpretation of axis 3: modalities most contributing to axis

prerogative of dispositions associated with lowbrow or highbrow, consecrated or *avant-garde*, etc. We will label this axis 'openness' and return to it in our discussion.

We added income, educational attainment and social class defined in terms of NS-SEC classification (I–VII) as supplementary variables (see Figure 13.4). The age categories are positioned diagonally across Figure 13.4, indicating they are closely related to positions on both axis 1 and axis 2. As expected, younger people are more likely to be at the engaged, open end of axis 1 and on the action-oriented side of axis 2. It confirms that younger people are more likely to spend their leisure outside the home, and that legitimate cultural participation is largely the domain of older generations, who are otherwise not very active. Disengagement is also higher among the (pre-)retired, the unemployed, and those with no or only primary education, while students are most likely to be found in the south-west quadrant of Figure 13.4, indicating an active, open lifestyle. Income and class positions describe a diagonal that is orthogonal to the line connecting the age categories, although the distances between the categories are shorter. High income or class is associated with more engagement and openness and a slightly higher action orientation than lower income. Educational attainment is only clearly linked to the first axis, where higher schooling levels imply more engagement or openness. The relation of schooling with axis 2 shows a U-shaped curve, where the highest and the lowest categories are in the northern half of Figure 13.4 while the intermediate levels are in the south. These vertical differences, however, are small, which means that schooling level is much more strongly related to engagement/openness than it is to

*Table 13.6* Axis 3: openness dimension, contributions

| *Variables* | *Contribution of variables* | *Modalities* | | *Contribution of modalities* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Left | Right | Left | Right |
| Travel: other cultures | 5.36 | Neutral | Agree | 1.50 | 3.51 |
| Travel: adventure | 5.06 | Neutral | Agree | 0.99 | 3.70 |
| Film: original style | 4.41 | Neutral | Like | 1.06 | 3.14 |
| Travel: meet new people | 4.15 | Neutral | Agree | 1.13 | 2.91 |
| Travel: party | 3.80 | Neutral | Agree | 0.73 | 2.88 |
| Travel: hiking and trekking | 3.75 | Neutral | Agree | 0.87 | 2.43 |
| Food: try new recipes | 3.51 | Neutral | Agree | 1.27 | 1.99 |
| Film: action and adventure | 3.19 | Neutral | Like | 1.02 | 2.09 |
| Film: special effects | 3.19 | – | Like | – | 2.77 |
| Film: critical comment | 2.85 | Neutral | Like | 0.60 | 2.24 |
| Film: comedy | 2.76 | Neutral | Like | 1.61 | 1.14 |
| Clothing: reflect personality | 2.55 | Neutral | Agree | 0.97 | 1.53 |
| Travel: culture | 2.46 | – | Agree | – | 1.86 |
| Food: important in life | 2.43 | Neutral | Agree | 1.10 | 1.33 |
| Sport: friendship | 2.28 | Neutral | Agree | 1.08 | 1.20 |
| Sport: limits | 2.24 | – | Agree | – | 1.77 |
| Arts: renaissance | 2.28 | Neutral | Like | 0.77 | 1.51 |
| Arts: baroque portraits | 2.22 | Neutral | Like | 0.74 | 1.48 |
| Film: romantic | 2.10 | Neutral | Like | 0.83 | 1.22 |
| Arts: Flemish primitives | 2.06 | Neutral | Like | 0.83 | 1.23 |
| Arts: abstract expressionism | 2.04 | – | Like | – | 1.72 |
| Food: familiar fare | 2.01 | Neutral | Disagree | 0.97 | 0.99 |
| Listening to jazz/blues | 1.95 | – | Often | – | 1.63 |
| Sport: beautiful body | 1.79 | – | Agree | – | 1.49 |
| Sport: kick | 1.78 | – | Agree | – | 1.53 |
| Sport: team spirit | 1.76 | Neutral | Agree | 0.75 | 1.00 |
| Arts: (post-)impressionism | 1.66 | – | Like | – | 1.18 |
| Total | 75.64 | | | 18.82 | 51.47 |

the contemplation-versus-action axis. Education is, thus, more related to omnivorousness than to a more exclusive orientation towards contemplative or highbrow matters. MCA is most helpful in revealing this matter so clearly, since patterns of cultural activities and preferences are derived from the data themselves, rather than based on pre-defined classifications, as would have been necessary if traditional correlational techniques were used. Allowing for multiple lifestyle dimensions, our MCA demonstrates that such a positive relation does not imply a strong or exclusive predilection among the higher educated for highbrow culture. They are more active or engaged in general, but care little about the legitimacy of their activities (see Van Eijck and Lievens, 2008 on the entanglement of highbrow and omnivorous participation).

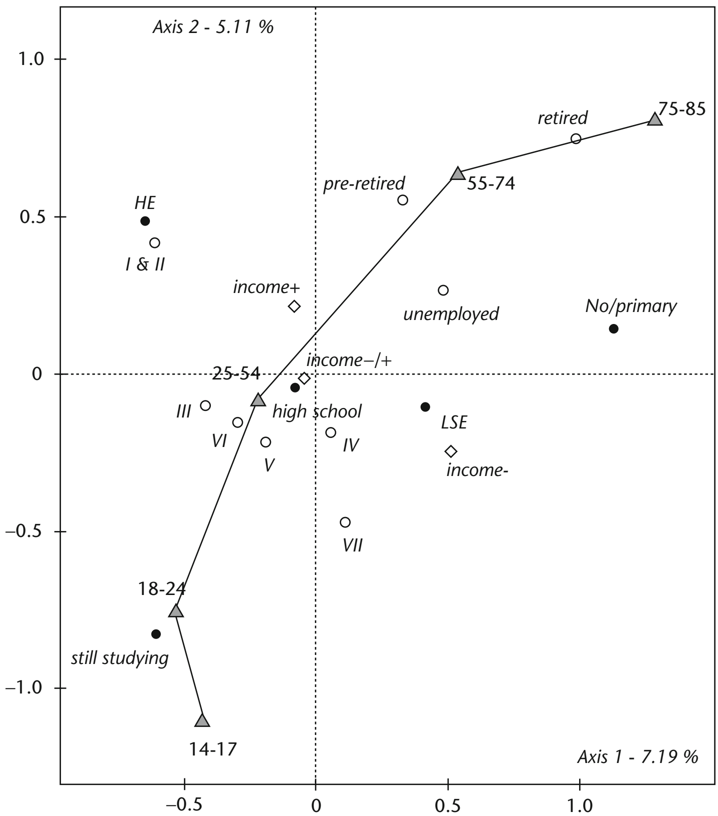


*Figure 13.4* Supplementary variables income, social class and educational attainment projected in plane 1–2

Note: No/primary: no or primary education; LSE: lower secondary education; HE: higher education (college or higher); I: managerial occupations; II: professions; III: intermediate occupations; IV: small employers and own-account workers; V: lower supervisory and technical occupations; VI: semi-routine occupations; VII: routine occupations.

Axis 3 reflects an active eagerness to discover something of interest in numerous domains and in various directions. This openness is not clearly linked to particular activities, and this makes it difficult to imagine the type of person who would be a typical example. Moreover, the third axis is not associated with any of the indicators of social position, nor with age or gender. Closer inspection of the data demonstrates that, in fact, quite different types of respondents have high scores on axis 3. We perform a so-called Euclidean clustering (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004: 106–115), also known as agglomerative hierarchical cluster analysis, using the scores on all axes/dimension as input. This results in seven meaningful clusters.[1] Three of these seven clusters score high on the third axis (see Figure 13.5). Briefly, they are as follows. (1) Middle-aged managers and professionals with high schooling levels and a lot of cultural capital—they could be considered as prototypical examples of the omnivore: relatively young, highly educated and having a high social position (Peterson and

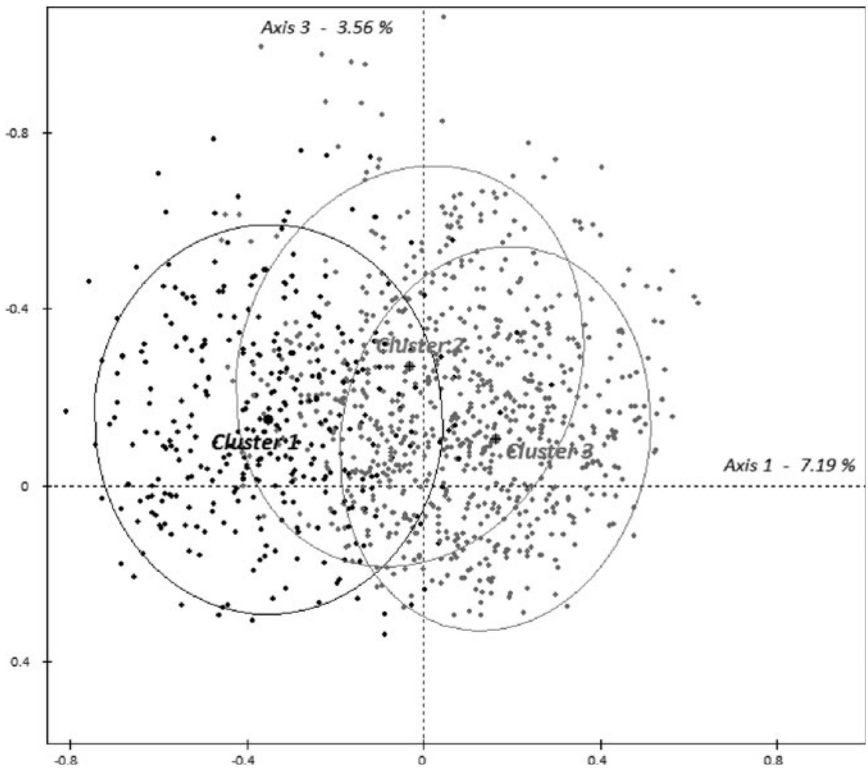


*Figure 13.5* Cloud of individuals with clusters 1, 2 and 3 whose members score high on axis 3 (in plane 1–3)

Simkus, 1992; Van Eijck, 2001). (2) Youngsters and students with less cultural capital but a strong predilection for amusement and action. (3) Older people (aged 65+) with relatively little cultural capital but a strong interest in classical, figurative art and cultural TV programmes.

## Conclusions and discussion

Our MCA of Flemish lifestyles has revealed three lifestyle dimensions. The first axis represents a continuum running from disengagement to engagement, especially an engagement in the public sphere. It is related to total capital volume in that the highest levels of engagement are found among those with the highest incomes and schooling levels. Age is an equally important characteristic, with young people being much more engaged than the elderly. It must be noted, however, that the largest age differences along axis 1 occur above the age of 64, when people become less active, probably due to retirement as well as increasing physical limitations. Regarding axis 2, however, the dispersion of the age categories is much more even. Age is therefore especially important for people's position on the second axis, representing a dimension ranging from action-oriented pop culture preferences to a more contemplative, highbrow taste. This may indicate a cohort effect in that younger generations show a waning interest for legitimate culture.

Our first two axes are very similar to those discerned by Bennett *et al.* (2009), including their associations with education and income (axis 1) and age (axis 2). This indicates that these dimensions could be two general structuring elements of lifestyles, irrespective of national specificities. A further confirmation for this is that very similar dimensions are obtained in Flanders and the UK despite the use of different items, with the UK data focusing more on behaviour/participation, whereas the Flemish data additionally provide more information on attitudinal aspects such as motives and preferences.

The use of a different set of items might, however, be the reason we find another third axis compared with the British study. In the British study, the third axis contrasts inwardly/feminine with outwardly/masculine dispositions. In the Flemish case, the third axis refers to a pattern that is reminiscent of Ollivier's (2008) 'populist openness to cultural diversity' in that it combines self-improvement with relaxation and does not seem dismissive of mass culture. We therefore labelled the third axis 'openness', without further specifying which 'direction' this openness refers to. By using the Euclidean clustering technique, moreover, we could observe that the specific type of openness depends on the characteristics of the agents endowed with this openness, most notably cultural capital and phase of life/generation. Post-baby-boom professionals (especially women) with high cultural capital are likely to satisfy their need for novel experiences by engaging in a wide variety of activities. The second group—the youngsters—can probably be better characterized as not yet having consolidated their cultural taste and still in the process of openly exploring a whole spectrum of different practices. They can be considered as still looking for a praxis that is homologous with their habitus. The third group, people aged 65+ and generally low in cultural capital, show their openness by preferring consecrated, figurative art and visiting museums of *beaux-arts*. Despite their diversity, all of these activities are in a sense expressions of the same characteristic (what Lahire calls 'disposition') that we refer to as 'openness'—expressions that are adequate or appropriate given a person's social context and resources. This demonstrates how MCA allows us to uncover an underlying disposition that is totally obscured by its various behavioural manifestations in different clusters of respondents.

In sum, we found that the Flemish space of lifestyles is structured by degree of engagement, by an emphasis on either contemplation or action (highbrow or pop culture), and by a more general degree of openness. As a result, our study confirms that breadth of taste, openness, and scope of activities are more relevant as structuring principles of the cultural space than the more traditional highbrow–lowbrow distinction.

## Note

1 Details of the statistical analysis can be obtained from the authors by request.

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# 14

# Classifying bodies, classified bodies, class bodies

## A carnal critique of the judgment of taste

*Dieter Vandebroeck*

### Introduction

Long before the body would become a particularly fashionable topic of sociological theorizing, Pierre Bourdieu's analyses of social life already assigned it a central role in the production and reproduction of the social order. From his early, quasi-phenomenological descriptions of the 'bodily habitus' of the peasants in his native Béarn (Bourdieu, 2008 [1966]) over his analyses of the body's role as a 'practical operator' of the divisions and oppositions inscribed in the Kabylian mythical system (Bourdieu, 1977a [1972]) or the importance of the 'body scheme' in understanding class-based differences in sociolect (Bourdieu, 1977b) to his later reflections on the role of bodily emotion and symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 2000 [1997]), Bourdieu's intellectual trajectory reveals a keen sensitivity to the fundamentally *embodied* nature of social practice.[1] His analytic of taste and consumption, condensed into the now seminal *Distinction* (1984 [1979], henceforth *Di*), forms no exception. Throughout his *magnum opus*, Bourdieu stressed that tastes, even the most 'refined' and 'spiritual' ones, are never just an intellectual or mental affair, but are 'perhaps first and foremost distastes, disgust provoked by horror or visceral intolerance ("sick-making") of the tastes of others' (*Di*: 56). In fact, rather than reducing Kant's illusive 'faculty for discriminating and judging' (2000 [1790]: 90) to the classificatory operations of the mind, Bourdieu insisted on its foundation in the visceral proclivities and aversions of the socialized body:

> So nothing is further removed from an act of cognition, as conceived by the intellectualist tradition, than this sense of the social structure, which, as is so well put by the word *taste* – simultaneously the 'faculty of perceiving flavours' and 'the

> capacity to discern aesthetic values' – is social necessity made second nature, turned into muscular patterns and bodily automatisms.
>
> *(Di: 474)*

As an 'incorporated principle of classification' (*Di*: 190), taste operates largely *below* the level of discourse and deliberation and finds its most authentic expression in the somatic modes of attraction and repulsion, desire and disgust. The socially informed body or 'habitus' hence plays a central role in transforming the arbitrary nature of class-tastes into the ineluctable necessity of bodily affect, which can take the form of a quasi-mystical communion (of which love, and especially the 'love of art', is but one example) or instead, of an unbridgeable difference borne of physical revolt (because the tastes of others 'turn one's stomach', 'hurt one's eyes', …).

There is, however, another, more literal sense in which *Distinction* treats class and class-tastes as fundamentally 'embodied'. In fact, the dispositions that inform the everyday perception of practices, properties and persons are not only rooted 'in' the body—in the form of postural schemes or quasi-visceral inclinations—but also contribute to actively shaping its physicality. Bourdieu even goes as far as defining the body as 'the most indisputable materialization of class-taste' (*Di*: 190) which is expressed in such apparently 'natural' features as its size and shape. This chapter aims to tackle this second sense in which class differences become inscribed in bodies, by examining the role that class plays in the social production and perception of differences in body-*weight*. Drawing on data generated in a recent national health survey, as well as in the author's own research, the analysis aims to advance a three-fold argument. Firstly, that differences in physical size (as measured by the 'body mass index')[2] are far from randomly distributed across social space, but are aligned with class-positions in a manner that proves quite consistent with the propositions on class and lifestyle outlined in *Distinction*. Secondly, that there is not only a considerable degree of consensus, *across* social space, as to what constitutes the 'ideal' and most 'disliked' physique, but that the gap between the body that social agents claim to have and the body that they would *like* to have tends to become systematically smaller as one moves from dominated to dominant social positions. The extent of this gap, in turn, proves to have quite serious consequences for the manner in which agents come to experience their own body, and especially for the 'subjective' degree of satisfaction they draw from it. Thirdly and finally, the analyses aim to show that body-size plays a central role in the everyday perception of class-differences, as it distinguishes not only between dominated and dominant social categories, but also, among the latter, between those who wield different *types* of social power (i.e. economic versus cultural).

In elaborating these arguments, this chapter aims to show that there is a quite literal meaning to the proposition that social agents are 'classified by their classifications' (*Di*: 6). It argues, more specifically, that it is in part through the routine set of practical classifications—commonly referred to as 'taste'—that bodies become *class*-ified, that is to say, acquire their distinct and distinguished social morphology. More importantly, because class-inequalities—through the tastes they engender—become materialized in the physicality of the body and therefore in 'nature', differences in physical size help to naturalize and hence legitimize such inequalities. The ultimate goal is to provide a practical demonstration of the ongoing relevance of *Distinction*, not only to our understanding of the social foundations of everyday tastes, but also to their central role in the naturalization of relationships of domination and exclusion.

## Distinctions in the flesh

As mentioned above, the socially informed body or 'habitus' plays a central (if often overlooked) role in the analytical architecture of *Distinction*. Class-tastes in fact draw a considerable part of their symbolic efficacy—their *mis*recognition as 'innate' rather than *socially* constituted—from the fact that they are largely *pre*-discursive and *pre*-reflexive in nature and hence elude conscious introspection and dispassionate judgment. In this sense, there is a kernel of truth in the maxim '*de gustibus non est disputandum*'. The most unequivocal and fundamental affirmations of class-taste are in fact those that circumvent debate and are *directly* expressed in the apparently most 'spontaneous' and 'natural' reactions of the body, like desire or disgust, attraction or repulsion. While this somatic dimension is most evident in the domain of primary tastes, it also subtends the most 'refined' of cultural pleasures:

> [E]ven the purest pleasures, those most purified of any trace of corporeality [...] contain an element which, as in the 'crudest' pleasures of the tastes of food, the archetype of all taste, refers directly back to the oldest and deepest experiences, those which determine and over-determine the primitive oppositions – bitter/sweet, flavourful/insipid, hot/cold, coarse/delicate, austere/bright – which are as essential to gastronomic commentary as to the refined appreciations of aesthetes.
> *(Di: 79)*

More important for the topic at hand, the embodied character of taste also has a strong *reflexive* dimension. In fact, the socialized body is not only the generative principle 'behind' everyday judgments of taste, but also comes to bear the traces of those judgments in its physical structure: 'Taste, a class culture turned into nature, that is, *embodied*, helps to shape the class body' (*Di*: 190, original emphasis). Bourdieu even goes as far as treating the body as

> the most indisputable materialization of class-taste [...] which it manifests in several ways. It does this first in the seemingly most natural features of the body, the dimensions (volume, height, weight) and shapes (round or square, stiff or supple, straight or curved) of its visible forms, which express in countless ways a whole relationship to the body, i.e., a way of treating it, caring for it, feeding it, maintaining it which reveals the deepest dispositions of the habitus.
> *(ibid.)*

In this sense, a class-habitus is not only 'embodied' in a metaphorical sense (i.e. in the form of postural schemata and visceral inclinations/aversions), but is also quite literally materialized in its perceptible features.[3]

While a full overview of the often minute ways in which class-differences come to mar(k) the body would lead us too far, a stenographic sketch of the central opposition between the popular 'taste of necessity' and the dominant 'taste of luxury' can go some way towards explaining class-differences in the size and shape of the body.[4] *Distinction* is in fact littered with clues on how social necessity, through the tastes it engenders, helps to fashion the physical body. This is already evident in the definition of the 'taste of necessity' as being, first and foremost, a taste for substance and the substantial, for that which 'is not only "filling", but also real, as opposed to all appearances, all the fine words and empty gestures that "butter no parsnips" and are, as the phrase goes, purely symbolic' (*Di*: 199). Whether it expresses itself in a conception of food as 'a material reality, a nourishing substance which sustains the body and gives strength' (*Di*: 197), a proclivity for sports that favor confrontation and the demonstration of physical strength and prowess, or a preference for clothing that is simple, cheap and practical; the experience of necessity produces a relationship to the body in which primacy is given to functionality, that is, on a refusal of the censorships that are implied by formality and 'manners'.

This focus on substance and function is itself intertwined with a practical philosophy of the body as an 'instrument' of labor which is evaluated primarily in terms of its performance, that is, its capacity for labor. For men in particular, the realities of physical labor are constitutive of an ethos of virility which subsumes judgments of *form* under judgments of *force* and values a large body for the potentiality of strength it betrays (see Willis, 1977; Mauger and Fossé-Poliak, 1983: 53; Charlesworth, 2000: 260ff.). Working-class women prove similarly over-represented in those occupational activities that tend to promote an 'instrumental' rather than 'ornamental' relation to the body. Their exclusion from those occupational markets in which appearance and self-presentation can function as a source of 'capital' means that they can expect little material or symbolic reward for investments in their physical capital. In addition, they also tend to be more often confined to the domestic sphere with its own sources (however limited) of social valorization, especially those related to maternal labor and its definition of the plump, caring and nurturing body as a positive source of self-identity (see Schwartz, 1990; Warrin *et al.*, 2007). It is especially in the license taken in the area of food and drink that members of the working class manage to carve out a domain of practice that is (or was?) relatively free from the restrictions and censorships imposed by dominant morality. Even if this 'conviviality which sweeps away restraints and reticence' (*Di*: 179) is itself the product of the necessity that pervades working-class conditions (and hence the basis of a culture 'in-itself' rather than 'for-itself'), it nonetheless operates as an effective 'principle of conformity', especially among working-class men. It is among the latter that any refusals to indulge in the name of values such as appearance or health are quickly perceived as a sign of the 'posh' mannerisms and restrictions that are traditionally reserved for women and members of the dominant class, and hence invoke the double suspicion of a tainted masculinity and a desire to distinguish oneself from the primary group.

It is this particular relationship to the body which serves as the negative reference point or 'foil' for the ways in which those who occupy more favorable positions in social space come to use, perceive and treat their bodies. The taste of necessity, and the type of body it produces, provide the Nature *against* which the latter measure their own degree of Culture (in the original etymological sense of *cultura*, that is, the 'cultivation of nature'). In fact, one of the defining traits of a 'cultivated' personality, especially in societies where the large majority are capable of satisfying basic biological necessities, is the capacity for restraint and self-control, that is, the ability to transcend 'vulgar' appetites and 'primal' desires in favor of more 'refined' and 'spiritual' pleasures. That is why, as *Distinction* insists, 'the refusal of nature, or rather the refusal to surrender to nature, which is the mark of dominant groups—who start with *self*-control—is the basis of the aesthetic disposition' (*Di*: 40). Self-control, elective austerity, restraint and conspicuous simplicity are the defining features of the dominant lifestyle and the dominant relationship to the body. This self-control applies with particular force to the most functional and hence most 'vulgar' aspects of everyday practice which the dominant—by virtue of their corporeality—inevitably share with the dominated, starting with everything that is linked to the satisfaction of biological necessity. Where the 'realistic hedonism' and 'practical materialism' of the working-class privileges quantity, abundance and elasticity, the taste of luxury foregrounds quality, restriction and formality, that is, imposes 'social censorships which forbid coarseness and fatness, in favour of slimness and distinction' (*Di*: 185). More generally, as one rises in social space and the body ceases to be the primary (and sole) source of labor, the functionalist relationship to the body gradually gives way to an ethos in which primacy is given to bodily 'form' in the triple sense of its appearance, its physical well-being, but also the specific *manner* in which the most routine acts are accomplished.

Within the system of features that define the 'legitimate body' (*Di*: 207), the actual size and shape of the body play a particularly central role as markers of 'class' (or the lack thereof). In fact, whereas cosmetic and sartorial indices, comportment and diction can, to a varying extent, become subjected to strategies of symbolic 'bluff', the physical body tends to provide one of the surest signs of the determinations that are exerted by a given social position and trajectory. This was already clearly acknowledged by Goffman, who observed that:

> Evidence concerning previous activity is crucial because class status is based not only on social qualifications, but also on the length of time a person has possessed them. Owing to the nature of biological growth and development, acquired patterns of behavior typically provide a much less reliable view of a person's past than is provided by *acquired changes in his physical structure.*
>
> *(Goffman, 1951: 301, my emphasis)*

That the necessity inscribed in a given social position effectively produces such changes in agents' physical structure is shown by an analysis of class-differences in average body mass (Table 14.1). In fact, as one moves from members of the working class, through the *petit-bourgeoisie* to those who occupy dominant social positions, average body mass declines in an almost systematic fashion. This is especially the case among women (a first indication that the class-differentiation in bodies applies most strongly to *women*'s bodies). For instance, female professionals (lawyers, doctors, etc.) are on average 7.7 pounds lighter than female unskilled workers (height being equal), and where more than one in three (36%) of the latter qualify as 'overweight' (of which 15% are labeled as medically 'obese'), this drops to fewer than one in five (19%) of

*Table 14.1* Body size characteristics by gender and class fraction

| | *Avg. BMI*[a] | | *% BMI <18.5 ('underweight')* | | *% BMI 25–30 ('overweight')* | | *% BMI >30 ('obese')* | | *Avg. height (cm)*[a] | | *N* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ |
| | * | * | | | | | | | * | * | | |
| **Dominant class** | **25.0** | **22.9** | **0.8** | **8.1** | **46.9** | **18.1** | **9.0** | **5.3** | **178.6** | **165.4** | **319** | **233** |
| Commercial employers | *25.9*[b] | n.a.[c] | 0.0 | n.a. | *58.7* | n.a. | *15.2* | n.a. | *179.3* | n.a. | 46 | 10 |
| Senior executives | 25.2 | 23.1 | 1.9 | 7.8 | 55.3 | 25.5 | 9.3 | *11.8* | 179.5 | 165.7 | 109 | 52 |
| Professions | 24.6 | 22.1 | 0.0 | *11.8* | 43.0 | 14.7 | 6.9 | 4.4 | 177.8 | 166.2 | 69 | 69 |
| Higher education and research | 24.8 | 23.4 | 0.0 | 4.5 | 43.1 | 21.2 | 7.8 | 7.6 | 179.1 | 166.2 | 51 | 66 |
| Cultural producers and artists | 23.9 | 21.9 | *2.3* | 11.1 | 29.6 | 11.1 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 178.4 | 164.3 | 44 | 36 |
| **Upper-middle classes** | **25.1** | **23.7** | **1.2** | **5.0** | **34.6** | | **10.7** | **8.4** | **177.6** | **164.9** | **789** | **1105** |
| Financial services | *26.2* | 24.2 | 1.2 | 5.7 | 37.0 | *31.4* | 16.0 | 8.6 | 177.9 | 164.9 | 81 | 35 |
| Junior executives | 26.1 | 23.6 | 1.1 | 4.7 | 36.4 | 15.6 | 6.3 | 7.0 | 177.9 | 164.7 | 176 | 128 |
| Socio-medical services | 24.8 | 23.8 | 0.0 | 3.7 | 35.0 | 25.7 | 5.0 | 8.7 | 177.8 | 165.0 | 41 | 218 |
| Teachers secondary | 24.3 | 23.3 | *1.4* | 2.1 | 36.2 | 20.8 | 5.0 | 7.3 | 176.6 | 165.0 | 69 | 96 |
| **Lower-middle classes** | **25.3** | **23.4** | **0.4** | | | | | | | | | |
| Shopkeepers | 25.4 | 23.4 | 0.0 | 4.4 | 33.0 | 16.5 | *18.8* | 9.9 | 178.0 | 163.5 | 112 | 91 |
| Office workers (administrators) | 25.1 | 23.7 | 0.7 | 4.4 | 36.3 | 19.4 | 11.2 | 8.3 | 176.4 | 165.0 | 267 | 360 |
| Office workers (presentation)[d] | n.a. | 22.9 | n.a. | 6.7 | n.a. | 16 | n.a. | 2.7 | n.a. | 165.0 | 15 | 75 |
| Teachers primary | 25.4 | 23.4 | 0.0 | *6.9* | *42.9* | 11.8 | 7.1 | 9.8 | 177.1 | *165.2* | 28 | 102 |
| **Working classes** | **25.7** | **24.4** | **1.5** | **3.6** | **40.9** | **22.4** | **12.5** | **12.7** | **177.0** | **163.8** | **656** | **431** |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Skilled manual (including foremen) | 25.7 | n.a. | 0.9 | n.a. | 42.4 | n.a. | 11.5 | n.a. | *177.6* | n.a. | 56 | 16 |
| Semi-skilled manual | 25.8 | 24.3 | 1.6 | 2.7 | *44.5* | *24.5* | 13.4 | 10.0 | 176.8 | *164.2* | 291 | 112 |
| Unskilled manual | *26.0* | *24.5* | *2.1* | *3.5* | 35.8 | 20.3 | 12.4 | *15.4* | 176.2 | 163.4 | 309 | 303 |
| Farm workers | 25.5 | n.a. | 0.0 | n.a. | 39.6 | n.a. | 10.4 | n.a. | 176.5 | n.a. | 48 | 15 |
| **Total** | **25.3** | **23.4** | **1.6** | **5.9** | **38.6** | **25.2** | **12.3** | **13.5** | **175.4** | **163.0** | **4881** | **5615** |

*Source*: Belgian National Health Survey 2004.

Notes:

[a]Both BMI and height have been adjusted for age differences.

[b]Figures in italics denote the strongest tendency in a column.

[c]Number of observations too low to make meaningful inferences.

[d]Office workers in sectors of presentation and representation (secretaries, receptionists, etc.) as opposed to office workers in administration.

* $P < 0.010$

the former (4% of whom qualify as 'obese'). At the same time, female professionals are three times more likely than manual workers to be classified as medically 'underweight'. Similar differences in body mass are found among men, although these prove considerably more attenuated. Even though working-class men have a higher average BMI and are somewhat more likely to be labeled as 'obese' than those who occupy dominant social positions, differences between the classes are far less outspoken (with junior executives even having a higher *average* weight than farmers, for instance).

However, if we expand the analysis to also take account of differences in the particular *type* of capital that defines agents' position in social space, more significant distinctions emerge. In fact, against monolithic conceptions of dominant tastes (often condensed in qualifiers like 'elite', 'highbrow', …), *Distinction* stresses that the legitimate principle of distinction is itself the object of struggle between 'class-fractions' that are most well endowed with economic capital (commercial employers, senior executives, …) and those for whom cultural capital dominates (higher education teachers, artists, …). To this opposition between the dominant and the dominated fractions of the dominant class correspond two different lifestyles and two distinct manners of relating to the body, that is, 'two contrasting ways of defying nature, need, appetite, desire' (*Di*: 254). On one hand, there is the 'hedonistic aesthetic of ease and facility' (*Di*: 176) of the economically dominant pole which expresses itself in the 'ostentatious freedom of gratuitous expense' (*Di*: 254–255) and uses the display of 'luxury, as the manifestation of distance from necessity' (*Di*: 255). On the other, the culturally dominant fractions are marked by a more purist ethos which has 'affinity with the ascetic aspect of aesthetics' (*Di*: 176) and distinguishes itself through 'asceticism, a self-imposed constraint' (*Di*: 255) which forms the basis of a lifestyle that is 'as remote from concupiscence as it is from conspicuous consumption' (*Di*: 497).

If the body is indeed the 'most indisputable materialization of class-taste', one should expect such oppositions to also be reflected in agents' bodies, with the culturally dominant pole of social space being most conducive to the leanest body-types. Interestingly enough, class-differences in BMI provide some evidence for this. For instance, the fact that the average BMI of men appears to vary only slightly *between* social classes (Table 14.1) conceals the differences rooted in capital-structure *within* the dominant and middle classes.[5] As one moves from the commercial employers and senior executives over the professions to the higher education teachers and the cultural producers, average weight decreases in an almost linear fashion (the average difference between the employers and the cultural producers, *ceteris paribus*, is 11 pounds), as does the proportion of individuals who are classified as 'overweight' or 'obese'. A similar opposition is found among men in the upper fringe of the middle classes, between those employed in the financial services (insurance, real estate, …) and the secondary education teachers, who on average are 13 pounds lighter than the former (height being equal). Among women, differences between class-fractions prove less outspoken, although it is again among the culturally dominant fractions that one finds both the leanest body-types and the highest percentage of women who qualify as medically 'underweight'. (It is interesting to note that it is precisely this fraction of the dominant class which Darmon, 2009 identified as being the most conducive to the production of the 'anorexic habitus'.)

While highly suggestive, such results of course become quickly mystifying if one forgets that they are based on differences in *average* body mass. If statistical averages always require a considerable degree of circumspection when gauging inter-group differences, this applies *a fortiori* when one tries to argue that such differences are the product of processes of social distinction. In fact, even if anthropometric averages express not only biological variation, but also a *social* normativity—a thesis advocated by a pioneer of the discipline like Maurice Halbwachs (1912) and reiterated by authors such as Canguilhem (1978 [1966])—they provide little information on how strongly such physical norms are imposed *within* a particular group. However, if dominant tastes owe part of their logic to the dialectic of distinction and pretension and, more specifically, to the pressure it exerts on dominant groups to maintain their distinctive appearance, one should expect the latter not only to have the lowest *average* weight, but also to be clustered more strongly around this average. This forces the analysis not only to look at differences in average weight *between* the classes, but also to examine the distribution of weight-differences *within* a given class or, put differently, to treat the *intra*-class variation in physical size as a function of its *inter*-class variation.

The analysis of the overall distribution of body mass by social class and educational capital (Figures 14.1 and 14.2) does reveal such differences in terms of the variation of bodies *within* various groups or classes. In fact, as one moves up the social hierarchy, it is not just the average weight which systematically decreases, but the distribution of body mass as a whole shifts towards leaner body-types, for both women and men. For the latter, the fact that average weight seems to vary only slightly between levels of education and occupational categories not only obscures the fact that the most stigmatized (i.e. corpulent) physique becomes increasingly rarer as one moves from dominated to dominant social positions, but also that weight-differences themselves become contained between ever-narrower boundaries. This proves even more evident among women, where weight-differences become systematically concentrated in the lowest categories as one rises in the social hierarchy. In accordance with the logic of distinction, dominant tastes not only tend to produce the lowest *average* BMI, but also place more restrictive boundaries on the range within which weight is allowed to vary. Without, therefore, denying that differences in body-size and -shape are subjected to biological variation (which would simply be trading in one type of reductionism for another), the analysis does suggest that *social* mechanisms, in this case the logic of distinction, manage to set effective limits to such variation.

## The body that 'is' and the body that 'ought to be'

While the BMI provides a practical estimate of differences in physical size, it remains a highly limited indicator. One of its most important drawbacks is that it makes no distinctions in terms of actual body-*type* and is oblivious to differences in muscle and body fat. In this manner, a nominally identical BMI can be associated with quite distinct morphologies and hence with quite different relationships to the body (see Monaghan, 2007). Furthermore, while analyses of the social differentiation in BMI help reveal how physical properties are distributed across social space, they provide little insight into how members of different social classes perceive and evaluate such properties. Such

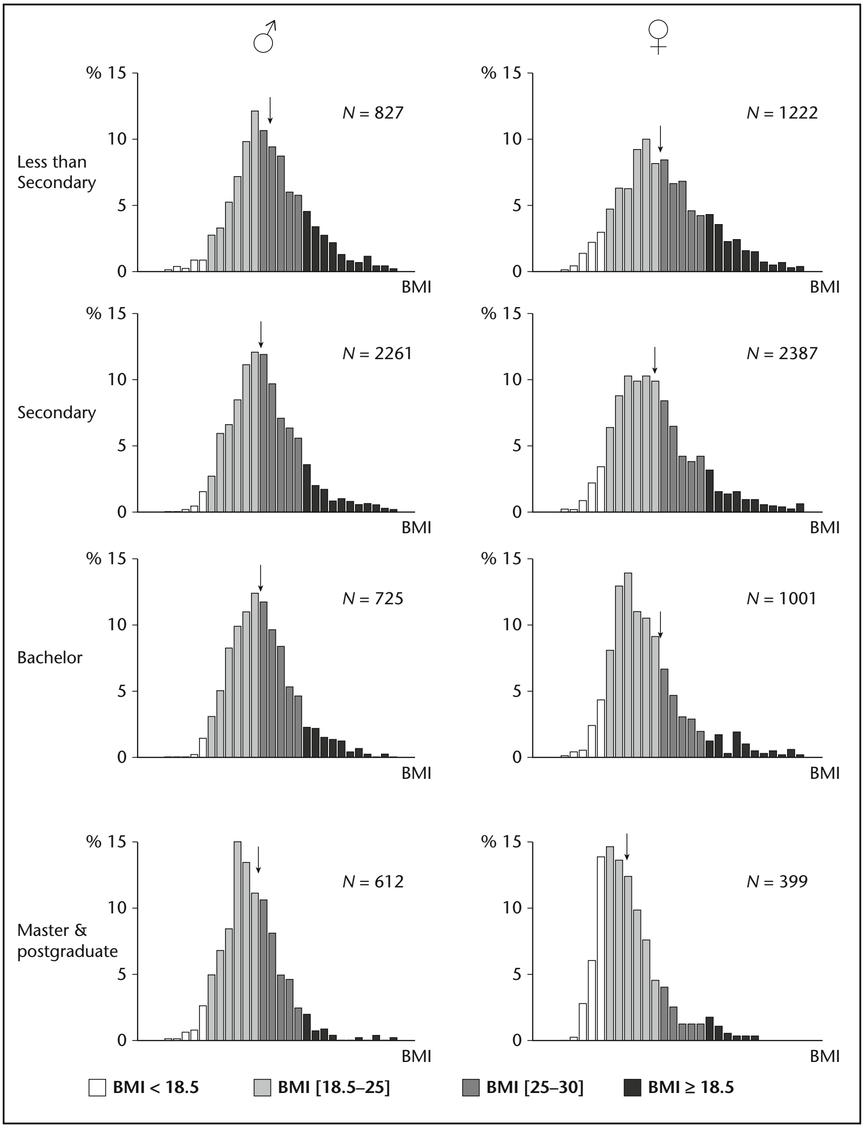


*Figure 14.1* Distribution of body mass by gender and educational capital

Note: The arrow denotes the average body mass for that specific category.

*Source*: Belgian National Health Survey 2004.

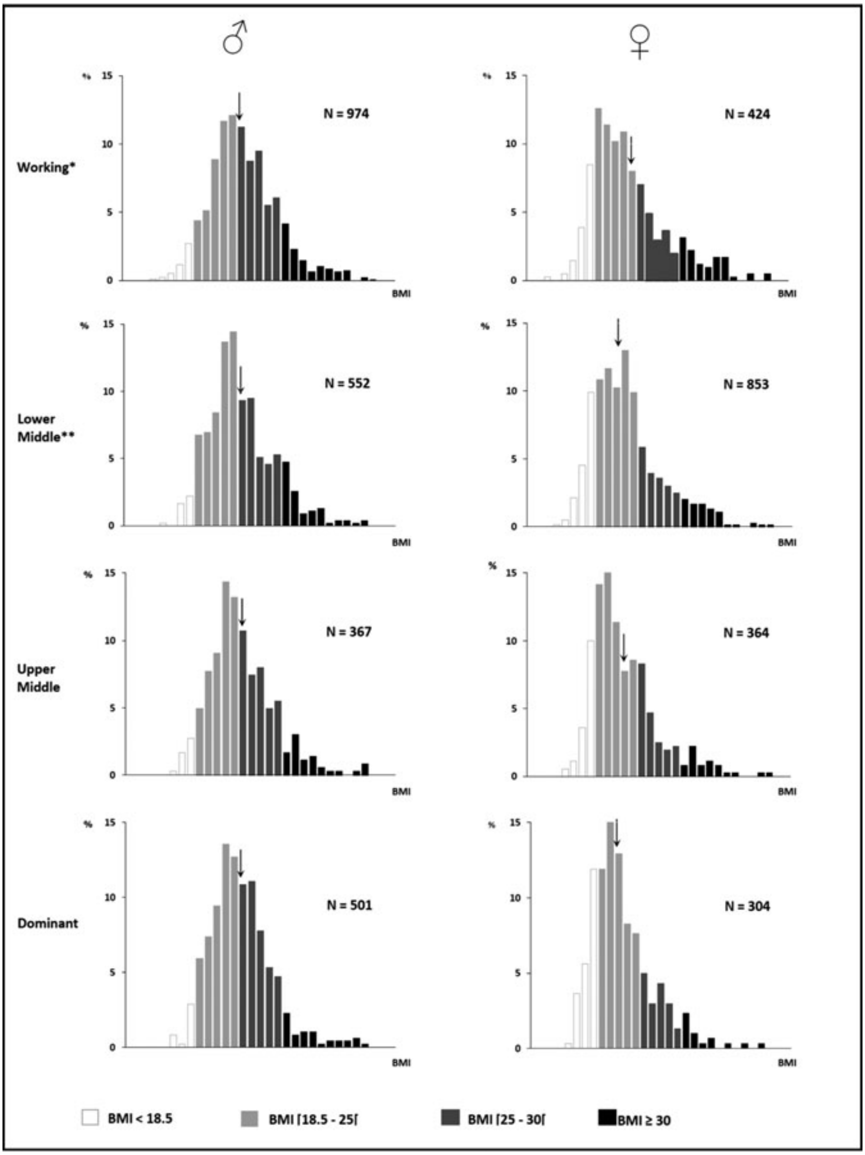


*Figure 14.2* Distribution of body mass by gender and social class
Note: The arrow denotes the average body mass for that specific category.
*Source*: Belgian National Health Survey 2004.

evaluations are, nevertheless, crucial in aiming to understand the practical awareness that social agents have of the value of their own physical capital and hence of the 'subjective' degree of satisfaction they derive from their own bodies. In fact, as Bourdieu asserts:

> The chances of experiencing one's own body as a vessel of grace, a continuous miracle, are that much greater when bodily capacity is commensurate with recognition; and, conversely, the probability of experiencing the body with unease, embarrassment, timidity grows with the disparity between the ideal body and the real body, the dream body and the 'looking-glass self' reflected in the reactions of others.
> *(Di: 207)*

In order to avoid the problems inherent in the use of BMI, and to gauge the value that the different social classes attribute to differences in physical size, a smaller survey of respondents ($N$ = 891) was presented with a diagram representing different types of male and female bodies.[6] They were then asked to choose the figure that was closest to their own body at the time of the survey, as well as the figures they would like to have, and most definitely did not want to have.

Analysis of their judgments reveals that the extent of the disparity between ideal and current body is itself closely related to one's position in social space. One of the first striking results (Figures 14.3 and 14.4) is the existence of a considerable consensus among both male and female respondents as to what exactly constitutes the ideal or, *a fortiori*, the most disliked body, largely *regardless* of social position. When asked to identify the body-type they found *least* desirable, more than 80% of male and female respondents chose the most corpulent figure (type 11). Similarly, more than 40% of men from both working-class (41%) and dominant (46%) backgrounds chose a muscular, 'toned' physique (type 5) as their most preferred body-type. For women, the situation proves somewhat different. Whereas virtually all women chose a slender silhouette as their personal ideal, the preference for a lean body-type (such as type 4) becomes considerably more evident as one moves from working-class women (31%), through those in the lower (45%) and upper-middle class (46%), to women who occupy dominant social positions (61%). Again, given that the logic of distinction would exert the strongest pressure on dominant groups to maintain the most distinguished appearance, one would indeed expect them to agree most strongly over the definition of what constitutes the ideal appearance.

That such pressure *is* quite effective in realizing the most valued physique becomes clear when one looks at the actual distribution of physical capital between the social classes. Like the analyses of BMI, the results show that the different social classes have a highly unequal probability of embodying the dominant definition of the ideal male or female physique. As one rises in the social hierarchy, the distribution of body-types tends to shift from the most devalued (i.e. corpulent) to the most valorized body-size, again more explicitly among women than men. While, for the latter, a large body-size appears to be more pronounced among those who are situated at the bottom of the class-structure, there are no (statistically) significant differences in the degree to which men at opposite ends of the social hierarchy are able to realize the most valued physique (in this case type 5). Such differences prove considerably more outspoken among women. The probability of being endowed with the most stigmatized physique decreases considerably

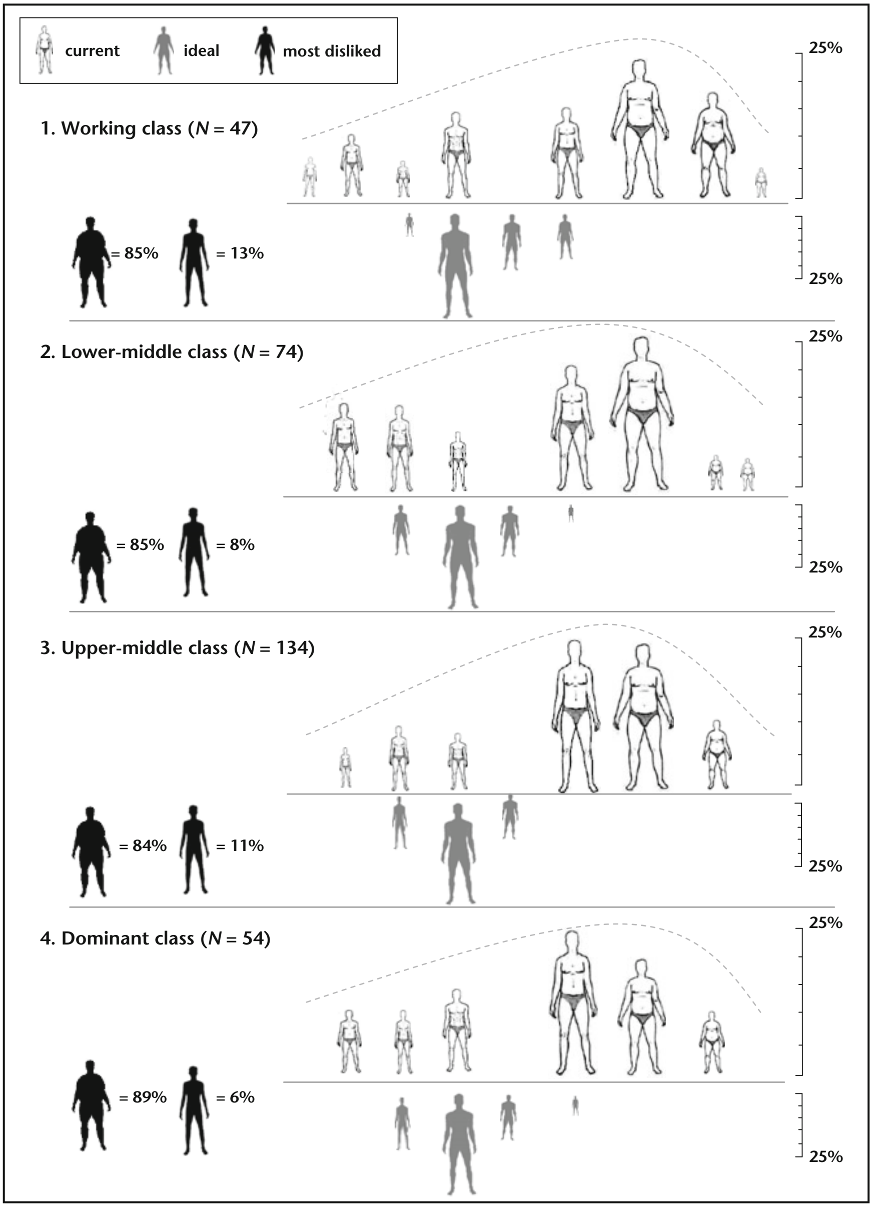


*Figure 14.3* Current, ideal and most disliked body by social class (men)
Note: The size of the figures is proportionate to their observed frequency. For reasons of presentation, figures for current and ideal body are represented on a different scale.
*Source*: National Body Survey, 2010, Belgium.

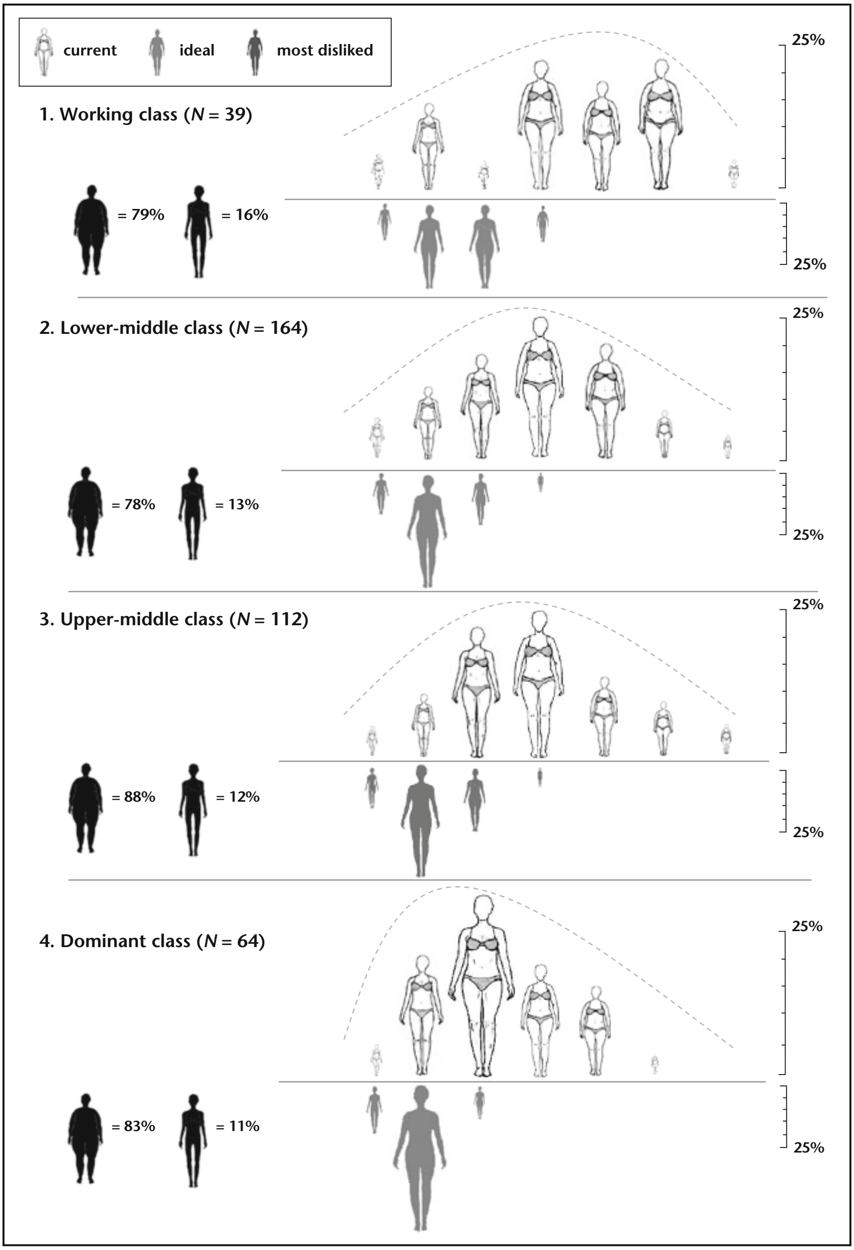


*Figure 14.4* Current, ideal and most disliked body by social class (women)
*Source*: National Body Survey, 2010, Belgium.

as one rises in the social hierarchy, with the percentage of women who claimed to have type 8 as their current body decreasing from 23% of working-class women, through 10% of those in the upper-middle class, to 3% of women from dominant social backgrounds. Inversely, the chances of attaining those body-types deemed most attractive (types 4 and 5) increase from 20% among working-class women, through 29% and 34% of those in the lower- and upper-middle classes, to 58% among women who are situated at the top of the social hierarchy. Quite tellingly, one-third of working-class women (31%) chose as their personal ideal the type of body (type 5) that more than a third (36%) of those in the dominant class actually claim to have. The overall result is that the gap between the type of body respondents claim to have, and the physical appearance to which they aspire, becomes systematically smaller as one rises in social space.

## Hexis and cathexis

According to Bourdieu, this discrepancy between the body that 'is' and the body that 'ought to be' has quite serious consequences for the manner in which social agents experience their bodies. In fact, the analysis suggests that members of dominated groups, and especially *women* who are situated at the bottom of the class structure, have durably internalized the dominant perception of their own physique. For instance, when asked to rate their personal satisfaction with their weight on a scale from 0 to 10 (Table 14.4), working-class women and those with little or no formal education (including unemployed women and housewives) consistently rate themselves lowest in weight-satisfaction. Similar results were found for men, although here differences in average weight-satisfaction between the classes again proved somewhat more attenuated. That weight-satisfaction is an integral element of agents' satisfaction with appearance in general is also shown by the fact that respondents' ratings of their own physical appearance varied in a highly similar manner. Again, it is among those who are situated at the bottom of the social hierarchy that the average scores proved lowest. That the dominant definition of the 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' body even affects those who tend to be most shielded from the *direct* scrutiny of their physical capital, is shown by the fact that unemployed women and housewives tend to rate themselves lowest both in terms of appearance and weight-satisfaction.

Similarly, the percentage of respondents who describe themselves as 'overweight' or 'obese' rises sharply as one moves from women who occupy dominant social positions (16%) or those who have obtained a master's or postgraduate degree (23%) to working-class women (45%) or those with little or no formal education (44%), while the percentage of those who describe their own weight as 'normal' varies in an inverse manner. For men, the situation proves somewhat less straightforward. Whereas working-class respondents and those who obtained a secondary degree in a vocational or technical track proved somewhat more inclined to describe themselves as 'overweight', differences in occupational and educational status are considerably more attenuated than those found among women. Finally, the survey also confronted respondents with the statements '*I find myself an attractive person*' and '*I find myself below average in beauty*'. Again, their responses suggest that social agents draw an unequal degree of 'subjective' satisfaction from their own appearance. Whereas more than half

*Table 14.2* Satisfaction with weight and appearance by gender, educational capital, professional status and occupational category[a]

| | *Satisfaction with weight (0–10)*[b,c] | | *Satisfaction with appearance (0–10)* | | *N* | | *Describe themselves as 'overweight' or 'obese' (%)* | | *'I find myself an attractive person' (% agree)* | | *'I find myself below average in beauty' (% agree)* | | *N* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ | ♂ | ♀ |
| **Educational capital** | *** | *** | * | ** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Less than HS | 6.3 | 5.6 | 6.9 | 6.5 | 909 | 968 | 32 | *44* | 38 | 41 | *30* | *37* | 56 | 81 |
| HS (voc./techn.) | 6.5 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 6.9 | 376 | 293 | *47* | 39 | 35 | 37 | 8 | 19 | 45 | 77 |
| HS (gen.) | 6.8 | 6.3 | 7.1 | 6.8 | 270 | 324 | 29 | 34 | 31 | 36 | 19 | 28 | 34 | 41 |
| Bach. | 6.6 | 6.2 | 7.1 | 6.9 | 255 | 331 | 31 | 36 | 35 | 37 | 13 | 23 | 108 | 144 |
| MA & postgrad. | *7.1* | *6.8* | *7.3* | *7.2* | 299 | 114 | 29 | 22 | *55* | *55* | 18 | 15 | 108 | 151 |
| **Occupational category** | * | * | *** | ** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unemployed | 6.3 | 5.7 | 6.9 | 6.6 | 160 | 185 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | 6 | 17 |
| Housework | n.a.[d] | 5.8 | n.a. | 6.7 | 4 | 250 | n.a. | 29 | n.a. | 43 | n.a. | 23 | 0 | 22 |
| Unskilled workers | 6.0 | 5.7 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 257 | 325 | n.a. | *53* | n.a. | 30 | n.a. | *42* | 14 | 36 |
| Skilled workers | 6.6 | 6.1 | 7.1 | 6.9 | 536 | 198 | 29 | 43 | 45 | 42 | *19* | 25 | 45 | 21 |
| Craftsmen and shopkeepers | 6.4 | 6.1 | 6.9 | 7.0 | 150 | 134 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | 14 | 17 |
| Office workers | 6.4 | 5.9 | 7.0 | 6.7 | 570 | 914 | 30 | 33 | 40 | 44 | 13 | 19 | 170 | 298 |
| Junior exec. | 6.6 | *6.6* | 7.2 | *7.2* | 100 | 244 | *38* | 39 | *47* | *52* | 15 | 34 | 68 | 33 |
| Professions | 6.9 | (6.4) | 7.6 | (6.4) | 38 | 19 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | 9 | 12 |
| Commercial employers | *7.0* | n.a. | *7.7* | n.a. | 26 | 4 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | 4 | 0 |
| **Total** | **6.5** | **5.9** | **7.0** | **6.7** | **2116** | **2172** | **32** | **34** | **42** | **43** | **17** | **23** | **356** | **510** |

Notes:
[a]The figures on satisfaction with weight and appearance are drawn from a national survey on 'well-being' conducted by the Department of Sociology of the Free University of Brussels (*Vrije Universiteit Brussel*) in 2004. The data on the subjective description of weight and the statements on appearance come from a smaller survey organized by the author in 2010. Given the relatively small sample size ($N = 892$), it was not possible to provide meaningful results for all occupational categories.
[b]All scores have been adjusted for age differences.
[c]Numbers in italics denote the highest score for that particular indicator.
[d]Number of observations too low to make meaningful inferences
*** $P < 0.001$, ** $P < 0.010$, * $P < 0.05$

of respondents, both men and women, who obtained a master's or a postgraduate degree and were from a dominant social background viewed themselves as attractive, this drops to roughly a third of working-class men and women. Similarly, working-class women (22%) proved almost three times as likely as women who occupy dominant social positions (8%) to consider themselves below average in beauty.

Such results indicate that the 'subjective' experience of the body can be reduced neither to the type of generic alienation represented by the Sartrian 'body-for-others', nor to the type of corporeal 'absence' or 'transparence' that often subtends phenomenological descriptions of the 'lived body'. What unites these apparently opposed perspectives is the silence with which they brush over the *social* conditions that are at the root of bodily self-consciousness or, inversely, of the body being experienced as self-evident or 'forgotten'. They tend to ignore, firstly, that the power to *objectify*, that is, to impose a particular definition of the legitimate body and the value of its traits, is far from universal, but is itself commensurate with social power. Secondly, they tend to overlook the fact that those properties that elicit stigmatization or valorization (such as corpulence or slimness) are themselves social products which are not randomly distributed across social space. Hence, far from being an inevitable condition of 'being-in-the-world', the experience of the body as haunted by the objectifying gaze of others is the particular plight of those who are unable to ignore the dominant definition of the legitimate physique, while at the same time being deprived of the means to fully realize this definition. It is this gap between recognition and ownership, between ideal and current physique, which leads to 'a fascinated awareness of oneself and one's body, to a consciousness fascinated by its corporality' (Bourdieu, 2008: 86).

Conversely, the ability to experience one's own body as 'absent', that is, as self-evident and fully justified in being, is not a gift of nature, but is itself the rare social privilege of those who, quite literally, 'embody' the norm. It is the privilege of those for whom bodily *hexis* is synonymous with bodily *cathexis*, the libidinal investment in one's own body which flows from the capacity to impose one's own criteria of apperception and forms the basis for its self-assured and contented projection towards others (and hence, paradoxically, for it being experienced as 'absent' in everyday practice).

## A moral physiognomy of class

'The human figure', writes Simmel, 'is the scene in which psychophysiological impulses struggle with physical gravity. The manner of fighting and resolving this battle repeatedly in each succeeding moment determines the style in which individuals and types present themselves to us' (Simmel, 1959 [1901]: 278). When discussing these physiognomic properties of the body (and the face in particular) he noted how 'closed eyes, head dropping to the chest, slack lips, lax musculature merely obeying gravity' are all treated as 'evidences of reduced spiritual life' (*ibid*.). From the above it becomes clear that Simmel's observations can equally be extended to the size and shape of the body, where the oppositions between the straight and the curved, the square and the round, the toned and the bulging are 'immediately read as indices of a "moral" physiognomy, socially characterized, i.e., of a "vulgar" or "distinguished" mind, naturally "natural" or naturally "cultivated"' (*Di*: 193). While the preceding analyses have aimed to show that social agents have a highly unequal probability of being endowed with such morally qualified physical attributes, they have left one crucial element of this equation unexplored. If physical differences do indeed contribute to the naturalization of class-divisions (by transforming them into innate differences of 'character' and 'personality'), then physical size should not only be invested with a particular aesthetic or moral value, but would also need to signal *social* identity. It is precisely this homology between morally qualified physical traits and positions in the social structure that makes the body into more than just a 'symbol' of class-status, but effectively transforms it into 'an embodied *theory* of the division of labor' (Martin, 2000: 202, original emphasis). More than simply an 'expression' of social status, physical differences provide a short-hand 'explanation' of that status of the type: 'Fat people are lazy and unmotivated. The poor and the unemployed are fat. *Ergo*: They are poor and unemployed because they are passive and lack ambition.'

To gauge whether social agents were also capable of divining indices of social position from such physical differences, the survey also asked respondents to choose which silhouette they thought was most 'typical' of four distinct social categories. These categories were chosen to reflect different positions in social space, ranging from those who occupy the most precarious social positions (an unemployed man or woman), through those who are situated in a more 'stable', but still dominated positions (a male or female worker), to those who are situated at the top of the social structure. Among the latter, the questionnaire also distinguished between those whose status derived mainly from an *economically* dominant position (a businessman or -woman) and those who mainly wielded *cultural* authority (a male or female artist) in order to gauge whether the perception of bodies also discriminated between differences based on the particular *type* of social status.

The results of respondents' classifications are summarized in Figures 14.5 and 14.6, which present the three most commonly attributed silhouettes for each of the four social categories in terms of the social background of the respondents. In addition, they also show the percentage of respondents who reported *not* knowing which body figure to attribute to a particular category. These figures already reveal that, while such a classificatory exercise is admittedly somewhat artificial (not only for reducing body shape to a *two-dimensional* representation, but also for abstracting it from the entire system of features that agents draw upon to classify others, which also includes sartorial and cosmetic indices, not to mention bodily hexis), it does not prove to be completely meaningless for respondents. For the majority of responses, only one in ten respondents indicated they did not know which body-type to attribute to a particular social category, while for others the proportion of 'don't know' answers never exceeds 20%. Furthermore, the fact that the three most commonly chosen silhouettes manage to group between half and three-quarters of the responses for a particular category further suggests that agents prove quite capable of equating physical and social characteristics.

A comparison of the classifications of respondents from different social classes again reveals a considerable consensus as to which silhouette gets attributed to a particular social category. With the exception of one category (the male artist), *none* of the selected body-types revealed statistically significant differences in terms of respondents'

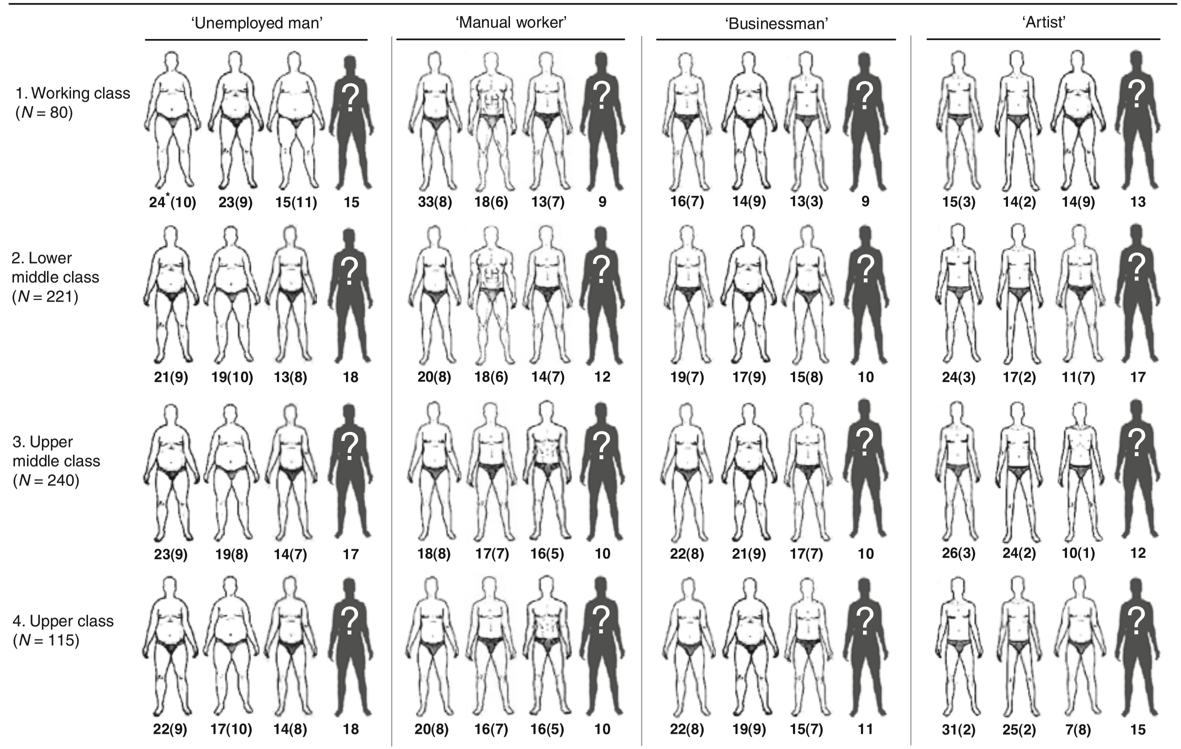


*Figure 14.5* Classification of male silhouettes by social class (percentage and type)

Note: This figure presents the three most commonly attributed silhouettes for a particular social category, as well as the percentage of respondents who claimed they didn't know which silhouette to choose. The number in brackets corresponds to the body types presented in the figure found in the Appendix.

*This number reads as follows: '24% of working-class respondents chose type 10 as the most typical silhouette for an unemployed man'.

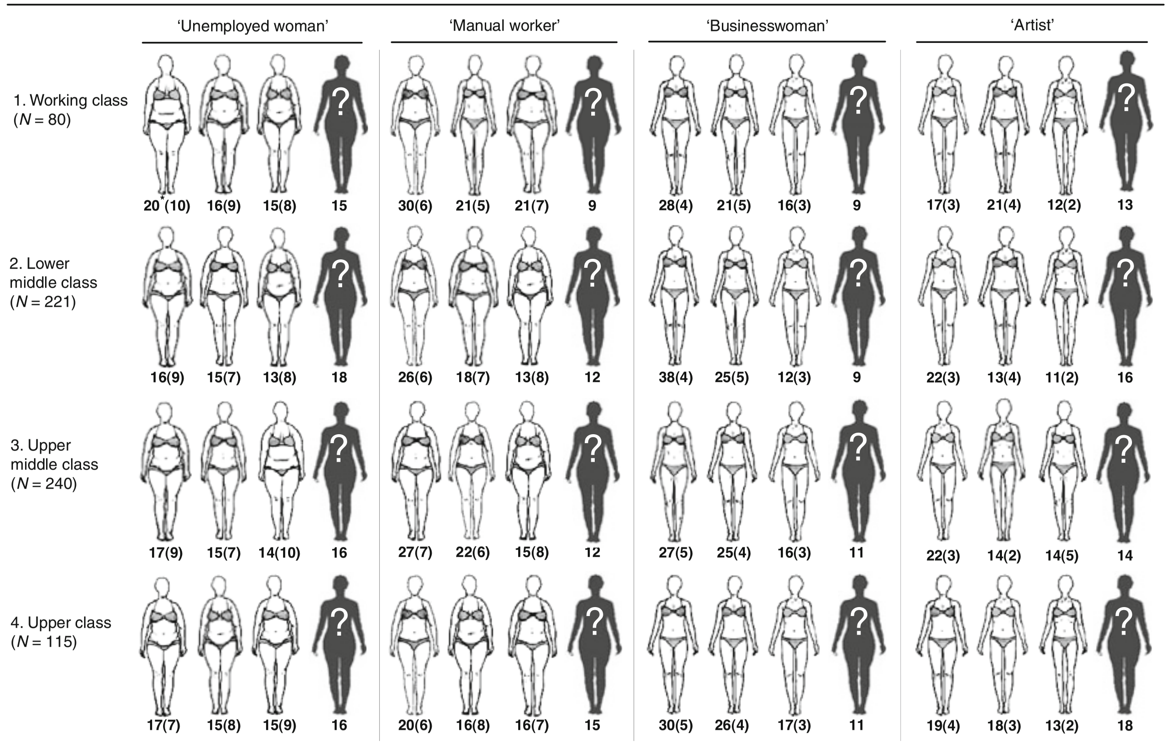


*Figure 14.6* Classification of female silhouettes by social class (percentage and type)

Note: This figure presents the three most commonly attributed silhouettes for a particular social category, as well as the percentage of respondents who claimed they didn't know which silhouette to choose. The number in brackets corresponds to the body types presented in the figure found in the Appendix.

*This number reads as follows '20% of working-class respondents chose type 10 as the most typical silhouette for an unemployed woman'.

social class. One thing that respondents clearly agreed upon is that those who dwell in the most precarious regions of social space—in this case the 'unemployed' (both men and women)—are most likely to have the most devalued (i.e. corpulent) physique. Not only did more than half of the respondents from each class associate unemployment with the most corpulent silhouettes (types 8–11), but in addition almost *none* of them attributed the ideal male and female physique (types 5 and 4, respectively) to an unemployed man or woman. The same seems to hold true for the category of 'manual workers', although here significant differences again emerge between men and women. Especially in the case of 'female workers', respondents again proved more likely to attribute larger body-types to this category (types 6–8) and less inclined to equate working-class women with the most desirable physique (fewer than 4% of respondents from each social class chose type 4 as a typical female working-class physique).

The classification of male 'workers' proved somewhat less straightforward. The first thing to note is that the traditional association between working-class masculinity and muscularity does not emerge particularly strongly from respondents' judgments. Less than one in five respondents, from each social class, chose a muscular physique as most common for 'male workers', with respondents from the working class and lower-middle class being somewhat more inclined to select the most muscular physique (type 6) as most emblematic of this category. At any rate, the clear association between 'working class' and a less desirable physique, as was the case for women, proved less evident for this category, with members of the dominant class (16%) even being somewhat more inclined to associate them with the ideal male physique (type 5) than working-class respondents themselves (9%). More generally, the equation of the most desirable body shape with dominant social groups and the most stigmatized physique with dominated social groups does not seem to fully apply to the social perception of the male body. This is further underlined by the classifications of the third social type, 'the businessman'. Respondents appear much more likely to attribute a corpulent physique to this category than to the 'male workers' (even though they are still considered to have a leaner body-type than the 'unemployed'). There is, however, some variation between social classes in the degree to which respondents subscribe to the equation of corpulence and the world of business. Interestingly, working-class respondents prove most divided on what the most common body for a 'businessman' actually is, with 10% of respondents still attributing them with the 'ideal' male physique (as opposed to 4% of respondents from a dominant background), and one out of three respondents (34%) attributing them with the leanest body-types (types 3–5) as opposed to one in five respondents from the upper-middle and dominant classes.

That the perception of class bodies operates along strongly *gendered* lines becomes even clearer when one looks at the manner in which respondents classified the most common figure for a 'businesswoman'. Close to 30% of respondents from both working-class (28%) and dominant social backgrounds (30%) attributed them with the most desirable body-type, while two-thirds of working-class respondents (65%) and almost three-quarters of those at the top of the social hierarchy (73%) chose a lean physique (types 3–5) as being most typical for a 'businesswoman'. These results further underline how the *social* classification of bodies is intrinsically tied to their *sexual* classification. It is especially among those who occupy a dominated position in the *sexual* division of labor (i.e. women) that one finds the closest correspondence, both in terms of the actual distribution of physical size and its symbolic evaluation, between social and physical value.

The inherent *over*-determination of social and sexual characteristics is, however, not restricted to the perception of women's bodies. There is another manner in which the classificatory schemes that organize the perception of physical differences tend to establish equivalences between positions in the social and sexual division of labor. This is shown particularly clearly by the manner in which respondents differentiated between the bodies of men who wield *economic* power (the 'businessman') and those who are associated with *cultural* authority (the male 'artist'). Their classifications suggest that this opposition between 'temporal' and 'spiritual' authority is perceived as a particular form of the opposition between the masculine and the feminine. Whereas most respondents attributed the former with a large, heavy and hence masculine, physique, they tend to disproportionately associate men who are engaged in *cultural* production with a slender and effeminate body (types 2 and 3), and increasingly so as one rises in the social hierarchy. More importantly, the fact that this opposition between the 'heavy' and the 'light' is not without its basis in the actual distribution of weight-differences between class-fractions (as shown in Table 14.1), in turn contributes to the legitimization of this opposition (rooted in capital *composition* rather than *volume*) as being seemingly rooted in nature, and *sexual* nature in particular.[7]

What these classifications suggest is that the social perception of bodies makes use of the same type of classificatory schemes that inform the perception and evaluation of the entire constellation of objects, practices and properties that constitute the 'lifestyle' of different social groups and which, as *Distinction* argues, 'receive the beginnings of objectification in the pairs of antagonistic adjectives used to classify and qualify persons or objects in the most varied areas of practice' (*Di*: 468). This can be seen in the different uses that are a made of an opposition that is central to the social (and sexual) qualification of practices, properties and bodies, namely that between the 'heavy' and the 'light' (and the host of homologous oppositions it implies: material/spiritual, coarse/refined, body/mind, etc.). When used by dominated groups, and especially (but not exclusively) by working-class *men*, the qualifier 'heavy' tends to be invested with a positive meaning, denoting everything that is sturdy ('heavy duty'), strengthening ('heavy fuel'), but also reliable and straightforward (a 'solid character'). Inversely, the popular uses of the term 'light' often have a negative connotation, implying everything (and everyone) that lacks substance, content and 'backbone' ('he is a lightweight'), is too sober, stingy or flimsy, but also too effete and effeminate (homosexuality often being described as being 'light in one's loafers' or, more succinctly, as being 'a light one'). Conversely, the dominant perception of the body makes use of the same opposition, but inverts its terms. When applied to the body, dominant uses of the term 'heavy' are often invested with a *negative* meaning, referring to properties (and people) that are considered excessive ('heavy make-up') or coarse ('heavy drinking'), but also passive ('heavy gait'), materialistic and hence lacking in subtlety, spirit and intellect (someone who's 'thick'). To this they oppose everything that is 'light' which is to say, elegant ('light touch'), subtle ('light perfume'), but also refined and sophisticated.

Again, the fact that such classifications are not without their basis in the objective distribution of physical capital between the classes (as the social differentiation of BMI presented in Table 14.1 shows) only serves to reinforce the mechanism of 'circular causality' that 'confines thought within the self-evidence of relationships of domination inscribed both in objectivity, in the form of objective divisions, and in subjectivity, in the form of cognitive schemes which, being organized in accordance with these divisions, organize the perception of these objective divisions' (Bourdieu, 2001: 11). Put differently, because differences in physical size owe a considerable part of their distribution to the same system of class-divisions that *also* structures the classificatory schemes through which these differences are perceived, they tend to naturalize the arbitrary character of these divisions and make them appear as rooted in the indisputable objectivity of nature.

## A 'hybrid' trait

There is, however, an even more fundamental reason why *weight*-differences in particular contribute in such an effective manner to the naturalization of class-divisions. In fact, most contemporary social systems are characterized by the fact that *bodily* characteristics—especially those related to relatively 'fixed' traits like biological sex, ethnicity or physical disability—can no longer be invoked as a legitimate justification for differences in social status. Stronger still, excluding agents from social positions on the basis of such traits is often subjected to legal sanctions. While a reference to inherited traits might function as a means of explaining status-differences in a feudal social order, such a reference clashes with the dominant sociodicy in societies where status, especially through the legitimizing action of the educational system, is deemed to be the product of individual *merit*. It is precisely in this respect, however, that the significance of body-*weight* stands out. A person's weight is in fact distinguished from other, equally visible aspects of his or her appearance in that it is deemed to be largely under individual control and hence seen as a matter of personal responsibility (see Cahnman, 1968; DeJong, 1980). Not faulty genetics or brute misfortune, but an innate lack of self-control and self-discipline are seen as the prime causes of a corpulent body. As DeJong observed: 'the obese have much more in common with those who possess a characterological stigma than those who are physically handicapped' (1980: 85). To be fat is, above all, a sign of not *wanting* to be thin and hence to willfully choose one's own stigmatization.

I will argue that it is precisely this 'hybrid' character of weight-differences—suspended halfway between nature and culture, a 'being' and a 'having', a gift and an achievement—that makes them into such an effective vehicle for the legitimization of class-differences. While undeniably 'of the flesh' and therefore partaking of the charm and charisma of a natural gift, a person's weight is simultaneously read as the most tangible index of his or her degree of willpower and self-control. In this sense, a well managed figure is not unlike the skilful display of cultural and linguistic competence in providing proof of a 'cultivated nature' which has 'all the appearances of grace or a gift and yet acquired, so therefore "deserved"' (Bourdieu, 1993: 235). Conversely, a corpulent physique provides the ultimate 'visual representation of non-control'

(Ritenbaugh, 1982), attesting to its owner's inability to transcend primary impulses, to harness 'vulgar' appetites and hence to overcome 'nature'. No wonder, then, that the corpulent body serves as the ideal 'pretext for a class racism which associates the popular with everything heavy, thick and fat' (*Di*: 178). By helping to transform a product of social necessity into a question of 'personality or character', the contemporary celebration of slimness and the concomitant stigmatization of corpulence hence makes a crucial contribution to the process whereby 'the social conditions necessary for the acquisition of forms of bodily hexis are misperceived as natural, individual, moral dispositions instead of socially mediated forms that relate directly to cultural relations of domination and exclusion' (Charlesworth, 2000: 158).

## Conclusion

In a key passage from *Distinction* devoted to the body, Bourdieu observed:

> The most fundamental principles of class identity and unity, those which lie in the unconscious, would be affected if, on the decisive point of the relationship to the body, the dominated class came to see itself only through the eyes of the dominant class, that is, in terms of the dominant definition of the body and its uses.
>
> *(Di: 384)*

This latches onto one of the book's central arguments, namely that some of the most effective (because best hidden) forms of class-domination exert themselves in those aspects of everyday practice where sociologists are often least inclined to look for them, that is, in the seemingly mundane areas of food, clothing or bodily care. This chapter has aimed to show that, far from being a cosmetic issue, the contemporary celebration of slimness (and concomitant stigmatization of corpulence) constitutes a particularly pernicious form of symbolic violence. Firstly, because it affects dominated agents in an aspect of their identity which, like tastes in food, for instance, is linked to some of the most deep-seated class dispositions. Being endowed with all the necessity of a 'second nature' not only makes it particularly resistant to conscious control, but also causes failure to live up to the dominant standards of physical excellence to be experienced in the mode of personal failure and self-incrimination ('*It's stronger than me*' or '*I can't help myself*'), that is, as a form of cultural shame which cannot assume itself as such. Secondly, because the contemporary cult of health and slimness targets precisely those aspects of the working-class lifestyle that provide the basis not only for a relatively autonomous definition of class identity—most clearly exemplified by the popular valorization of 'virility and of everything that produces and supports it ("strong" food and drink, heavy work and exercise)' (*Di*: 384)—but also for a set of circumscribed 'luxuries' in a universe that is otherwise pervaded by necessity. While *Distinction* repeatedly stressed that it is especially in their manner of using, perceiving and treating the body that the working-class prove most defiant of the dominant lifestyle, the question remains to what extent the 'realistic hedonism' (*Di*: 394) that informs popular tastes can counter the effects of symbolic dispossession that accompany the imposition of the dominant bodily aesthetic. Faced with the proliferation in symbolic outlets devoted to diffusing this aesthetic—nowadays epitomized by the various forms of 'lifestyle'—or 'makeover' television (see Wood and Skeggs, 2011)—the capacity of dominated groups to impose and uphold their own criteria of physical apperception appears increasingly constricted. While this chapter does not pretend to provide a conclusive answer to this question, it has tried to show that the imposition of the dominant lifestyle, and the forms of cultural shame it generates, extend well beyond the domain of 'legitimate culture'. In this sense, *Distinction*'s key lesson that the sociology of taste is an integral element of a sociology of social domination is perhaps more pertinent than ever, especially since such domination increasingly operates in a manner that by 'substituting seduction for repression, public relations for policing, advertising for authority, the velvet glove for the iron fist, pursues the symbolic integration of the dominated classes by imposing needs rather than inculcating norms' (*Di*: 154).

## Notes

1 Years in square brackets indicate the original French publication of the texts.
2 The BMI is calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by his or her height in meters squared.
3 This, incidentally, brings the definition of 'habitus' much closer to its uses in the life sciences, where it is used to denote an individual's physical and physiological constitution.
4 The analyses presented here are in fact part of a larger research-project by the author which applies some of *Distinction*'s central insights to a comparative analysis of food habits, sporting practices, personal care and weight-concern.
5 In order to analyze the variations in BMI not only in terms of agents' overall capital-*volume*, but also in accordance with the particular *composition* of their capital structure, it was necessary to construct an occupational taxonomy that not only differentiated between agents' overall class-position (i.e. whether they belong to the working class, the lower or upper fringes of the *petit-bourgeoisie* or the dominant class), but also distinguished class-*fractions* that are distinguished according to the particular type of capital (cultural vs. economic) that is predominant in their capital-structure. Given the large sample-size ($N$ = 11,972) of the survey used for these analyses (Belgian National Health Survey, 2004), it was possible to delineate quite detailed class fractions within both the dominant class and the *petit-bourgeoisie*. Moving from the dominant to the dominated fractions of the dominant class, the taxonomy differentiated between the owners of large private companies (commercial employers), senior executives within both the private and public sector, the members of the professions (who occupy an intermediate position within the dominant class), professors in higher education as well as senior scientific researchers, and finally those who are positioned within fields of cultural production (artists, journalists, critics, …). A similar distinction was made in the upper fringes of the middle class between those who are engaged in the financial sector (real estate, insurance, banking, …), the junior executives, the social and medical services (therapists, chiropractors, …) and the secondary school teachers. In addition, the occupational classification also differentiated, within the somewhat heterogeneous category of 'clerical workers', between occupations that involve more traditional administrative tasks and those that entail a high degree of what Collins (1992) has coined 'Goffmanian labor', namely occupations centered on the 'front-stage' work of presentation and representation (receptionists, secretaries, …) that demand special investments in appearance and demeanour.
6 The author is deeply indebted to R. Carremans for his invaluable work in helping to construct these diagrams.
7 This association of culture, and educational culture in particular, with the feminine and the effeminate and its consequences for the reproduction of class inequalities has already been discussed by authors such as Hoggart (1957, esp. 294ff.) and Willis (1977), and more recently by Connell (2000, esp. 131ff.) and Reay (2002), as well as by Bourdieu himself (1977b: 667 n32) in one of his earliest excursions into linguistics.

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## Appendix: Figures of male and female silhouettes

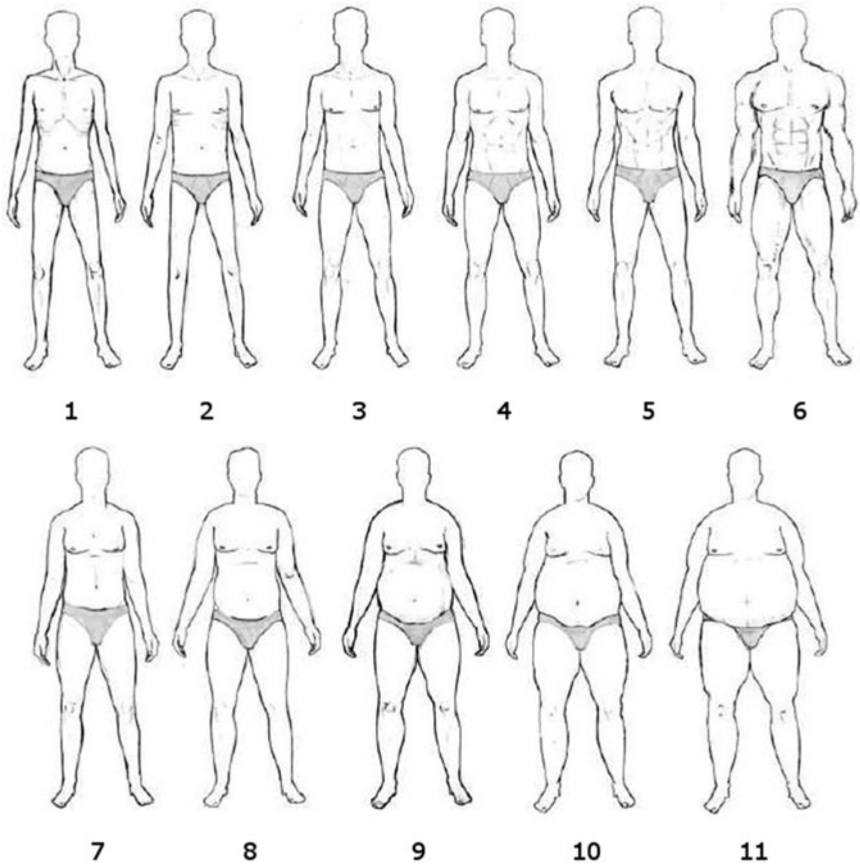


*Figure 14.7* Figure of male silhouettes

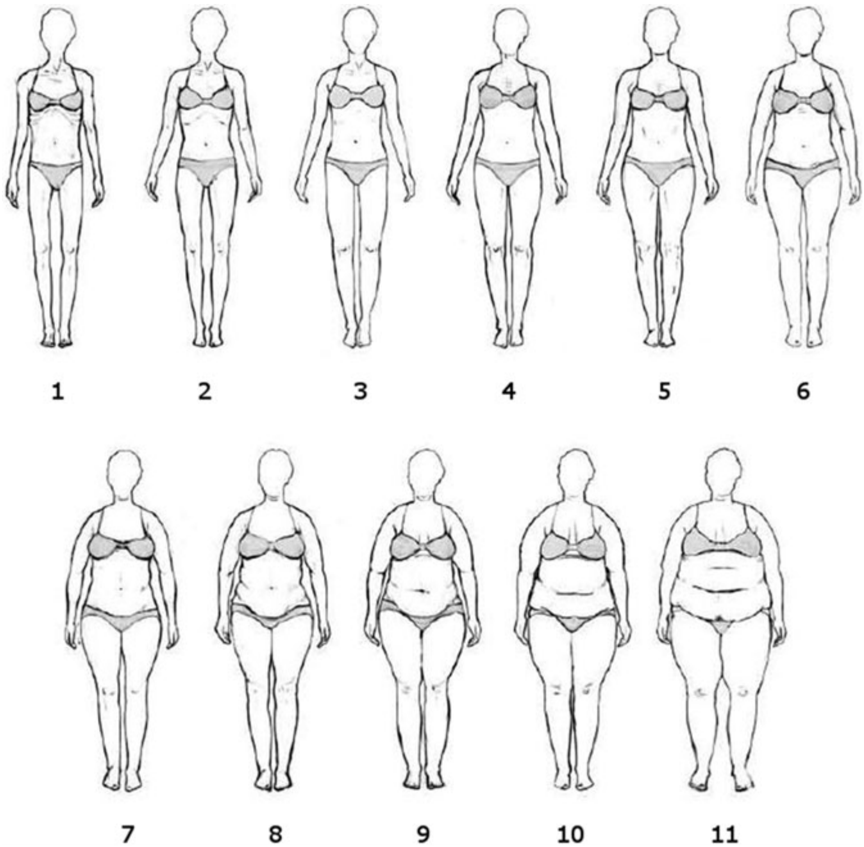


*Figure 14.8* Figure of female silhouettes

# 15

# The Australian space of lifestyles in comparative perspective

*Tony Bennett, Mauricio Bustamante and John Frow*[1]

This chapter compares multiple correspondence analyses (MCA) of the survey data produced by two projects examining the social distribution of practices of cultural consumption in Australia and the UK. The two spaces of lifestyle produced by these analyses are governed by class, age and gender as the three most significant axes of differentiation. There are, however, differences in the roles that specific cultural fields (notably the music, literary and media fields) play in the two national contexts. Class culture divisions are also less marked in Australia than in Britain, albeit that working-class tastes and those of professionals are strongly polarised.

To what extent are cultural fields in a globalised world nationally specific? That question has grown in importance since the publication of *Distinction* (Bourdieu, 1984). Posed initially as a set of questions concerning how far the peculiarities of the French cultural field in the 1960s (the central role of the state; the distinctive qualities of the education system) apply elsewhere (Lamont, 1992), it has been displaced, in more recent literature, by an accumulating body of evidence about the specific characteristics of other national cultural fields (see, for example, Cvetičanin and Popescu, 2011; Gripsrud *et al.*, 2011; Prieur and Savage, 2011).

It is to this second enterprise that we contribute here. We first present the results of an MCA of the data produced by the Australian Everyday Cultures (AEC) survey that was conducted in the mid-1990s, and then compare these findings with those produced by the MCA that was applied to the data produced by the UK Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion (CCSE) survey conducted a little short of a decade later. We do so with a view to considering how far the social articulations of cultural practices in 1990s Australia approximate to, or differ from, those found in the United Kingdom.[2] We have selected this point of comparison partly because, while their trajectories are likely to become increasingly diverse, the British and Australian cultural fields are still closely connected through language, cultural and media networks, and relations of historical affiliation. Britain therefore provides the most meaningful point of reference for a comparative analysis concerned to identify those distinctive aspects of the social organisation of Australian cultural practices that might merit closer attention in future research.

There is also a more pragmatic reason for this choice. Cross-cultural comparisons are, of course, beset with methodological difficulties, and we shall review these—and the ways in which we have addressed them—at appropriate points in the analysis. Suffice it to say here that our primary concern has been to model the design of the Australian MCA as closely as possible on the procedures used for the UK MCA to permit broadly based comparisons to be made regarding the organisation and composition of the two spaces of lifestyles and their connections to social divisions. Even so, our conclusions are cautious and provisional, identifying questions for further investigation, rather than definitive. This is particularly so as far as the differences between the two studies are concerned. Our findings regarding the similarities are rather more robust in the respect that the most statistically significant axes of differentiation produced by the two MCAs show strong similarities with regard to both the distribution of modalities of cultural taste and participation across the two spaces of lifestyles, and the connections between those axes of differentiation and pertinent social divisions. In rough summary, the first and most significant axis of differentiation is, in both cases, organised mainly in relation to forms and levels of cultural participation which are most strongly related to social class indicators; the second axis, where indices of cultural tastes and participation are more equally weighted, connects most strongly with age; and the third axis, where tastes prove more significant than indicators of participation, correlates most strongly with gender. There is, however, also evidence of significant differences that warrant further investigation. These concern, first, differences in the roles that specific cultural fields (the music, literary and media fields, for example) play relative to one another in the two national contexts; and second, the ways in which cultural divisions connect with social divisions of class in the two studies. There are three issues here. First, class–culture divisions appear more attenuated in the Australian than in the British case, with a significant clustering of classes in the middle of the space of lifestyles. Second, and as the chief exception to this, the division between the working class and professionals is more strongly polarised in Australia, while, third, managers and professionals seem to be more clearly separated from each other with regard to their cultural practices than are their British counterparts.

We return to these comparisons, and the degrees of reliance that might be placed on them, in the final section of this chapter. First, though, we look more closely at the methods used in the two studies in order to identify the strengths and limitations of the comparisons we are able to make. We pay particular attention here to the comparability of the procedures used in the design of the two MCAs. We then look more closely at the construction of the space of lifestyles produced by the Australian MCA, before looking at the connections between this space and social class indicators, age and gender. These analyses will set the scene for our concluding discussion of the most significant differences suggested by comparing the AEC and CCSE MCAs.

## Methodological perspectives

The similarities between the two projects are soon stated. Both were based on national surveys of cultural practices and preferences designed to identify aspects of cultural tastes, participation and knowledge as indices of cultural capital and to correlate them with indicators of economic and social capital and a range of socio-demographic indicators.[3] The questionnaires for both surveys drew on focus group discussions designed to tease out the cultural interests of different social groups identified in terms of gender, class, ethnicity, level of education and, in the Australian study, Aboriginal identification. Both surveys were supplemented by follow-up interviews with representatives of the survey sample.[4] These were selected to allow the research teams to explore particular areas of cultural practice in greater detail, particularly with a view to unravelling the social logics informing their relations to class position, age or gender—or, of course, combinations of these. The two studies were conducted roughly a decade apart: the AEC survey was in the field between October 1994 and March 1995; that for CCSE was administered between November 2003 and April 2004. While this temporal lag brings with it the danger that we are not comparing like with like, the questions asked in each survey are for the most part not strongly affected by cultural change (the major exception has to do with the digital media, and we have omitted questions in this area). There are also significant differences between the two studies. The surveys were administered by different methods to national samples that differed in size and in the modes of their construction.[5] The CCSE sample comprised a main sample and an ethnic boost sample, and also included interviews with a specially recruited cohort of economic and political elites, whereas the AEC study was limited to a main sample. While both studies surveyed cultural practices across a range of cultural fields, the scope of these was broader in the AEC questionnaire, which included a greater range of domestic cultural practices and also surveyed holiday and gambling practices. And while many questions asked were similar, others differed with regard to both their specific content and their form.

Although it is important to register these differences, we have taken a number of steps to limit their bearing on our comparisons of the MCAs conducted for the two studies. We shall explore the properties of MCA more fully shortly. Suffice it to say for now that this is the method through which the relations between cultural practices are plotted into a visual representation of the space of lifestyles, where their relations to socio-demographic variables can then also be examined. The MCA for the UK study was performed solely on the main sample for this project, and was thus congruent with the MCA on the Australian data in this respect. When account is taken of the individuals excluded from the two MCAs because they had failed to respond to an adequate range of questions, the UK MCA refers to 1529 individuals whereas that for Australia refers to 2715 individuals (of whom 2154 were retained for the purposes of class analysis).[6] The questions selected for the Australian MCA approximated as closely as possible those included in the British study and focused, in both cases, on cultural tastes as expressed by likes and dislikes (with a greater stress on the latter in the UK study) and on cultural participation.[7] Questions concerning the extent and kind of respondents' cultural knowledge were not included in either case. When passive modalities—those recruiting a response rate of less than 4% –were excluded, the Australian MCA comprised 29 questions, 16 of which focused on taste and 13 on participation, encompassing 102 active modalities—that is, particular practices—38 of which deal with participation and 64 with taste. The UK MCA comprised 41 questions, 24 focused on taste and 17 on participation, encompassing 166 active modalities.

The questions were, in both cases, spread across seven fields: television, film, music, literature, visual art, culinary practices, and sport.[8] The distribution of questions across these fields was the same with regard to film, visual art, culinary practices and sport. There was a greater focus on the music, literary and, to a lesser extent, television fields, particularly with regard to tastes, in the questions included in the UK MCA. The active modalities were spread across the different fields (see Table 15.1), thus securing, in both cases, a reasonable balance between them in the construction of the space of lifestyles, rather than any one field preponderating unduly. The coding of questions included in the two MCAs followed similar procedures, albeit that some options included in the UK study were not possible with the Australian data owing to the wording of the survey questions: in the former, some tastes were coded as like, dislike or indifferent, whereas only like and, less frequently, dislike responses could be coded for the Australian data. Similarly, the framing of participation questions for the latter usually permitted only yes/no coding options, whereas infrequent participation could sometimes also be coded in relation to the UK data. These considerations account for a good deal of the difference in the totals of active modalities in the two MCAs.

MCA is a form of geometric data analysis which produces two clouds: the cloud of individuals and the cloud of modalities (see Rouanet and Le Roux, 2005). The former plots onto geometric space the supplementary (demographic) information for the individuals in the survey. Sub-clouds of individuals can then be generated in relation to each variable—for occupational class, level of education, gender, and so on—whose mean points can be put into correspondence with the modalities constituted by the cloud of modalities. These modalities are disposed relationally to one another depending on the degree to which there is overlapping participation in, or liking for, particular cultural practices. Where there is a large degree of overlap between liking, disliking, taking part in, or shunning particular kinds of cultural activity, these modalities are placed close to one another in the space of lifestyles. Where such overlap is small,

*Table 15.1* Active modalities, AEC and CCSE

| *Field* | *AEC* | *CCSE* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Television | 11 | 23 |
| Film | 13 | 20 |
| Music | 21 | 38 |
| Literary | 17 | 25 |
| Visual art | 12 | 23 |
| Culinary | 16 | 16 |
| Sport | 12 | 21 |
| Total | 102 | 166 |

modalities are distanced from one another across either the west–east or the north–south axes of the space of lifestyles. The construction of this space is based entirely on the relative disposition of the modalities where each modality represents the mean point of the individuals who like, dislike, take part in, or shun the practice in question. The organisation of this space is thus indifferent to the social characteristics of those individuals, and its construction is therefore entirely inductive. The correspondences between individuals' social characteristics and the relative positioning of cultural tastes and practices within the space of lifestyles are possible only when different sub-clouds of individuals (class, gender, etc.) are fed into that space.

We shall then, in accordance with the principles of this method, present our findings concerning the organisation of the Australian space of lifestyles first, and consider its social articulations only when its dispositional qualities have been determined. The social articulations we shall explore will be determined by how many axes of differentiation are pertinent to the interpretation of the space of lifestyles. Employing the same tests as the UK study,[9] four statistically significant axes of variation were identified. The first three of these—and particularly the first two—were far more important than the fourth. We therefore focus on the first three axes, which account for a cumulated modified rate of 82% of the total variance in the cloud of modalities (compared with 78% for the UK data). The contributions of the seven fields to this variance and, within each field, the relative contributions to such variance made by the taste and participation modalities, are broadly similar in the two studies (Tables 15.2 and 15.3). The main differences here are registered in relation to the culinary and visual art fields and, to a lesser extent, television.

The clouds of modalities which make up the two spaces of lifestyles are thus broadly comparable in their composition. The relative total contributions of taste and participation modalities are virtually identical across the two studies. Rather more important for our purposes, however, is the strong degree of correspondence in the

*Table 15.2* AEC—contribution of the seven fields to total variance according to participation and taste (percentages)

| *Frequency by subfield* | *TV* | *Film* | *Music* | *Literary* | *Visual art* | *Culinary* | *Sport* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participation | 2.7 | 2.7 | 5.8 | 5.5 | 4.2 | 5.3 | 4.1 | 30.3 |
| Taste | 8.1 | 11.0 | 14.8 | 12.2 | 4.0 | 10.8 | 8.7 | 69.7 |
| Total | 10.8 | 13.6 | 20.6 | 17.8 | 8.2 | 16.2 | 12.8 | 100 |

*Table 15.3* CCSE—contribution to total variance of the seven fields by participation and taste (percentages)

| *Frequency by subfield* | *TV* | *Films* | *Reading* | *Music* | *Visual art* | *Eating out* | *Sport* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participation | 3.2 | 1.6 | 4.0 | 7.9 | 6.3 | 3.2 | 4.0 | 30.2 |
| Taste | 11.2 | 12.1 | 11.2 | 11.2 | 9.7 | 6.4 | 8.1 | 69.8 |
| Total | 14.4 | 13.7 | 15.2 | 19.1 | 16.0 | 9.6 | 12.1 | 100 |

relative contributions that modalities of taste and participation make to the first three axes across the two MCAs. In the case of the Australian data, participation modalities account for most (64%) of the variance on the first and most important axis, whereas on the second axis, the contributions of taste and participation are weighted at 50% each (Table 15.4). On the third axis, the role of taste eclipses that of participation, accounting for 80% of the variance. On the first axis, then, the distinctions between what people choose to do, or not to do, are more consequential than expressions of likes or dislikes; on the second axis, these are more or less evenly balanced; and on the third axis, likes and dislikes trump elective forms of participation. The pattern in the UK data is similar for the first and third axes, but less so for the second, with participation/taste ratios as follows: axis 1, 60/40; axis 2, 37/63; axis 3, 15/85 (Table 15.5). We can also note that the relative contributions of the music, literary and visual art

*Table 15.4* AEC—contribution of the seven fields to the first three axes according to participation and taste (percentages)

| *Subfields* | *Axis 1* | | | *Axis 2* | | | *Axis 3* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Participation* | *Taste* | *Total* | *Participation* | *Taste* | *Total* | *Participation* | *Taste* | *Total* |
| TV | 1.0 | 2.2 | 3.2 | 0.2 | 9.0 | 9.2 | 0.8 | 20.5 | 21.3 |
| Film | 3.7 | 3.7 | 7.3 | 5.7 | 4.2 | 9.9 | 1.1 | 10.9 | 12.0 |
| Music | 17.7 | 7.3 | 25.0 | 25.1 | 22.4 | 47.5 | 2.1 | 4.0 | 6.1 |
| Literary | 17.6 | 4.6 | 22.1 | 0.8 | 3.0 | 3.8 | 1.2 | 16.2 | 17.3 |
| Visual art | 19.3 | 8.8 | 28.1 | 2.9 | 1.9 | 4.8 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 4.6 |
| Culinary | 3.1 | 8.0 | 11.1 | 7.5 | 5.5 | 13.0 | 1.7 | 14.3 | 16.0 |
| Sport | 1.2 | 2.0 | 3.2 | 7.5 | 4.4 | 11.9 | 11.4 | 11.3 | 22.7 |
| Total | 63.6 | 36.4 | 100 | 49.7 | 50.4 | 100 | 20.5 | 79.5 | 100 |

*Table 15.5* CCSE—contribution of modalities from each cultural subfield to the variations on each axis (percentages)

| *Subfields* | *Axis 1* | | | *Axis 2* | | | *Axis 3* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Participation* | *Taste* | *Total* | *Participation* | *Taste* | *Total* | *Participation* | *Taste* | *Total* |
| TV | 4.5 | 2.9 | 7.4 | 0.2 | 6.5 | 6.7 | 0.2 | 22.1 | 22.3 |
| Film | 3.7 | 2.1 | 5.8 | 2.9 | 10.2 | 13.1 | 1.3 | 18.0 | 19.2 |
| Literary/reading | 9.5 | 13.5 | 23.0 | 2.6 | 7.0 | 9.6 | 0.9 | 18.3 | 19.2 |
| Music | 14.9 | 10.3 | 25.2 | 19.5 | 25.9 | 45.4 | 2.5 | 7.5 | 10.0 |
| Visual art | 21.1 | 2.6 | 23.7 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 8.2 | 1.4 | 6.8 | 8.2 |
| Eating | 3.6 | 5.7 | 9.3 | 4.0 | 5.4 | 9.4 | 3.4 | 1.4 | 4.8 |
| Sport | 3.0 | 2.4 | 5.4 | 3.7 | 3.8 | 7.6 | 5.3 | 11.0 | 16.3 |
| Total | 60.4 | 39.6 | 100 | 37.0 | 63.0 | 100 | 15.1 | 84.9 | 100 |

modalities to the first axis are similar, and the most significant, across the two studies. Music also stands out as the most strongly differentiating field on axis 2 of both studies. The third axis shows a greater and more mixed set of differences.

## The Australian space of lifestyles

We turn now to examine how, in the Australian MCA, these first three axes translate into visual mappings of the most significant differences in the distribution of tastes and forms of participation across the Australian space of lifestyles. We look first at how all of the 102 active modalities are arrayed across this space. This will serve a number of purposes. It will allow us to identify how the questions we included in the AEC MCA have been translated into visual form, the symbols used to differentiate cultural fields, and those used to identify dispositions of taste and participation. It will also serve a more theoretical purpose. With the recent resurgence of interest in applying the principles of MCA to the analysis of cultural data, there is a tendency to present only those visual maps that identify the modalities which are most sharply distinct from one another in terms of their distribution across the space of lifestyles. While these are understandably a primary focus of attention, account also needs to be taken of the commingling of those modalities which, typically clustered together in the middle of the space of lifestyles, indicate areas of broadly shared tastes. This is a useful precaution against the tendency to over-polarise tastes. While this has been a long-standing criticism of Bourdieu's work, it is one that has acquired a particular salience in the wake of Bernard Lahire's contentions regarding the respects in which the taste profiles of individuals tend to spread across different segments of the space of lifestyles, rather than clustering uniquely in one segment (Lahire, 2003, 2004, 2011). It is also, in the Australian case, an important empirical caution, in view—as we shall see in due course—of the relatively low level of differentiation of those classes which, when mapped onto the space of lifestyles, occupy its centre where, as we have noted, shared tastes tend to congregate.

With these considerations in mind, let us look at Figure 15.1. This gives a total picture of the distribution of all 102 active modalities across the Australian space of lifestyles. The shape and colour of the symbols stand for the different cultural fields: black circles for sport; white circles for music; black diamonds for visual art; white diamonds for film; black squares for television; black triangles for culinary practices; and white triangles for literary practices. Their size indicates the relative portions of the cloud of individuals who are 'attached' to the modality in question. Plus and minus signs, when attached to the music symbols, indicate likes and dislikes, respectively; otherwise, when attached to the film, visual art and culinary symbols, they indicate level of participation, ranging from high levels (+) through less frequent ones (=) to nil (–) levels—eating out, going to the cinema or reading books, for example. Yes/no for all symbols refer either to activities participated in or not (writing and drawing, going to live music, rock or orchestral concerts, for example), or to ownership of pertinent cultural items (original paintings and drawings, limited-edition prints, art posters). While most of the labels are self-explanatory, some need a little unpacking, particularly in the culinary domain, where Ff refers

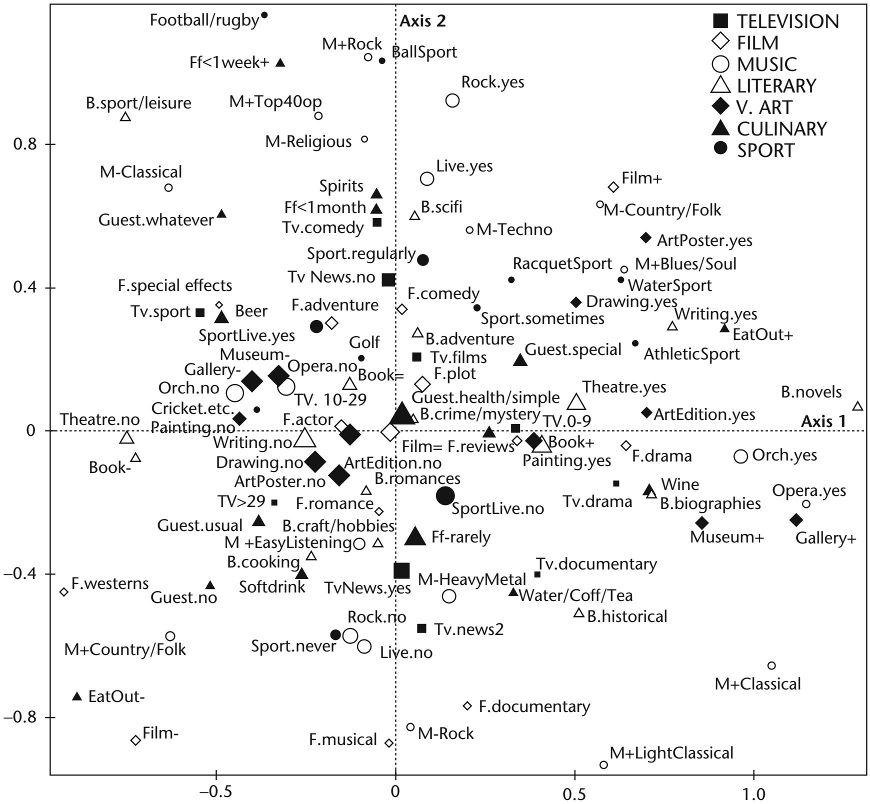


*Figure 15.1* AEC—the cloud of modalities

to frequency of eating out at fast-food outlets, and where the various references to Guest indicate different preferred styles of home entertaining, ranging from serving something special through to just serving the usual fare. The references to actor, plot, director and reviews in the film domain are to the factors that are most important to individuals in deciding whether or not to watch a particular film. There are two participation labels in the sports domain, referring to whether individuals play any particular sport regularly or not at all, and whether or not they watch sport at live venues. The symbols for particular sports played are ball sport (baseball, basketball, netball, softball, volleyball), water sport (sailing, scuba diving, swimming, water polo, water skiing, fishing and surfing), racquet sport (tennis, badminton, squash), football/rugby (all the codes, including touch football and AFL), cricket etc. (cricket, indoor cricket and lawn bowls), athletic sport (athletics, gymnastics, jogging, power walking, running, walking, weight lifting, weight training), and golf (standing only for itself).

Figure 15.2 plots the distribution of those modalities which account for the greatest degree of statistical variation in the analysis. The interpretation of this axis relies on the selection of those modalities whose contributions exceed the average

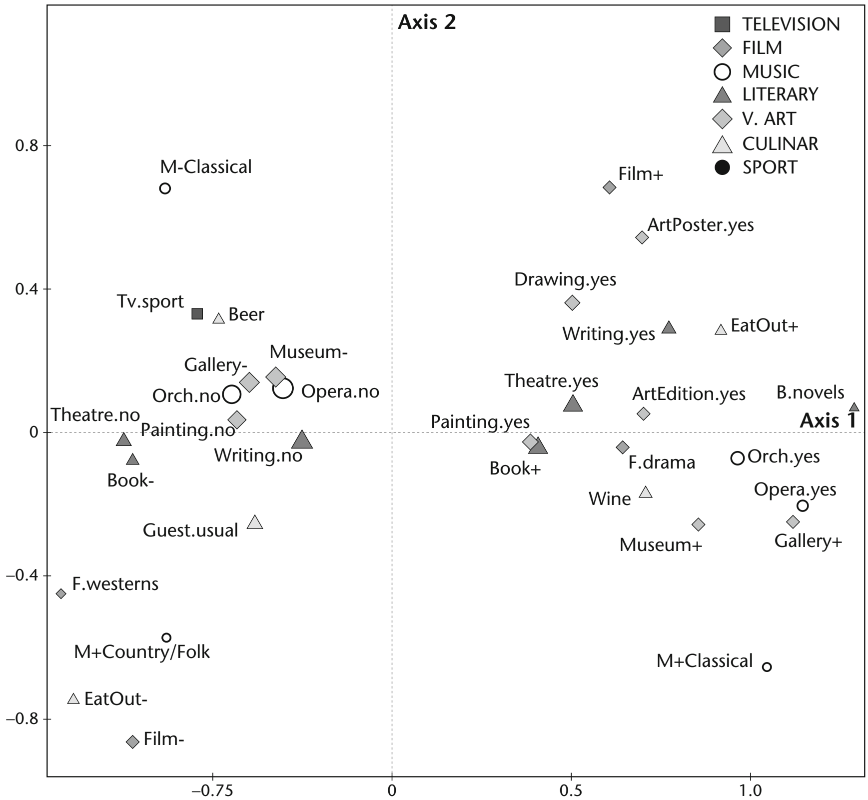


*Figure 15.2* AEC—the modalities contributing most to axis 1

contribution (0.98%) to this axis. There are 34 such modalities, accounting for 85% of the variance of axis 1. We can see that this first axis of differentiation—arrayed from west to east—is organised primarily in terms of participation or non-participation in legitimate forms of culture and, secondarily, in terms of preferences for popular or legitimate forms. The right of the axis is thus dominated by participation in museums and art galleries; going to orchestral concerts, the theatre or the opera; owning original paintings, limited edition prints and art posters; and reading books, drawing and writing. Owning of art objects proved particularly significant here, accounting for 44% of the variation. Taste preferences are for classical music, film dramas and novels and, in the culinary field, for wine. The symbols in the western end of the map indicate zero to low levels of participation in all these forms of legitimate culture: little or no participation in theatre-going, going to art galleries, museums, orchestral concerts, or the opera; very little engagement with painting or drawing; and low levels of ownership of books and art objects. There are lower levels of participation, too, in cinema-going and eating out. With regard to tastes, a dislike of classical music is accompanied by a liking for film westerns, country and folk music, televised sport and beer.[10]

Looking now at the second most significant axis of differentiation, the 34 categories selected for the interpretation of this axis account for 83% of the variance (Figure 15.3). The most immediately observable distinguishing characteristic here consists in the significance of music (accounting for 48% of the variance) in differentiating the north and south 'poles'. We find, in the north of the map, a liking for contemporary musical forms (liking rock and popular music accounting for 9% of the variation) matched by high levels of participation in rock concerts and live music venues (15%), and a dislike for classical and religious music. This pattern is reversed in the southern half of the map, where a positive taste for classical, light classical and country and western genres is counterbalanced by low levels of participation in popular music venues (9%) and a dislike of heavy metal. There is not, though, any evidence of high levels of participation in opera or orchestral music concerts. The other key organising feature of the north–south axis is that between active participation in sports in the north and the absence of such participation in the southern part of the map. Going out—to the cinema and to fast food outlets—is also more prevalent in the north. Television news is strongly liked in the south but not in the north, where a liking for comedy shows is the most active television preference. Tastes for specific film genres register

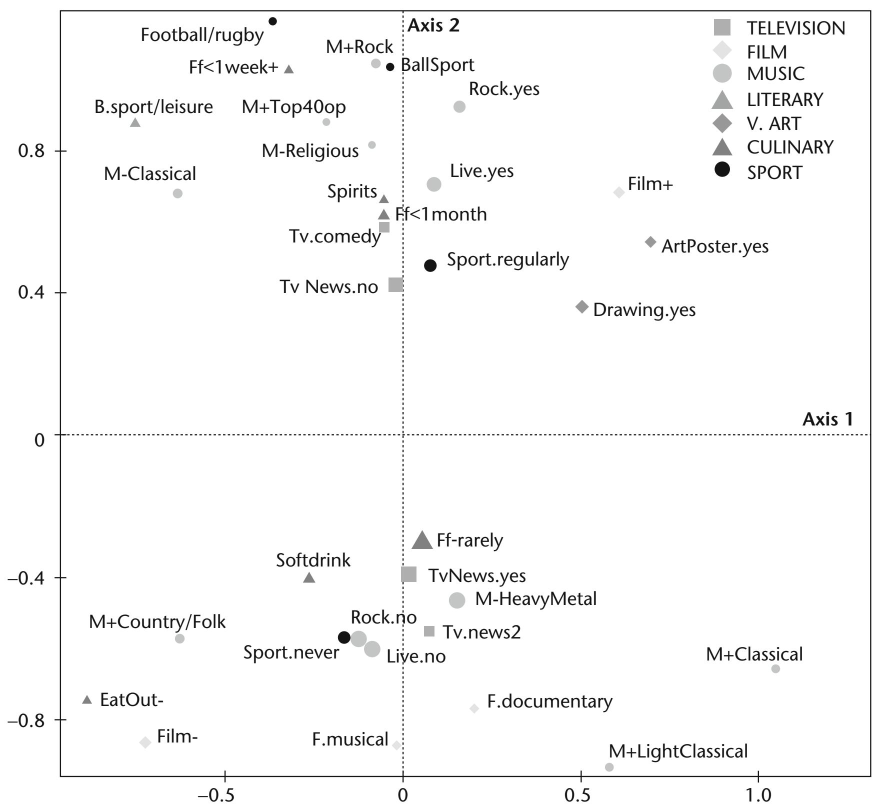


*Figure 15.3* AEC—the modalities contributing most to axis 2

as significant only in the south—for film musicals and documentaries—whereas art practices (owning art posters and drawing) register only in the north.

Looking, finally, at the third axis of differentiation in the Australian space of lifestyles (Figure 15.4), the 23 categories selected here account for 79% of the variation. Sport figures very strongly in the upper half of the map, with high levels of regular participation in sport. Playing golf and cricket are particularly popular here. Watching sport on television and reading sport/leisure genres are also popular. Taken collectively, the sport modalities account for 25% of the variance here. There is a strong documentary flavour to other cultural tastes—documentary films, television news and historical books. Western and adventure films are the only fictional genres that register. We note, finally, high levels of museum visitation and a liking for beer in the two upper quadrants. If this latter taste is contrasted, in the southern half of the map, with a liking for soft drinks and spirits, the north and south axes are most significantly contrasted in the lack of interest in sport and in documentary

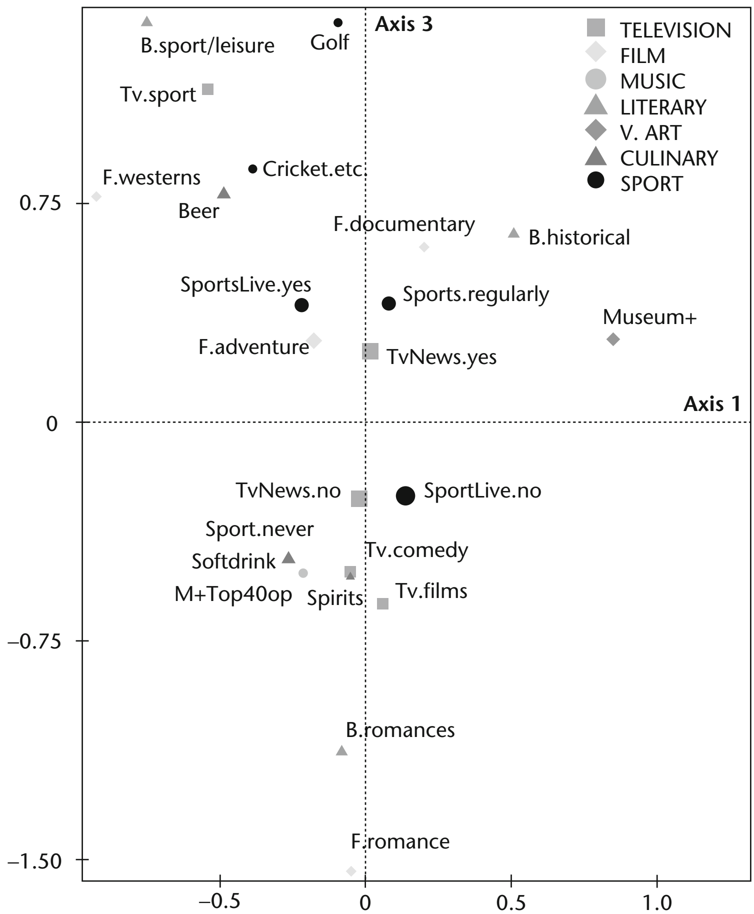


*Figure 15.4* AEC—the modalities contributing most to axis 3

or factual genres in the south and the marked preference, in both film and literary tastes, for romances.

In summary, cultural tastes and practices in the Australian data are most significantly differentiated in terms of relative degrees of engagement in cultural activities with a high degree of legitimacy. Second in importance are divisions across, generally speaking, more modern and traditional cultural tastes and pursuits with, third, a set of divisions between genres invested with different values (factual, fictional) and between levels of participation in physical activities. We have also seen that each of these axes of differentiation is strongly marked by practices from different fields: the art field for the first axis, music for the second, and sport for the third. We now go on to examine how each of these axes connects with social divisions.

## The social organisation of the Australian space of lifestyles

As we noted earlier, MCA allows us to generate two overlapping clouds: a cloud of modalities showing the scattering of cultural preferences and participation across a geometric space; and a cloud of individuals distributed across the same space, from which we can extrapolate the mean points for sub-classes organised by socio-demographic variables. It is the mapping of those sub-classes onto the cloud of modalities that makes possible the form of analysis traditionally undertaken by sociology: a correlation of cultural practices and preferences with the variables of age, gender, income, education, and so on.

We begin by mapping these four variables onto axes 1 and 2 (Figure 15.5). We have designated axis 1, which runs horizontally, as establishing a continuum from relative disengagement in 'legitimate' cultural activities on the west to heavy involvement in them on the east of the space of lifestyles. On this axis there is a strong correlation with level of education (the most educated have the strongest levels of participation in high culture, the least educated have the weakest levels) and, apart from the lower income levels, a correlation with income; levels of income are also correlated, especially at the lower levels, with the south–north axis 2, which, in its most significant aspects, runs from 'traditional' to 'modern' tastes: the higher the income, the more modern the tastes.

Axis 2, running vertically, has a particularly strong correlation with age: as you move south from youth to age, you are likely to move from 'modern' to 'traditional' preferences. Finally, gender cuts diagonally across the two axes to indicate higher levels of involvement in legitimate culture and more traditional tastes on the part of women, and lower levels of involvement in legitimate culture together with more 'modern' tastes on the part of men. When we map these four variables onto the third axis of differentiation (Figure 15.6), which runs vertically from a liking for romances and a lack of interest in sport in the south of the figure to strong levels of participation and interest in sport in the north, we find that this axis is correlated to some extent with age (increasing age runs from south to north), but very strongly with gender. The distinction in terms of cultural preferences between women and men is, we might say, the 'meaning' of this axis.

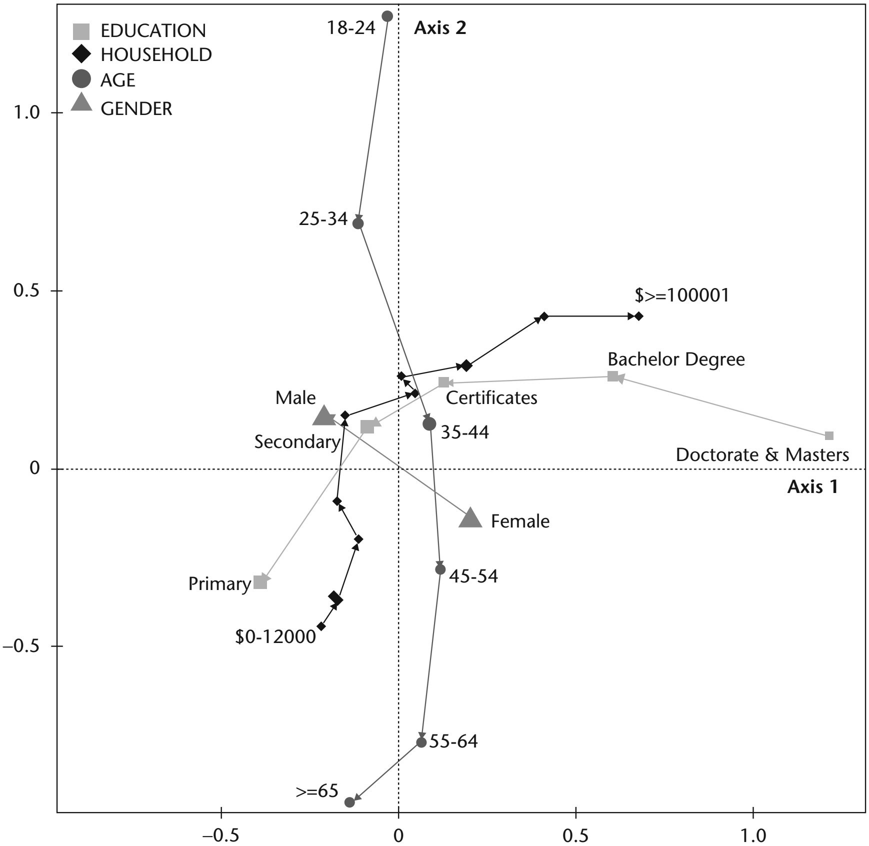


*Figure 15.5* AEC—supplementary variables: gender, age, education and household income in the cloud of modalities

One way of rendering graphic the social organisation of the space of lifestyles is to examine individuals occupying extreme positions in the cloud of modalities. We compare below two individuals representing the polar extremes of this first axis of differentiation.

*Individual 998*, occupying the centre of the far left side of the axis, is an unemployed man aged between 25 and 34 and earning less than $12,000 p.a. He watches television extensively (10–29 hours a week), particularly comedy shows and the news. He likes westerns, and he chooses films that have striking special effects. He likes pop music, dislikes classical music, and does not attend musical concerts of any kind. He reads about three books a year, mostly adventure books; he does not write; he does not go to the theatre or to museums or art galleries; he owns no artwork of any kind; he eats at fast-food outlets (at least once a week), not at restaurants, and his preferred drink is beer. He does not play sport, but goes to matches.

By contrast, *Individual 1279*, occupying the centre of the far right of the axis, is a professional woman aged between 25 and 34, with a bachelor's degree and earning

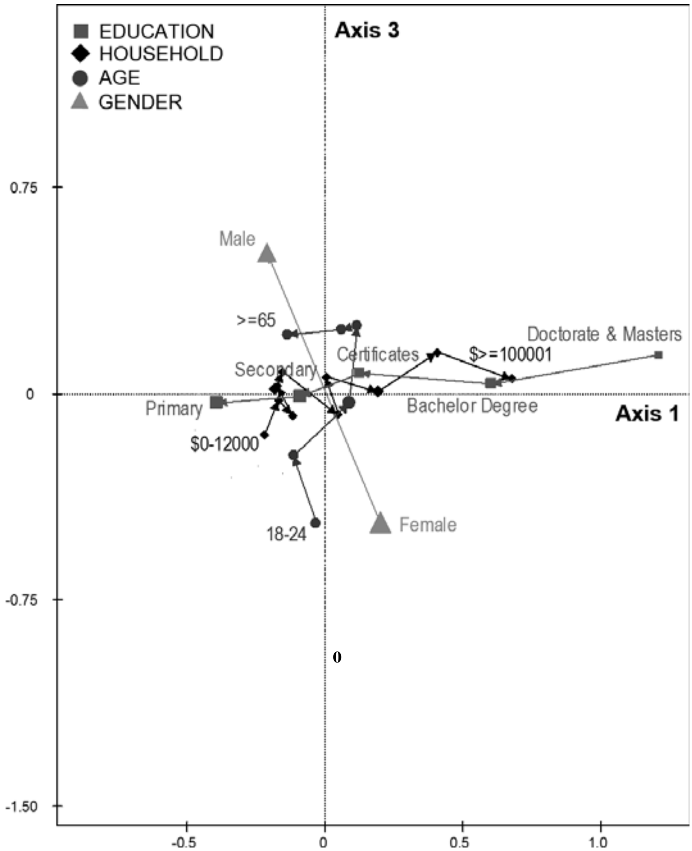


*Figure 15.6* AEC—gender, age, education and household income in the cloud of modalities

between \$40,000 and \$50,000 p.a. She watches television for less than nine hours a week, and her preferred programs are the news and films. She goes to the movies frequently and prefers dramas, which she chooses according to who is acting in them. She goes to rock and orchestral concerts and the opera, likes the blues and soul and dislikes heavy metal. She reads a book a week, mostly novels, and she writes herself. She goes to the theatre and to museums and art galleries. She owns drawings, paintings and art posters but no limited-edition prints. She eats frequently at restaurants but not at fast-food outlets, and her preferred drink is wine. She engages in sport (athletics), but does not go to sporting events.

These are extremes, almost caricatures; but they display with great clarity the distinguishing features of the statistically most significant axis of cultural differentiation, that which maps degree of cultural involvement. The picture is considerably complicated when we look more closely at how class differences map onto this space of lifestyles. The original Australian study worked with an eight-class model constructed on the basis of relation to the means of production (being an employer, an employee or self-employed); occupation; supervisory status; and education as a marker of difference between professionals and para-professionals.[11] For the purposes of this comparative study, we reduced the Australian class model to a smaller number of classes. The statistical clusters generated by MCA gave rise to a four-class model comprising a class of manual workers (19.7%); a white-collar class (50%) made up of sales and clerical workers (23.1%), supervisors (9.9%), own-account workers (7.9%) and para-professionals (9.1%); an employer-manager class (16.8%) made up of the small employers (9.4%), larger employers (2.2%) and managers (5.2%); and a class of professionals (13.4%) (Figure 15.7).

This model foregrounds a sharp differentiation between manual workers and professionals which shows up in the way these two groups map onto the space of modalities, especially along the axis of engagement. It also divides other occupational groups into two classes, which cluster around the middle of the cloud at the intersection of axes 1 and 2, according to similarities in the location and shape of the concentration ellipses formed around their mean points. Figure 15.9 shows the ellipses formed by these four groups in relation to axes 1 and 2. It indicates the relative proximity of the white-collar and employer-manager groups as well as the degree of distance between manual workers and professionals.

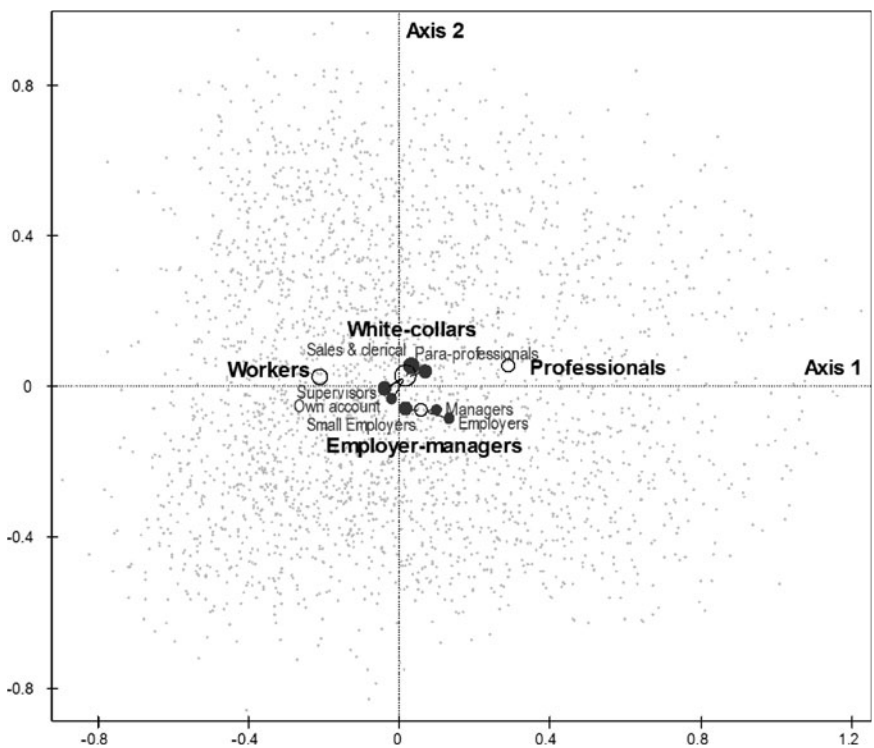


*Figure 15.7* AEC—occupational group mean points in the cloud of individuals (axes 1 and 2)

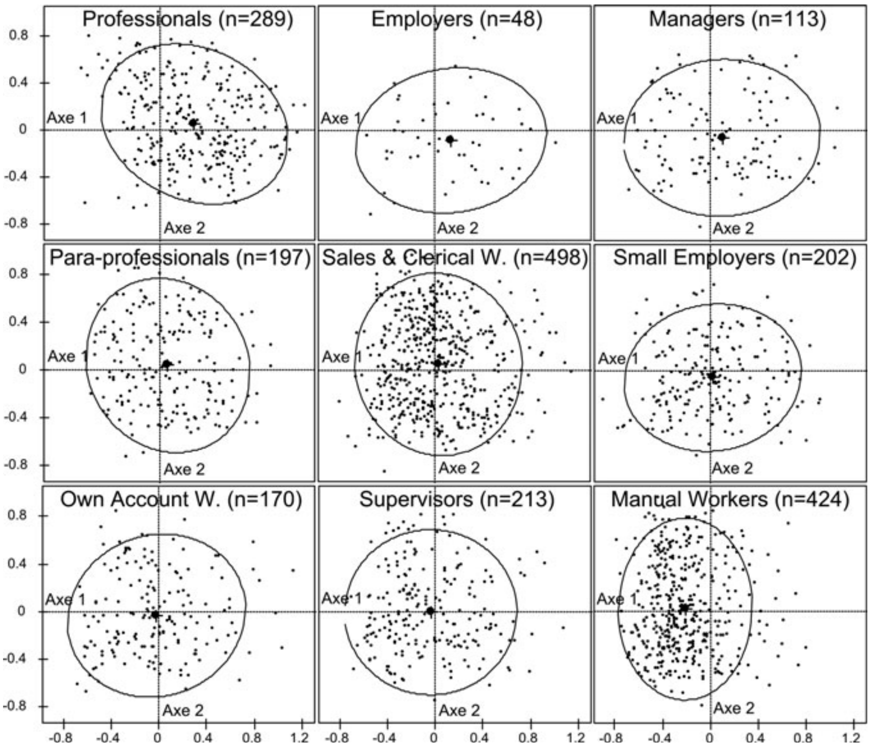


*Figure 15.8* AEC—the sub-clouds of the occupational groups with their concentration ellipses on axes 1 and 2

For each of these groups we can isolate the modalities of participation and taste in which they are over-represented. For *professionals* (see Table 15.6),[12] the 23 over-represented modalities concern a range of high-cultural practices (opera, theatre, art galleries, movies, concerts and so on) and preferences for classical music, novels, and athletic and racquet sports. For *employer-managers* (see Table 15.7), three of the five over-represented categories refer to possessing artworks and not going to concerts, especially rock concerts. A further two have to do with playing golf and disliking heavy metal music, bringing this class closer in this respect to professionals. For *white-collar workers*, no categories are under- or over-represented, which means that this class has no statistically distinctive cultural practices and tastes. For *manual workers* (see Table 15.8), finally, 19 categories are over-represented. Eleven categories of participation define this class as uninterested in high-cultural practices, and as participating as spectators but not as players of sport. Categories of taste include disliking classical music but liking country/folk music, together with liking beer, watching sport on television, watching films for the sake of the actors, and serving guests with the food that is normally served in the house.

In summary, then, Australians are most strongly divided in their cultural pursuits in terms of their class as marked by a range of social class indicators (income, level

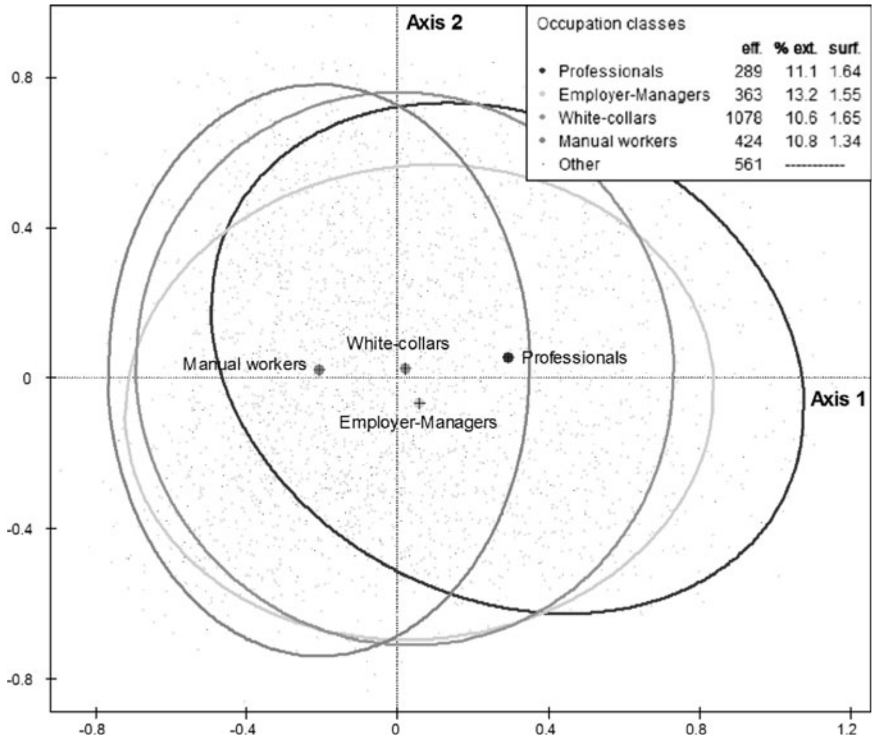


*Figure 15.9* AEC—the concentration ellipses of the four occupational classes on axes 1 and 2

of education) and by occupational class position. Age then articulates a powerful set of distinctions between 'traditional' and 'modern' tastes, followed, thirdly but still significantly, by a set of gendered divisions. While the initial analysis of the Australian data identified the importance of all of these social divisions, the MCA we have applied here has clarified their relative importance as well as identifying the regions of cultural practice with which they most strongly articulate. As we noted at the outset, however, this MCA was modelled closely on that for the UK study in order that we might, by comparing the two, be able to identify how far and in what respects the social organisation of the Australian space of lifestyles exhibits distinctive characteristics. It is to this matter that we now turn.

## Comparative perspectives

The three most significant axes of differentiation in the CCSE study are structured broadly similarly to those we have reviewed, and connect with social divisions in much the same way. There are, however, also some suggestive differences. We look first at these questions axis by axis, before considering the similarities and differences between the two class models constructed by the two MCAs.

*Table 15.6* Class of *professionals* ($n = 289$; 13.4%): the 23 over-represented categories

| *Variable labels* | *Categories (k)* | *Percentage of k in class* ($f_k^c$) | *Percentage of k*($f_k$) | ($f_k^c - f_k$) | *P* | *Absolute frequency* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MusOrch | Orch.yes | 54.0 | 31.7 | 22.3 | 0.000 | 683 |
| Theatre | Theatre.yes | 78.9 | 58.9 | 20.0 | 0.000 | 1268 |
| Writing | Writing.yes | 41.2 | 23.1 | 18.1 | 0.000 | 498 |
| MusOpera | Opera.yes | 35.6 | 19.8 | 15.9 | 0.000 | 426 |
| Art_Gallery | Gallery+ | 43.3 | 26.9 | 16.3 | 0.000 | 580 |
| Bk_Freq | Book+ | 68.2 | 51.1 | 17.1 | 0.000 | 1101 |
| TVfreq | TV.0-9 | 37.4 | 23.8 | 13.6 | 0.000 | 512 |
| Art_Poster | ArtPoster.yes | 30.8 | 19.2 | 11.6 | 0.000 | 414 |
| Art_Edition | ArtEdition.yes | 27.0 | 16.2 | 10.8 | 0.000 | 348 |
| Art_Drawing | Drawing.yes | 41.5 | 29.2 | 12.3 | 0.000 | 629 |
| Art_Museum | Museum+ | 39.8 | 27.8 | 12.0 | 0.000 | 598 |
| Art_Paintings | Painting.yes | 67.1 | 55.3 | 11.8 | 0.000 | 1191 |
| FilmFreq | Film+ | 30.1 | 21.1 | 9.0 | 0.000 | 455 |
| SportLive | SportLive.no | 69.2 | 60.1 | 9.1 | 0.000 | 1295 |
| SportFreq | Sport.regularly | 46.7 | 38.9 | 7.9 | 0.002 | 837 |
| DrinkTaste | Wine | 42.6 | 26.0 | 16.5 | 0.000 | 561 |
| MusicLike | M+Classical | 21.1 | 9.8 | 11.3 | 0.000 | 212 |
| Bk_Taste | B.novels | 14.9 | 6.0 | 8.8 | 0.000 | 130 |
| SportPlay | AthleticSport | 12.8 | 6.8 | 6.0 | 0.000 | 147 |
| SportPlay | RacquetSport | 17.0 | 11.3 | 5.7 | 0.001 | 243 |
| FilmTaste | F.reviews | 18.7 | 12.9 | 5.8 | 0.002 | 278 |
| GuestTaste | Guest.special | 39.1 | 32.4 | 6.7 | 0.006 | 698 |
| FilmTaste | F.plot | 48.4 | 41.9 | 6.5 | 0.010 | 903 |

*Table 15.7* Class of *employer-managers* ($n = 363$; 16.9%): the five over-represented categories

| *Variable labels* | *Categories (k)* | *Percentage of k in class* ($f_k^c$) | *Percentage global of k*($f_k$) | ($f_k^c - f_k$) | *P* | *Absolute frequency* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Art_Paintings | Painting.yes | 65.8 | 55.3 | 10.6 | 0.000 | 1191 |
| MusLive | Live.no | 51.8 | 43.0 | 8.4 | 0.000 | 934 |
| MusRock | Rock.no | 58.7 | 52.0 | 6.7 | 0.003 | 1120 |
| MusicDislike | M-HeavyMetal | 56.5 | 47.3 | 9.2 | 0.000 | 1019 |
| SportPlay | Golf | 13.5 | 8.7 | 4.8 | 0.000 | 187 |

## *Axis 1*

Figure 15.10 represents the most significant axis of differentiation produced by the UK MCA. The black text and symbols here refer to cultural participation—to things that people do or do not do. A zero indicates nil or very low levels of participation; number 1 indicates occasional levels of participation; number 2 indicates very high levels of participation. The grey text and symbols refer to tastes: a plus sign indicates

*Table 15.8* Class of *manual workers* ($n$ = 424; 19.7%): the 19 over-represented categories

| *Variable labels* | *Categories (k)* | *Percentage of k in class* ($f_k^c$) | *Percentage global of k*($f_k$) | ($f_k^c - f_k$) | *P* | *Absolute frequency* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bk_Freq | Book- | 38.4 | 23.0 | 15.5 | 0.000 | 495 |
| Art_Paintings | Painting.no | 60.9 | 44.7 | 16.1 | 0.000 | 963 |
| Theatre | Theatre.no | 48.6 | 33.9 | 14.7 | 0.000 | 731 |
| MusOrch | Orch.no | 75.2 | 61.1 | 14.1 | 0.000 | 1316 |
| Art_Gallery | Gallery- | 80.7 | 69.0 | 11.7 | 0.000 | 1486 |
| Art_Poster | ArtPoster.no | 88.9 | 80.8 | 8.1 | 0.000 | 1740 |
| Art_Edition | ArtEdition.no | 91.3 | 83.8 | 7.4 | 0.000 | 1806 |
| FilmFreq | Film- | 21.2 | 14.0 | 7.3 | 0.000 | 301 |
| SportFreq | Sport.never | 43.2 | 33.9 | 9.3 | 0.000 | 730 |
| SportLive | SportLive.yes | 48.1 | 39.9 | 8.2 | 0.000 | 859 |
| MusOpera | Opera.no | 77.4 | 71.2 | 6.1 | 0.001 | 1534 |
| Writing | Writing.no | 74.3 | 68.9 | 5.4 | 0.004 | 1484 |
| Art_Museum | Museum- | 72.9 | 67.7 | 5.2 | 0.006 | 1458 |
| DrinkTaste | Beer | 41.3 | 29.1 | 12.2 | 0.000 | 626 |
| MusicDislike | M-Classical | 24.1 | 15.1 | 8.9 | 0.000 | 326 |
| MusicLike | M+Country/Folk | 19.6 | 12.7 | 6.9 | 0.000 | 274 |
| FilmTaste | F.actor | 37.5 | 29.0 | 8.5 | 0.000 | 624 |
| TVtaste | Tv.sport | 22.9 | 16.1 | 6.8 | 0.000 | 346 |
| GuestTaste | Guest.usual | 36.6 | 29.1 | 7.4 | 0.000 | 628 |

liking, a minus sign indicates dislikes, and an equals sign indicates neutrality. The size of the symbol, as in the Australian map, indicates the number of people engaged in or not engaged in, liking or disliking, the activity concerned. As we can see, degree of cultural participation is more important than tastes in the organisation of axis 1. The west–east distinction is most strongly articulated as one between those who do and those who do not engage in those legitimate cultural activities that are traditionally coded as high culture: museum and art gallery visiting, going to the opera, theatre or orchestral concerts, and so on. Tastes on the right of the axis are also mostly for legitimate cultural forms of music, art and literature, whereas such positive tastes as there are on the left are for more popular forms (soap operas and westerns, for example). This first axis of the CCSE MCA connects with social class indicators in generally the same way as for the AEC data, with levels of income, education and occupational class position rising consistently across the west–east coordinates of the space.

The most significant difference from the Australian pattern registered here concerns the appearance, in the top right-hand quadrant, of high levels of participation in rock concerts and similar levels of liking for rock and heavy metal music; going to rock concerts and other live music venues and liking rock music are, by contrast, located in the middle of the Australian space of lifestyles (see Figure 15.1). It is also noteworthy that levels of television viewing register as significantly differentiating in the UK data—registering at less than one hour per day on the right and at more than 5 hours a day on the left—in ways that are not true for the Australian data, where such differences congregate more toward the middle of the space of lifestyles and are thus

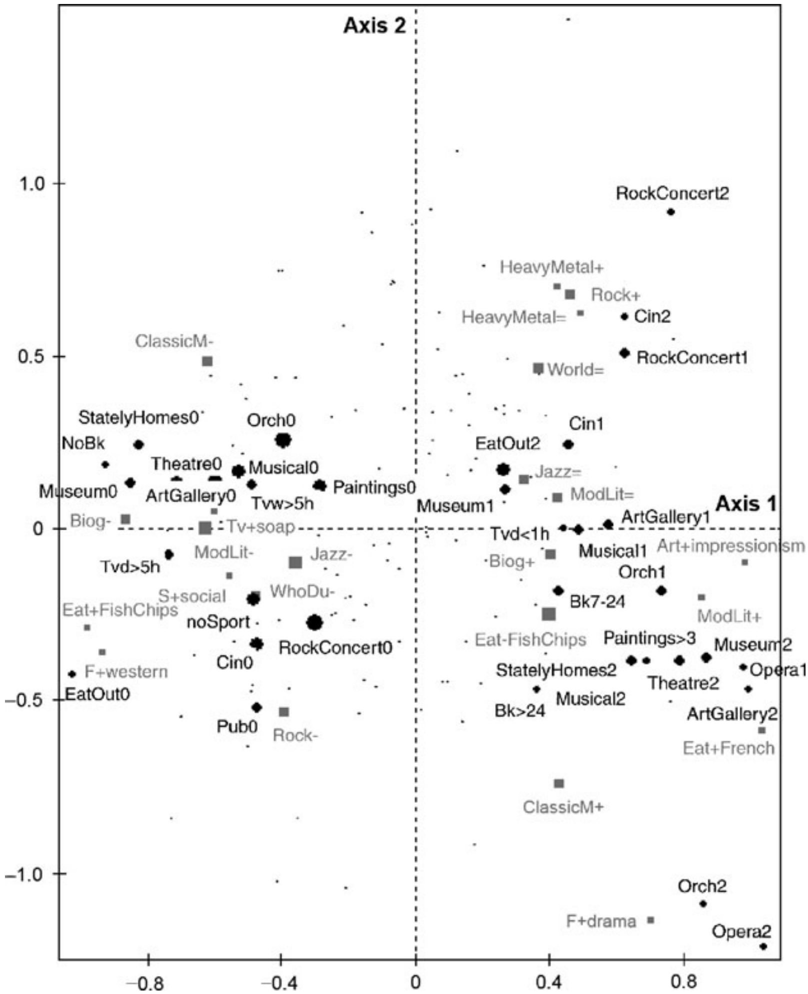


*Figure 15.10* CCSE—the modalities contributing most to axis 1

less sharp. This implies that the tastes of the most highly educated and paid groups in the UK are more eclectic—or, perhaps, omnivorous[13]—than is the case in Australia. It also suggests that watching television of any kind frequently and, by implication, indiscriminately is a stronger marker of social class in the UK. This is supported by the CCSE interview data, with professionals and higher-level managers going to some pains to stress the rarity of their television viewing (see Bennett *et al.*, 2009: ch. 8).

## *Axis 2*

As with the AEC MCA, tastes are more significant than indices of level of participation in dividing the north and south poles, with music tastes proving the most important in this regard (Figure 15.11). Tastes are also divided along roughly the same lines: a liking for and participation in contemporary popular forms (rock concerts and night clubs) in the north of the map, a disengagement from these and a liking for more classical musical genres in the south. We should note, however, that this also includes going to orchestral concerts, the opera and musicals alongside frequent participation in art galleries, stately homes, museums and the theatre—practices which are not found in the southern half of the Australian map. The high levels of participation in art galleries in the UK study are matched by largely conservative visual art tastes (landscapes), whereas modern art—disliked in the south of the map—is the genre singled out for liking in the north. Positive film tastes for costume dramas and musicals in the south of the map are counterbalanced by positive film tastes for

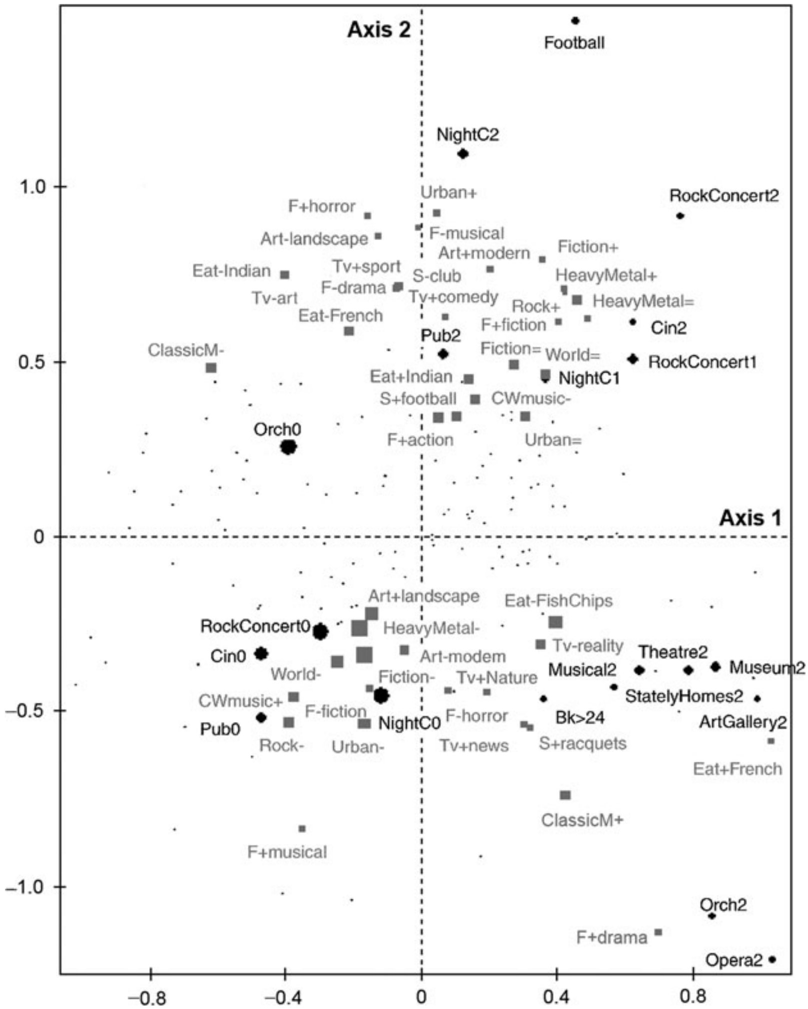


*Figure 15.11* CCSE—the modalities contributing most to axis 2

comedy, science fiction, horror and action films in the north. The pattern for television is broadly similar to that for the Australian map: liking news and natural history programs in the south; liking TV comedies and sports on TV in the north. We note also that literary tastes enter into the picture here, with science fiction, fantasy and horror stories popular in the north of the map. There are differences between the kinds of sports liked or practised—playing football registers in the north, and liking racquet sports in the south. Although the question exploring this matter was included in the MCA, there are no indicators of zero or low levels of sports participation. As with the second axis of the Australian MCA, the north–south differentiation that we see here correlates most strongly with a consistent movement from younger groups (18–25 year olds) in the north to late-middle-aged and retirement-aged groups in the south. This suggests that participation in the more 'public' forms of legitimate culture (orchestral concerts, opera and musicals) is more strongly correlated with increasing age in the UK than in Australia; and that level of sports participation differentiates younger and older Australians more strongly than it does their British counterparts.

## *Axis 3*

The third axis of differentiation for the CCSE MCA (Figure 15.12)—which correlates with gender—again presents interesting similarities and differences. In reading this figure, though, it is important to note that the axes are inverted relative to the figure for the AEC third axis of differentiation. It is thus in the south of the map that we find high levels of participation in sport and a liking for documentary genres—or, where fictional genres are liked, they are ones with a strong action or adventure orientation—and an equally strong dislike for romances, Bollywood and musicals. These patterns are, generally speaking, reversed in the north of the map, where a liking for soap operas, TV drama and comedy films is added to the strong interest in romances that we find in the south of the AEC map. War films, westerns and horror movies are disliked. We see too that visual art tastes differentiate the north and south, with a liking for modern art and portraits pairing with a dislike for more established genres (Renaissance art and landscapes, for example) in the north, while only landscapes score positively in the south. Such tastes do not register in the AEC map, as the AEC survey did not ask about tastes for visual art genres. It is notable, though, that the broadly comparable range of questions about musical tastes asked in both surveys, while not registering as significant in the third axis of the AEC MCA, do register here. Rock and heavy metal music thus score positively in the south, while urban music, disliked in the south, registers most strongly in the north, where rock music is also liked, although not so strongly. Women in the UK are thus like Australian women in expressing a liking for romance genres compared with factual or documentary forms, and having a relative lack of interest in sport. However, musical tastes, particularly in relation to popular genres, seem to play a lesser role in differentiating men's and women's cultural practices in Australia than in the UK.

We now turn, finally, to compare the class models produced by the two studies. This is complicated by the different assumptions made in each. The UK study used a twelve-class occupational model which, among other things, distinguished

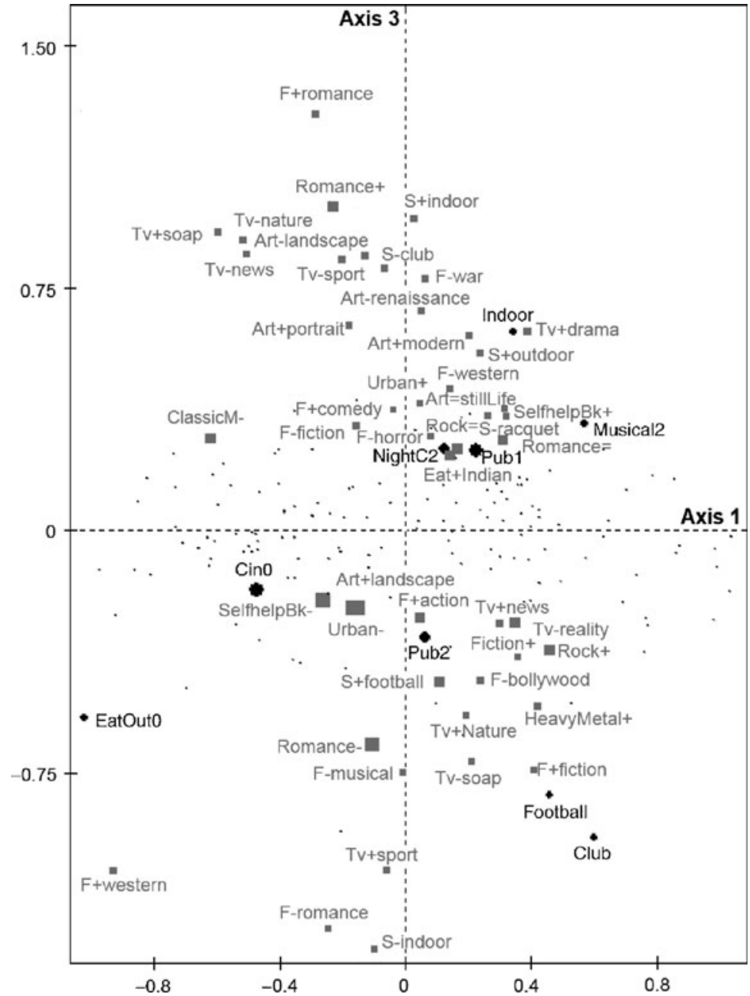


*Figure 15.12* CCSE—the modalities contributing most to axis 3

occupational positions according to size of organisation. For most practical purposes, however, it worked with a three-part distinction between a working class (46%), an intermediate class which includes lower managers (30%), and a professional-executive class which includes professionals, managers in large establishments and large employers (24%) (Figure 15.13). The correspondence between the class analyses of the two projects is substantial once the class models are reduced in this way, although the relative percentages are somewhat different. Indeed, if we were to group the Australian white-collar workers and employer-managers into a single middle class, they would be structurally very similar, showing a continuous movement from least to most cultural involvement in the passage from the working class through the middle class to the professional-executive (UK) and professional (Australia) class.

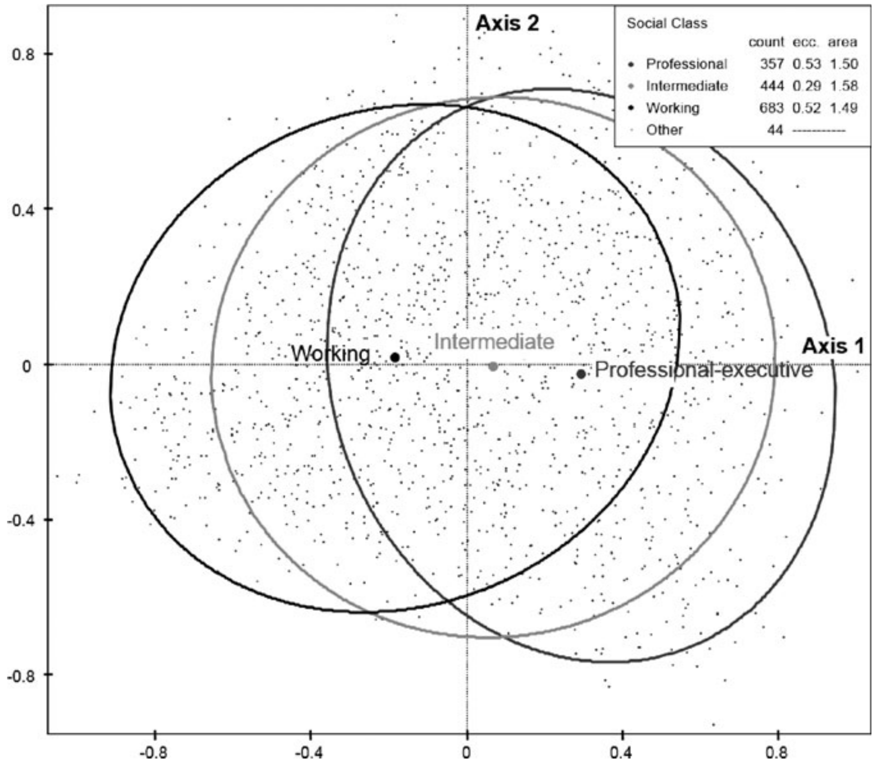


*Figure 15.13* CCSE—the ellipses of concentration of the three occupational classes on axes 1 and 2

However, these gross similarities conceal what might prove to be significant differences: in Australia, for example, the size of the white-collar class occupying the middle of the spectrum (50%), and even more so of the two classes (white-collar and employer managers) that cluster around the mean (66.8%), suggests a weaker social differentiation of the population as a whole than in the UK. In the Australian model, too, professionals are a sharply distinct class, whereas in the United Kingdom they are more closely aligned in their cultural preferences and practices with the class of large employers and managers. This might indicate a greater degree of interaction and class affinity between managers, employers and professionals in Britain, and indeed a greater degree of coherence of the professional-executive class than is the case in Australia. The relative isolation of Australian professionals (13.4% of the population, as opposed to an aggregated professional-executive class in the UK of 24%) might also suggest a weaker hegemony of 'legitimate' culture, and of the corresponding forms of cultural capital, in Australia. The cultural tastes of the employer-managers, by contrast, are in many respects closer to those of the working class than to those of professionals, who are anomalous in their high degrees of participation not only in 'high'-cultural practices, but across the board. These differences, however, do stand in need of some qualification when the fourth axis of differentiation in the UK study is taken into account. While of relatively weak statistical significance compared with axes 1–3, this axis does testify to a division within the professional occupations between those in educational, cultural and traditional professional occupations—such as law—and those in business, engineering and science professions, with the former being more inclined to be intensively involved in high-cultural pursuits.

These differences in the salience of social class between Australia and Britain are perhaps not unexpected. That said, some cautions need to be registered regarding the consequences of the different class categories used in the two studies. Given the different occupational categories used in the Australian ASCO and the UK NS-SEC data classification systems,[14] as well as the different organisation of the questionnaires on which the two studies are based, there are a number of mis-matches between the class categories that have been fed into the two spaces of lifestyles. The Australian data, for example, do not permit differentiation of employers and managers in large organisations of 25 employees or more from those in smaller enterprises which informs the grouping of the former with professionals in the UK study. Equally, the category of para-professionals in the Australian data includes both lower-level professionals and high-level technicians, the latter being included alongside professionals in the UK MCA. Some of the semi-routine workers who are included among sales and clerical workers in the Australian schema would count as members of the working-class in the UK scheme, and the significantly larger number of those counting themselves as small employers in the Australian data (9.4% compared with 2.4% for the UK) must also be noted.

These are, however, matters whose resolution goes beyond the scope of the comparative analysis that the composition of the two datasets permits.[15] In general, it is clear that both studies point to a substantial fracturing of the cultural field along the fault-lines of education and social class, albeit that these fault-lines are somewhat differently structured. It is also the case that both studies point to a marked clustering of commonalities in the middle of the field—perhaps more strongly so in the case of Australia than in Britain, but nonetheless significantly so in each case; what divides us culturally happens above all at the social margins, but none the less consequentially so for that.

## Conclusion

Our comparison of the MCAs conducted on roughly similar datasets derived from research in Britain and Australia has yielded conclusions about the structure of relations between social variables and cultural tastes and participation in the two countries that are broadly comparable. Our findings about the role of social class in the two countries, and about local variations in the practices that contribute most to cultural differentiation—the greater importance of rock and other forms of popular music in cultural engagement in Britain, compared with the role of more high-cultural forms in Australia, for example; a greater differentiation of television-watching in the UK (which might reflect differences in historical patterns of broadcasting provision, as well as the comparative costs of public engagement with culture and their effect on patterns of cultural distinction); a somewhat different organisation of gender-based variations in the two countries (perhaps reflecting historically distinct divisions of labour in the home and in the labour market)—provide insight into the way these cultural fields are structured and the way they interact with socio-demographic variables. They are in many ways homologous, but their differences reflect those between an older, more densely populated, socially in many ways more conservative country and a younger, in many ways more homogeneous country with greater social mobility and yet with clearly established markers of cultural distinction, particularly between professionals and workers.

Most importantly, perhaps, our analysis confirms the methodological advantages of the techniques of MCA pioneered for the social sciences by Bourdieu. For a range of reasons, our two studies diverge from the particularities of Bourdieu's findings in *Distinction*. Nevertheless, the core principle of Bourdieu's work—the socially formative role of cultural taste in its intersection with social power—remains valid for us. Equally, the principle of induction that lies at the heart of MCA—the principle that, rather than starting with pre-given social variables, one should seek to derive patterns from the scatter of modalities across a geometric space, and to work from them to the explanatory constructs on which analysis is based—seems to us to offer an invaluable tool for the work of social understanding. This tool works in particular to help us understand social class as being less a matter of occupational grouping or relation to the means of production, than a complex amalgam of 'social' and 'cultural' variables. Rather than mapping a pre-given set of social coordinates onto a map of cultural practices and preferences, MCA allows those coordinates to emerge from the map itself. One consequence of this, in the UK study, was to call into question the logic of Goldthorpe's (1982) concept of the service class, by showing that lower managers occupy a different socio-cultural space from that occupied by employers and higher-level managers in large organisations, and professionals. Finally, our analysis similarly suggests, in the Australian case, a partitioning of professionals from managers, and a polarisation of the relations between professionals and workers, that derive from particular orderings of the relations between the economic and cultural aspects of class. We believe that these findings make it clear why the analysis of cultural practices and preferences can make a substantial contribution to our understanding of social structure in a way that the consideration only of demographic and economic data cannot.

## Notes

1 Although bearing only our names, this chapter is indebted to Brigitte Le Roux and Philippe Bonnet for directing the multiple correspondence analysis of the AEC data and for ensuring that it replicated that for the CCSE study (undertaken by Brigitte Le Roux and Henry Rouanet) as closely as possible. We also draw on the collective work of the research teams responsible for the design and execution of the two projects, and acknowledge the advice and input of Mike Emmison, Mike Savage, Elizabeth Silva and Alan Warde at various stages in the design and execution of this comparative study. The chapter was originally published in the *Journal of Sociology*, 49(2/3), June–September 2013: 224–255.

2 For full analyses of both datasets, see, respectively, Bennett *et al.* (1999) and Bennett *et al.* (2009).
3 The surveys were funded by the Australian Research Council and the UK's Economic and Social Research Council, respectively.
4 The CCSE household interviews also included interviews with the survey respondent's partner in order to explore gender differences within the same household.
5 The AEC survey was postally administered; the CCSE survey was administered by the National Centre for Social Research using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) techniques. The random sampling techniques used for the AEC survey were based on the Australian Electoral Roll; those for CCSE were based on the UK Small Users Postcode Address File for Britain and the Valuation and Lands Agency's list of domestic properties in Northern Ireland. The achieved sample size for the CCSE study was 1576, with an additional ethnic boost sample of 227 (not included in the MCA reported here), and for the AEC study, 2756. The two samples were similar in their gender distribution: 51% women for AEC and 54% for CCSE. Their age distributions are also broadly similar, particularly in the 25–54 range. The most significant differences are that the AEC sample has a smaller proportion of 18–24 year olds (9% compared with 17%) and a larger grouping in the 55–64 range (15% compared with 9%).
6 This was due to the exclusion of the categories *Unemployed* and *Others*.
7 Readers interested in comparing the questions included in the two MCAs will find the AEC survey questionnaire reproduced as Appendix 2 of *Accounting for Tastes*. The questionnaire for the CCSE survey is reproduced in Thomson (2004).
8 The relations between fields, modalities and questions are mostly self-evident. The art field in the UK study, however, includes museum and heritage site visitation; museum visitation is also included in the Australian art field data.
9 These are detailed in Appendix 2 of Bennett *et al.* (2009).
10 It is important to qualify the engagement/disengagement interpretation we place on these axes. These mostly relate to engagement/disengagement in forms of legitimate culture, which are accorded a prominence in surveys informed by cultural capital theory that is out of proportion to general levels of population participation in such practices. See Bennett (2011) for a discussion of these matters.
11 A ninth class of the unemployed was excluded from most of our analyses because of its heterogeneity: it includes the chronically ill and disabled, housewives, sole carers, students, and those who have not yet begun employment.
12 For Tables 15.6–15.8, the third column identifies the percentage of the class participating in or liking the activity in question; the fourth column identifies the percentage of the sample of 2154 retained for the analysis of occupational classes participating in or liking the activity in question; and the fifth column identifies the deviation between these two percentages. The *P* value is the result of the hypergeometric typicality test (a combinatorial test or the comparison of a frequency to a reference frequency; see Rouanet *et al.*, 1988: 102–103). Where *P* is equal to or less than 0. 025, the frequency is statistically greater than the reference, and the category in question is thus said to be over-represented.
13 We refer here to the debates around the thesis that middle-class tastes are most distinguished by their omnivorous qualities—ranging across high and low boundaries—proposed by Peterson (1992). Bennett *et al.* (2009: 182–190) suggest that this concept unravels into a number of different mixed taste profiles when probed more closely.
14 On the latter see Rose and Pevalin (2003).
15 It is likely that, beyond the problems we have identified, significant differences in historical processes of class formation are also involved. The proximity of managers and employers in the CCSE study is something of a historical novelty—largely a result of the redrawing of class boundaries effected by the post-war expansion of higher education—when compared with longer histories of opposition between technical and managerial cultures and the gentlemanly ethos of earlier ruling-class fractions (see Savage, 2010).

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# 16

# *Distinction*'s framework*

## A tool to understand the space of cultural practices in Mexico

*Mauricio Bustamante and Domingo Garcia*[1]

### Cultural studies in Mexico

Culture studies in Mexico have gone through several phases where different objects and schools of thought have been prioritised: the tradition of indigenist anthropology focuses on cultural aspects of subaltern classes and ethno-cultural specificities of indigenous groups, whilst the Marxist–Gramscian school focuses on folklore and popular cultures. These approaches are characterised by a descriptive rather than an explanatory perspective of cultural phenomena, or by treating cultural manifestations as autonomous and unconnected with any reference to the country's global cultural system (Valenzuela, 2003). The most recent studies in the area of cultural studies are confined to aspects of mass culture: urban, anti-establishment, subordinate popular cultures, etc.. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, Mexico does not have any lines of research on sociology of taste. Research into cultural practices and lifestyles is still the 'Cinderella' of social sciences in Mexico (Giménez, 1999: 128).

Sociology of taste and lifestyles is a recent area of research in Latin America, despite the interest it has awoken in other developed countries.[2] The rarity of these studies in Mexico can be ascribed to structural reasons, among which we could list a lack of interest on the part of government institutions (especially for the financing of research projects and surveys), the absence of suitable academic spaces, and the pressure exercised by 'cultural industries' in defining the research topics in this sector (Rosas, 2002).

Furthermore, in Mexico the available studies on culture that are based on statistical material are derisory and isolated. The few that exist have paid insufficient attention to the importance of social properties in the formation of tastes and the structuring of cultural practices. One example of this is the rejection of variables that allow us to construct useful professional categories in the surveys carried out (the lack of occupation or skill variables is, unfortunately, a recurrent issue).[3] The common denominator is that surveys on Mexican consumption and cultural practices have been aimed at the interpretation of demand to model supply through the design of public policies. In this regard, the hypotheses guiding the construction of the surveys are often aimed at answering questions of an administrative nature.[4] We have observed the same phenomenon in similar surveys carried out in other countries of the region. Chile (2007), Colombia (2009) and Costa Rica (2011) are for the moment the only countries that have statistics on cultural practices based on representative samplings of the population.

The appearance of statistics on cultural practices responds to a demand of the state, which is in strict proportion to the institutionalisation of culture as a category of public sector intervention. Eight new ministries of culture (or related institutions) have been created in Latin America in the past 10 years—Colombia (1997), Chile (2003), the Dominican Republic (2000), Venezuela (2004), Ecuador (2007), Bolivia (2009), El Salvador (2009) and Peru (2010)—these join those already existing in Cuba (1976), Brazil (1985) and Mexico (1988). The transformation of the institutions in the region possibly augurs greater interest in research in the field of culture. In any event, the correlation between the interest in collecting data about cultural practices and the creation of new public institutions responsible for defining and executing public policies is undeniable.

The study of cultural practices in Latin America is therefore a recent interest. The model that Bourdieu put together in the 1970s, that establishes a structural homology between the space of social positions and the space of lifestyles, has not so far, for the reasons we have just given, been totally verified in Mexico. The ambition of this contribution is to discuss this theoretical model and its method, making a first attempt with data on the cultural practices of Mexicans. The base we are using corresponds to the first National Survey of Cultural Practices and Consumption (*Encuesta Nacional de Prácticas y Consumos Culturales*) carried out by the National Council for Culture and the Arts (CONACULTA) in 2004, and we use the method of multiple correspondence analysis (MCA).

The initial results suggest social structures similar to the observations made by Bourdieu in *Distinction*, as the social distribution of cultural practices seems to correlate with the volume of capital controlled by the individuals. On the other hand, there appear, although with certain nuances, differentiation factors across social classes, involved with other social properties (age, sex, education, etc.). In the first part of this chapter we describe specific characteristics of Mexican society. In the second part, we present the parameters that guided the survey we used in our analysis. In the final section, we give the main results of our research.

## Specific characteristics of Mexican society

Cultural diversity is a feature that, ever since the colonial period, has characterised Mexican society. The unification of the cultural field in Mexico was not possible until after the Revolution (1910–20). The old regime was characterised by a social division—a legacy of colonisation and its caste system—between an elite that leant towards a culture of European origin or inspiration,[5] and the people's attachment to the culture of indigenous or *mestizo* (mixed-blood) heritage.[6] The post-revolutionary nationalist project sought to unify the diverse forms of cultural expression under the '*mestizo* ideology' (Castellanos *et al.*, 2007). The creation of the *mestizo* idea was a strategy of the political class aimed at attenuating differences in order to unify the nation. *Mestizaje* was exalted as a measure for the construction of a more homogeneous national cultural identity (Van Dijk, 2007). Made up of elements from different forms of cultural expression, *mestizos* have, to a large extent, participated in what has been defined as the 'Mexican culture' (Frost, 2009).

The variety of indigenous languages is an illustration of the diversity of cultures that coexist in Mexico. There are 291 languages in total, placing Mexico among the countries with the greatest number of autochthonous languages in the world (UNESCO, 2009). Despite this huge ethno-linguistic diversity, the indigenous population (with its own cultural system that encompasses systems of values, traditions, beliefs, etc.) represents only 13 per cent of the total Mexican population in 2005 (Oropeza, 2003). 'Mexican culture' is the result of a historical process of national construction—in permanent transformation—that combines features of cultural expressions from the pre-Columbian, European societies and, more recently, North American popular culture. The situation in Mexico is very similar to that of other countries with major inequalities based on social and ethnic origin. Everything else being equal, 'good birth' or skin colour are an advantage to access certain occupations. Poor whites earning less than a dollar a day represent barely 12 per cent of the population, whereas the 'non-white' category represents 41 per cent (PNUD, 2010). Likewise, the indigenous people of Mexico are more likely to be poor (81 per cent) than the 'non-indigenous' (18 per cent) (PNUD, 2004).

As for education, the possession of a university degree is not only more useful for getting a job, but also contributes to a large extent to the structuring of social status. Only 6.7 per cent of the population hold a university degree in Mexico (INEGI, 2000), a figure that contrasts strongly with European societies (compared with 42 per cent in France, according to the INSEE).[7] The majority of public and private universities were created after 1930, and access to university became more and more general towards the end of the twentieth century.[8] The growing ascendancy of the United States meant a strong North American influence on the Mexican educational system which, until that point, had been dominated by the European model. The massification of public universities since 1970 (Muñoz, 2001) resulted in the rise of private institutions that, despite solid public investment in education (5.4 per cent of the GIP), capture a third of the country's university population (ANUIES, 2004).

Thus the economic elites of Mexico tend to look to North American culture for distinctive cultural forms that would better correspond to their social aspirations (Camp, 2002), while the Mexican cultural elites are still being seduced by the European tradition and its forms of artistic, intellectual and political expression (Lemperière, 1992). The geographic proximity with the United States is a factor that explains its influence and makes Mexico a privileged market for its cultural products. In 2003, Mexico, thanks to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed in 1994, is the fourth recipient of US exports of cultural goods and services (UNESCO, 2005). The influence of the United States has created divergent ways of perceiving the cultural exchange. Some researchers consider that this can put the Mexican identity at risk, if the economic imperatives exceed the social ones (Sánchez, 1995); others think that the interactions generate 'hybrid cultures', produced by their capacity to adapt to the new transnational configurations (García Canclini, 1997).[9]

As regards economic inequality and its impact on access to culture, income distribution in Mexico historically has been asymmetric. In the decade of the 2000s, only 1.7 per cent of the population belonged to the 'upper class', 59 per cent to the 'lower class', and 39 per cent to the 'middle class' (INEGI, 2013a). Three-quarters of the middle class live in an urban environment. In other words, the majority of the people living in the rural areas belong to low-income groups that generally have a low level of education. Moreover, the cultural infrastructure is notably more significant in urban than in rural areas (Oropeza, 2003). More than half the population of the country live in poverty (of whom half live in conditions of multidimensional poverty[10]). Their global capital volume is weak, explained by the fact that having very little leisure time and a low income makes access to culture prohibitively difficult (or secondary after key priorities such as food, health and housing).

According to the Regional Human Development Report of the PNUD, Latin America is, irrespective of the reduction in inequalities recorded over the past few decades, the most unequal region in the world. Inequality, measured by the Gini index (54.6 in 2000), is widespread and persistent (PNUD, 2010: 26). The income of the wealthiest decile in Mexico is 27 times more than that of the poorest decile (by contrast with the average of OECD countries, which is only nine times more). Social expenditure in Mexico is the lowest of the OECD countries (OECD, 2010).[11] Income inequality is even higher if we add in the variable of gender. Purchasing power parity (PPP) is almost 3 to 1; men earn three times more than women. All these factors explain why Mexico is number 53 in the IDH world ranking in the year when the Conaculta survey was applied (PNUD, 2004).

## Data and methodology

The survey was carried out using a representative sampling of the population, in which the information from the *Encuesta Nacional de Prácticas y Consumos Culturales* (2004) was employed as a reference population. The base sample is 4400 individuals of 15 years and older. The questionnaire used included 153 questions and was conducted in December 2003 by a private firm (Mitosfsky Consultants) in 27 of the 31 states of the Mexican Republic.[12] The sampling plan includes, apart from cultural practices, socio-demographic variables (region, size of cities) and socioeconomic variables (sex, age, level of education and family income). The questionnaire responds to the same institutional logic that aims to measure the impact of public policies (Flores, 2004: 185).

In this vein, the survey lacks socio-professional variables, information that is particularly relevant as it would let us reconstruct more efficiently the social classes and the distribution of the different types of capital (a fundamental aspect for understanding the relationship between the aesthetic dispositions and social conditions of existence). The structure of the questionnaire suggests that the original objective was to measure the intensity of cultural consumption and not so much the system of cultural preferences according to social properties.

In order to be able to interpret the different questions in the survey, we systematically recoded most of the variables used in the MCA to obtain a more balanced distribution of their modalities. We carried out the recoding of answered questions in order of importance using the first option. We took the other options when the frequency of the modality was under 3 per cent. We regrouped the variables with a limited number of effectives into a new modality called 'junk' (cf. Figure 16.2).

To construct the space of cultural practices in Mexico we used 26 questions, which were grouped into six topics: television, films, music, reading, radio and leisure. These questions generated 105 modalities, 14 of which were considered to be passive modalities, thus we kept 91 active modalities. The modalities considered to be passive are those with a frequency of less than 4.5 per cent, and those regrouping the modalities 'no answer', 'no purpose' and 'doesn't know'. Modalities associated with questions that had a filter were also coded as passive.[13]

As for individuals, 233 were eliminated from the base for the MCA because of a significant number of 'no answers'. The individuals excluded from the analysis, due to similar response patterns, tend to be concentrated in the same region of the space.[14] The selection of variables and their recoding respond to two prerogatives. The first seeks to obtain information that conveys the distinction between cultural taste and participation. The second covers a preliminary treatment of this information in order to obtain a better distribution of said information.

## Comprehensive interpretation of the axes

The contribution of the six items to the variance, on which basis we selected the questions for the MCA, is similar enough (see Table 16.1), meaning that there are a balanced number of modalities for each item being studied. The eigenvalue of the total variance corresponds to 2.5575. The contributions of the first three axes ($\lambda 1 = 0.1962$; $\lambda 2 = 0.0823$; $\lambda 3 = 0.0684$) are much higher than those of the following two ($\lambda 4 = 0.0561$; $\lambda 5 = 0.0529$). As for the fourth axis, the difference between the eigenvalues is relatively low, which is why we shall just interpret the first three axes

*Table 16.1* Total contribution of the six items of the first three axes to the variance

| *Items* | *Total contribution to variance (%)* | *Contribution to axis 1 (%)* | *Contribution to axis 2 (%)* | *Contribution to axis 3 (%)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Television | 15.2 | 15.3 | 20.9 | 25.9 |
| Films | 15.6 | 21.5 | 15.7 | 9.2 |
| Music | 17.5 | 12.1 | 14.8 | 10.5 |
| Reading | 18.3 | 12.4 | 13.7 | 24.6 |
| Radio | 15.2 | 6.3 | 18.4 | 23.7 |
| Leisure | 18.2 | 32.4 | 16.7 | 6.1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

(Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010: 51–52) which concentrate 67 per cent of the adjusted information about the space.

The variance of axis 1 is mostly explained by the weight of the items 'leisure' (32 per cent), 'films' (22 per cent) and 'television' (15 per cent) which add up to a total of 69 per cent. Consequently we could consider that visual arts and leisure contribute to the variance of this axis. Axis 2 gives the impression of being more balanced. However, the significant contribution of television (21 per cent), radio (18 per cent) and leisure (17 per cent) is particularly remarkable. On axis 3, the contribution of television predominates (26 per cent), closely followed by reading (25 per cent) and radio (24 per cent). The variables leisure and films contribute to a lesser extent to the formation of this axis (6 and 9 per cent, respectively).

## Cultural practices and preferences of Mexicans

For the interpretation of axis 1, we selected the modalities whose contribution is above the average (100/91 = 1.09 per cent): 37 categories (over 91) have been selected according to this criterion, which contribute to 89 per cent of the variance of axis 1. This high percentage clearly reflects the contrasts and allows us to interpret this axis (see Figure 16.1).

On the left we find a dozen categories that represent 'non-participation' in a great number of practices. These modalities characterise those individuals who have never visited an archaeological site or a museum, have not gone to an arts centre, a cultural centre or a theatre; have not read a book in the past year, are not in the habit of reading magazines; some have never or hardly ever been to a cinema. However, they usually watch soap operas on the television, but hardly ever watch cultural programs. As for music, they are not in the habit of listening to recorded music and never go to a live concert. In their leisure time, they prefer to meet with relatives or friends.

On the right side we can observe some twenty modalities that contrast with the above and relate to the intensity of cultural participation of the individuals in a variety of activities, such as going to the cinema more than once a month, frequently watching 'art films'; going to events in cultural centres, arts centres or the theatre. The last time they went to a musical event was less than a year ago and when they did, it was in an auditorium or a concert hall. They regularly use the computer, often watch videos on television, and perform artistic activities such as writing or singing. In the quadrant on the right we also find modalities that describe taste such as, for example, watching either cultural programs or documentaries on television. In their leisure time, they also frequent archaeological sites, museums and cinemas (where they watch Hollywood movies) that they often choose from the entertainment guide. They listen regularly to the radio in the car, tuning in to cultural radio stations, and they like rock or classical music. They often read scientific or technical books as well as scientific journals and computer magazines, and devote a little of their leisure time to video games. To summarise, axis 1 could be interpreted as that which is structured as a function of the global capital volume.

Unlike the first axis, which is mainly made up of modalities that convey the intensity of cultural practices, the second axis consists of modalities that chart the

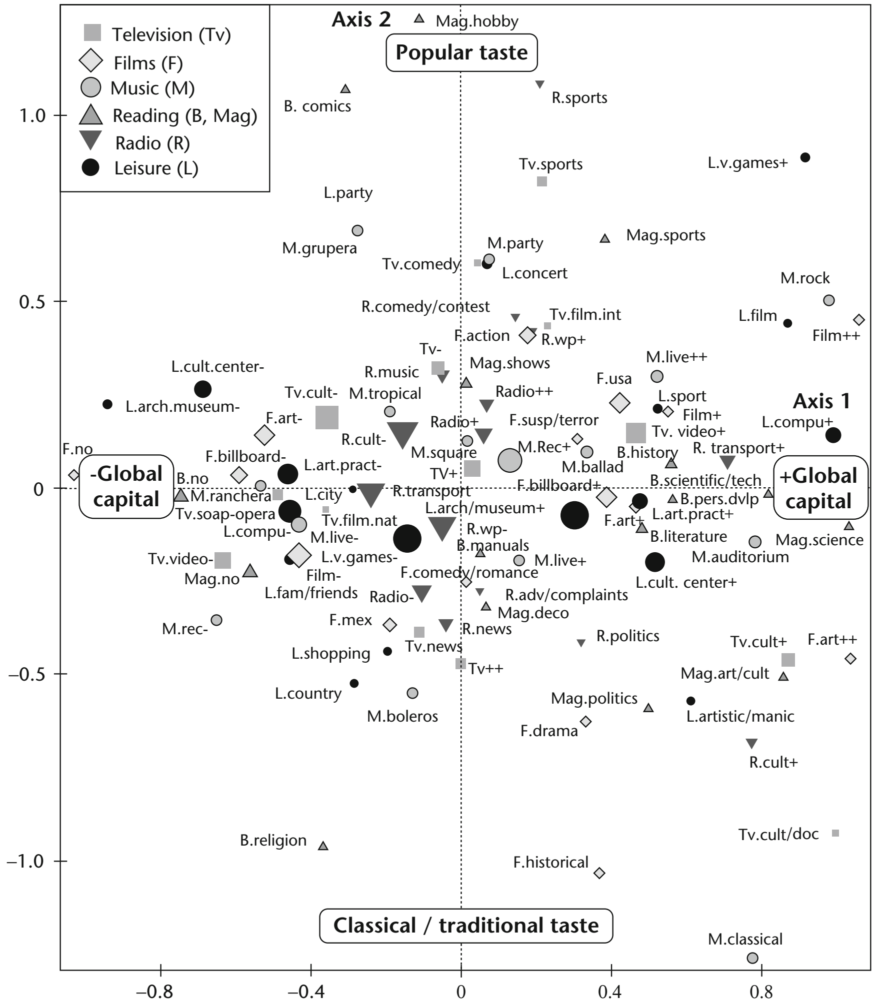


*Figure 16.1* Cloud of the 91 active modalities in plane 1–2

characteristics connected with taste. Here we find modalities that oppose different tastes in reading, television and radio programs, the type of movies, and the use of leisure time. In terms of reading, in the top part of Figure 16.1 we find modalities such as reading puzzle magazines, comics and sports magazines; while in the bottom part we find modalities that refer to reading religious books and specialist magazines on arts, culture and politics. The contrast described above is also confirmed when we observe preferences in television programs: in the top part we find sports and comedy programs as well as the retransmission of international movies, contrasted with the programs found in the bottom part (documentaries, cultural and news programs).

Another characteristic of this axis is the contrast between practices that differentiate between tastes in the use of leisure time. In the top part we find the modalities that represent preferences for parties, concerts, films and video games contrasted with the modalities about artistic expressions, visits to cultural centres, but also to those such as going to the countryside and shopping. As for music, in the top part we find modalities such as the preference for '*grupera*'[15], 'tropical'[16] and rock music contrasted with 'classical music' and '*boleros*'. We observe a contrast between musical genres and the use of the body: the first preference is more practical and implies the use of the body (dance music); the second, on the contrary, is more abstract and involves 'contemplative listening'. The item 'films' also contrasts preferences for action, suspense and terror (generally Hollywood films) with a predilection for *auteur* films (frequently European and sometimes Latin American) and cinematographic genres such as drama or historical movies. The second axis opposes a set of distinctive characteristics of taste that could well be defined as typical of 'popular' culture (the top part) and 'classical or traditional' culture (the bottom part).

The third axis also generates a series of contrasts between the modalities that make it possible to appreciate differences in taste (see Figure 16.2). In the top part we find

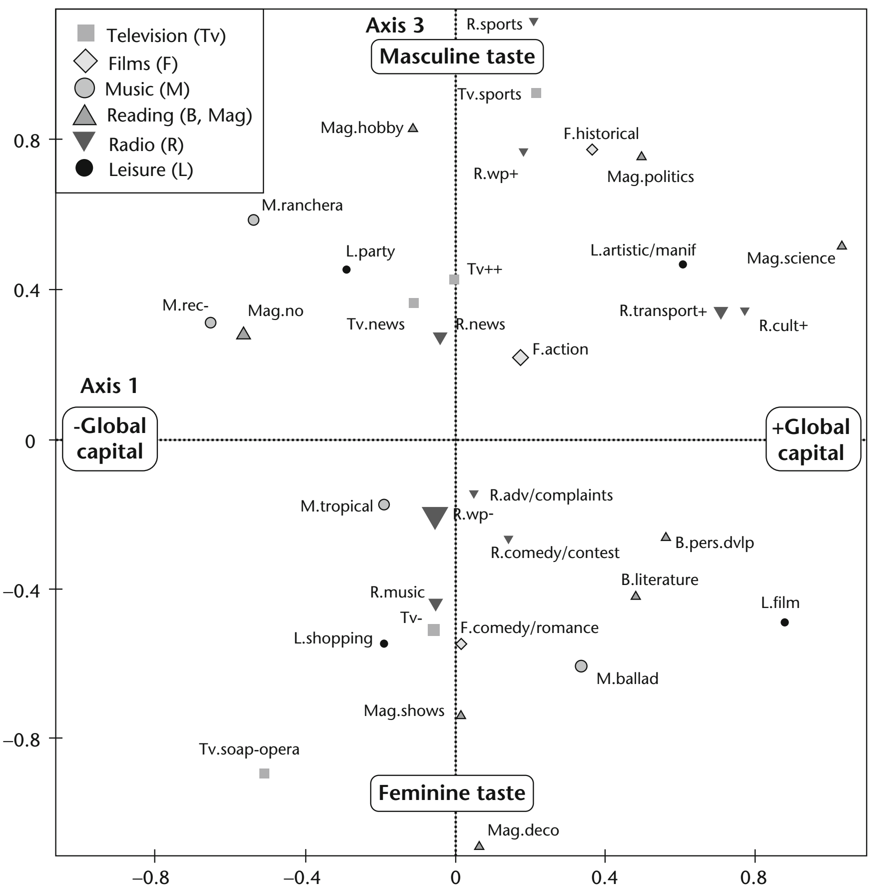


*Figure 16.2* Cloud of the 31 main modalities contributing to axis 3 (plane 1–3).

modalities such as listening, usually in the workplace or while travelling in the car, to sports and cultural programs, as well as the news, on the radio. Reading is concentrated on sports magazines, comics and puzzle magazines, but also on magazines that talk about politics and science. The preferred music ranges from '*rancheras*'[17] to rock. In their leisure time they prefer to go to artistic events, although there is also a perceptible preference for going to parties. Their preferred television programs are sports and news programs.

In the bottom part of the third axis we can distinguish modalities that indicate a different taste. As regards reading, we observe a preference for magazines on handicrafts, decoration, cooking, health, beauty and show business, but we also observe an interest in literature (although self-help books,[18] which are not very literary, are not very far behind). We also find the modalities that represent individuals who tend to watch very little television, except for soap operas. The programs they prefer to listen to on the radio are music and comedy, as well as programs for 'advice and complaints'. Among their preferred musical genres are tropical music, ballads and romantic music. In their leisure time they prefer to go to a film or shopping. To summarise, we can observe that gender is the main distinction on this axis, in other words this axis illustrates the contrast between the modalities that represent male and female practices.

## Socio-demographic variables in the cultural space

By superimposing the socio-demographic variables (age, level of education, family income and gender) on the space as supplementary information—in other words, without having them contribute to the construction of the space—we observe that they corroborate the above descriptions (see Figures 16.3 and 16.4). If we return to the analysis of the first axis, we observe that the distinction we noted earlier—between volume of capital—confirms the aforementioned contrast. To the far left of Figure 16.3, we find a concentration of individuals who did not finish primary school, who are very often people on a low income and over 65 years of age. On the opposite side, we find individuals who, on the contrary, enjoy more substantial incomes and confirm a concentration of people with university degrees or who are still enrolled in university. This validates the contrast between the social groups according to the volume of cultural capital they have. Note that the acquired cultural capital (degrees in the educational system) and economic capital (economic resources) go in the same direction in the social space. This suggests that, in a country with strong economic inequalities, cultural practices are structurally interlaced with economic and cultural capital.

The second axis—characterised by the distinction between popular cultural practices and classical or traditional cultural practices—is structured according to the age of individuals. Thus popular practices are over-represented among young people (15–17 years of age), while practices considered to be more classical correspond to the seniors (≥65 years). The third axis evidences a significant contrast among the cultural preferences of men (in the top part) and women (in the bottom part). This contrast can be attributed to reasons of social inequality: the majority of women are in the 'economically inactive' category.[19] The rate of employment for men is 83 per cent, whereas it is 40 per cent for women (INEGI, 2000).

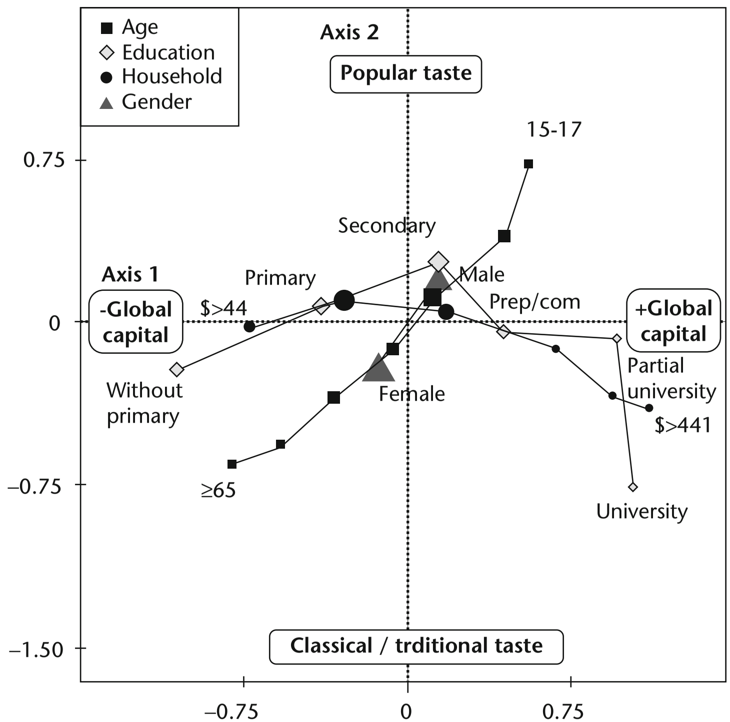


*Figure 16.3* Age, education, household and gender clouds in axes 1 and 2

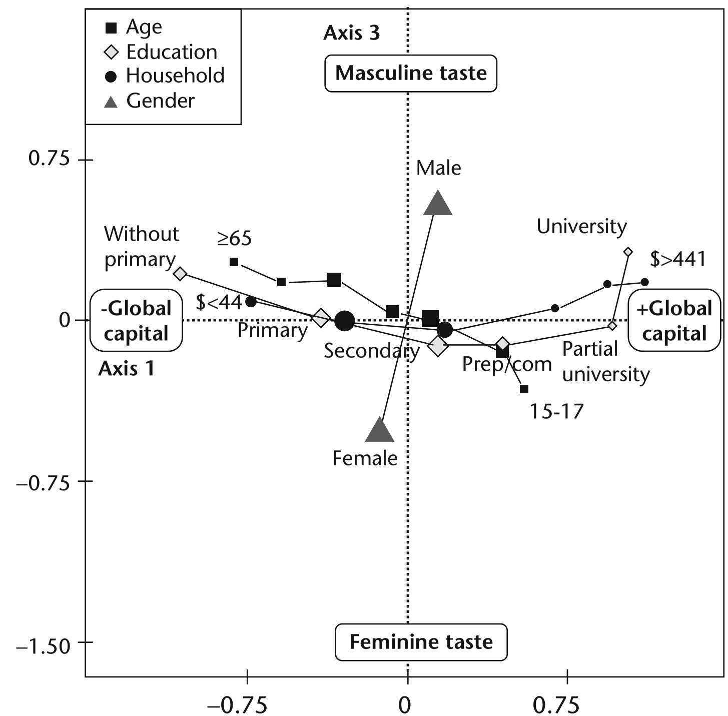


*Figure 16.4* Age, education, household and gender clouds in axes 1 and 3

This inequality in access to work reinforces the differences in cultural activities between genders. However, this contrast is more significant if we consider the ages of the respondents. The younger the individuals are, the more the sex variable tends to be an element that is sufficiently differentiated in respect to cultural practices and tastes (see Figure 16.5). If we consider axes 2 and 3, we find an even greater difference among young people according to their sex ($d$ = 1.41) than among the senior citizens ($d$ = 0.68).

In Figure 16.6 we can observe that the age of the individuals surveyed has a clear effect on cultural practices in general. However, evolution tends to be even more differentiated as a function of the level of income of individuals. In fact, higher-income social groups are characterised by greater cultural activity. But their preferences and tastes seem to evolve in the social space, going from relatively 'popular' practices for young people to 'classical' practices for the older generation. While the lower-income groups as a whole present a lower rate of cultural activity, they are, however, relatively active as far as popular practices are concerned. In other words, the intensity of cultural practices is proportional to the level of income. But as people advance in age, we can appreciate sharp variations in the aesthetic preferences of the different social classes.

Cultural practices tend to be more homogeneous among young people than among people over 65, irrespective of the level of income. This difference could be explained by the fact that being released from economic imperatives by their status as students, young people benefit from conditions that allow them to devote more time to cultural activities. Following the same reasoning, we were also able to observe that the distance that separates young people between 15–17 and 18–24 years of age with a lower family income (income of less than $44 pesos a day) is much more significant than in the other social groups. This could be explained by the fact that by belonging to low-income groups they do not stay in the educational system or prematurely enter the world of work, which radically reduces the amount of time devoted to cultural activities. For example, among the students, only 10 per cent of the people who declare a family income that is less than or equal to $44 pesos a day are enrolled in university, while the proportion reaches 53 per cent in the case of students belonging to families with incomes of more than $309 pesos a day. If we take the population as a whole, only 1.4 per cent of the individuals with family incomes of less than or equal to $44 pesos a day were enrolled in a university program, while this proportion is 17 times higher (24.3 per cent) in families with incomes higher than $309 pesos a day, a fact that coincides with the information from INEGI (2005: 89), according to which the highest decile of Mexican society spends six times more on cultural goods and services than the lowest decile. Therefore empirical evidence suggests a strong correlation between the level of education and family income, as testified by the contrasts observed in the space of cultural practices of Mexicans.

## Social class division and cultural practices

The structure of the space of cultural practices of Mexicans suggests a homology with the social classes according to the model outlined by Bourdieu. Cultural preferences

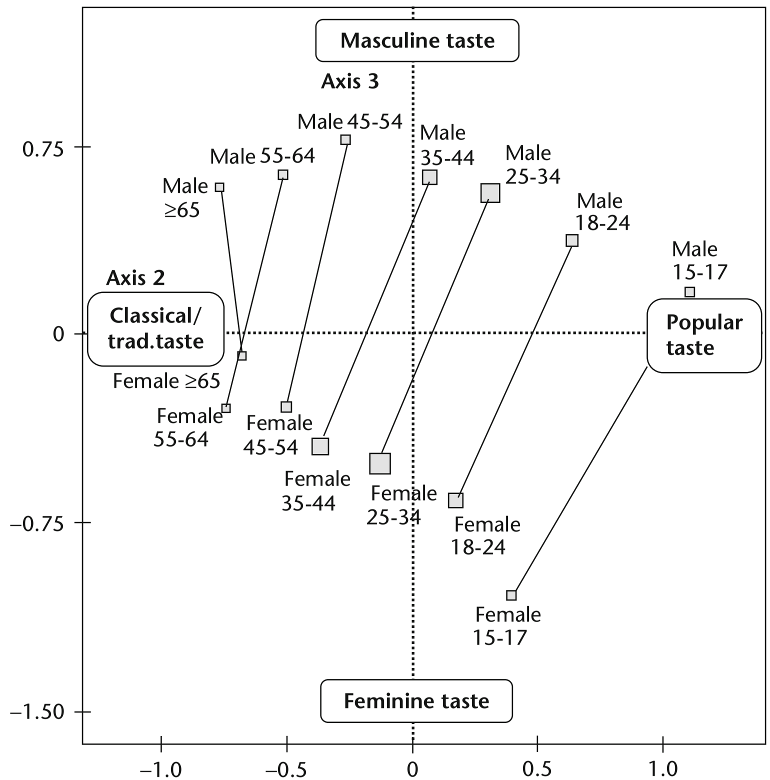


*Figure 16.5* Relationship between age and sex in planes 2–3

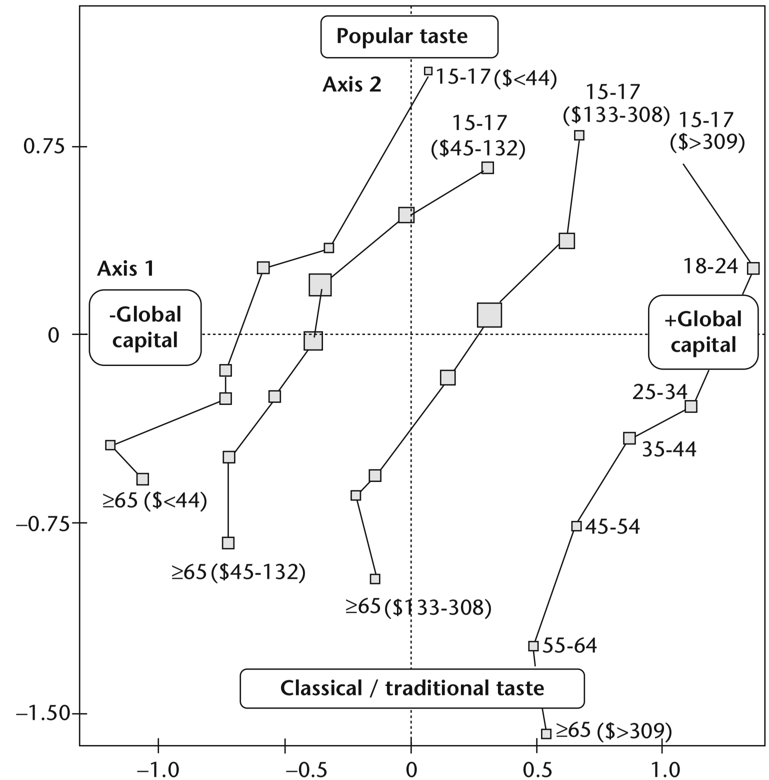


*Figure 16.6* Relationship between age and income in planes 1–2

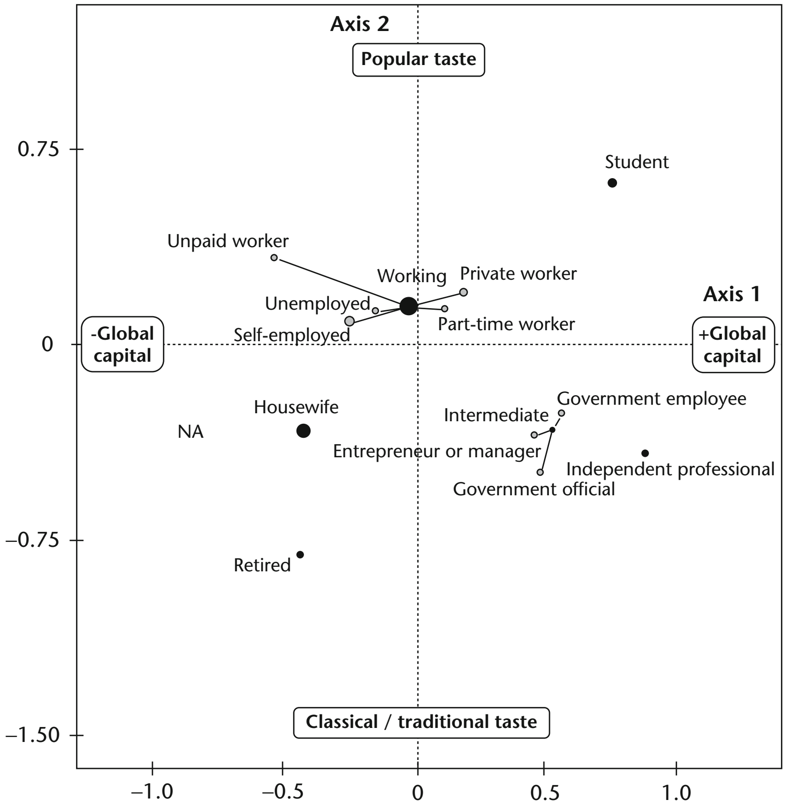


*Figure 16.7* Distribution of the types of occupation on axes 1 and 2

have a particularly significant power of classification in a developing country. However, the first difficulty we faced in this contribution was the lack of adequately efficient variables for the occupations that would let us organise the population into social classes. The 'occupation' variable proves a relatively useful element to conceive a classification of groups according to social class, although it is a rather imprecise tool with which to do so. As Louis Pinto points out, the variable 'occupation' enjoys a key place in the majority of sociological studies because it is the most complete variable despite its imperfections: on one hand, it systematically crystallises the relationships with other variables (income, educational level, etc.), and on the other it defines with sufficient scope the social space of possible structural configurations (matrimonial and educational strategies, cultural preferences, etc.) (Pinto, 2009).

Consequently, we decided to employ a variable used in the survey (occupation) that, to a large extent, restores the type of work and the status of the worker. Despite being a variable that is very basic in its composition, the economic activity status allows us to regroup categories in order to define in a certain way the social groups according to their relationship with labour.

From the 12 categories proposed in the survey for measurement of individuals' occupations, we can formulate a first differentiation between the different groups: the 'economically inactive' (43 per cent) and the 'economically active' (57 per cent). The first group (students, 13 per cent; housewives, 26 per cent; retired people, 3.4 per cent) cannot be classified according to social class: there are no questions about the activity of the head of the household in the survey. That is why we decided to organise the second group into three classes (*professional*, 2 per cent; *intermediate*, 7 per cent; *working*, 47 per cent).

In Figure 16.8, we can observe the concentration ellipses for the social classes established in the cloud of individuals. The position of the barycentre for each class reveals a more significant distribution on the first axis. The *working class* is thus contrasted with the *professional class*, and the *intermediate class* occupies a position between the two. We can conclude—not without certain reservations—that in Mexico, the class division coincides with the segmentation of tastes and cultural practices. The latter structurally contribute to the composition of the social classes, as has been demonstrated in other countries (Le Roux *et al.*, 2008; Bennett *et al.*, 2009).

On the other hand, the groups of individuals within the 'economically inactive' category are distributed between the first and second axes, with a more significant contrast between the *students* and the *retired*, which corroborates the distinction of the second axis (classical/traditional taste versus popular taste). To summarise, the students and the professionals are the groups with a greater volume of cultural capital, but are differentiated by their cultural preferences. The former opt for more popular practices, the latter for more classical repertories, which can be explained by the differentiation of ages: as people get older, their cultural demands shift accordingly. However, other generational effects could explain this difference: the first concerns the considerable rise in the university population, which has tripled over the past three decades; the second is the appearance on the scene of the new communication technologies in the differentiation of the use of leisure time between generations (frequency of use of the computer, time devoted to video games, etc.); and finally, the free trade agreements signed over the past 20 years with the United States, which have completely opened up the borders of the cultural industries.

The *working class* occupies a central position in the space of the practices and is characterised by an 'average' taste. Being relatively excluded from the higher education system, this class inclines towards forms of cultural expression that do not require a significant intellectual investment. They prefer to read comics and puzzle magazines and to watch sports programs on television, while their musical tastes are for Mexican popular music: *rancheras* and *gruperas*. Housewives and retired people appear to be a little more excluded, the former with a preference for shows and soap operas, and the latter with a slight trend towards some forms of classical or traditional cultural expressions: reading religious books, listening to *boleros*, etc.

The results obtained in the MCA are not strictly the same as those of *Distinction*. However, it cannot be denied that the space of cultural practices is homologous to the social space, as the first axis reproduces a differentiation of the cultural practices

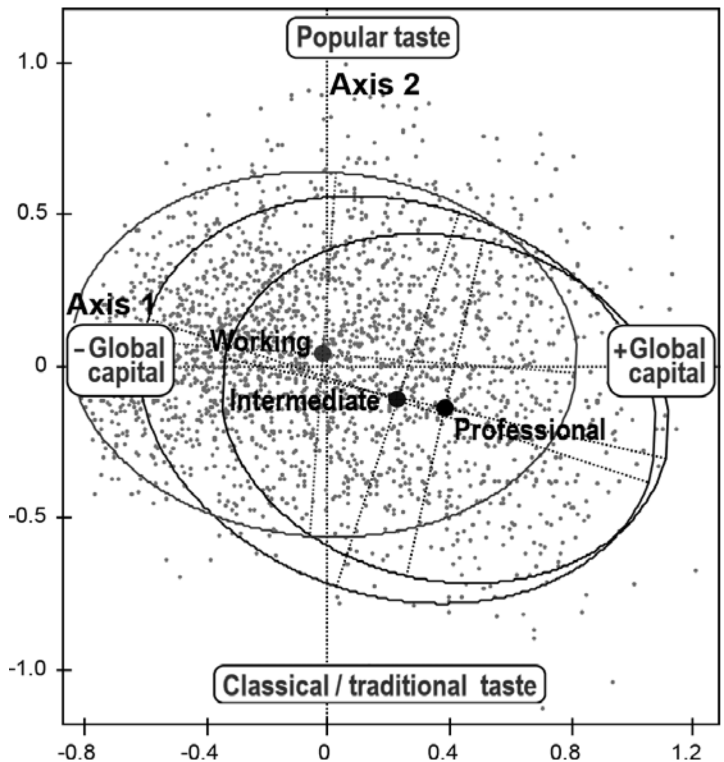


*Figure 16.8* Subclouds of economically active population with concentration ellipses

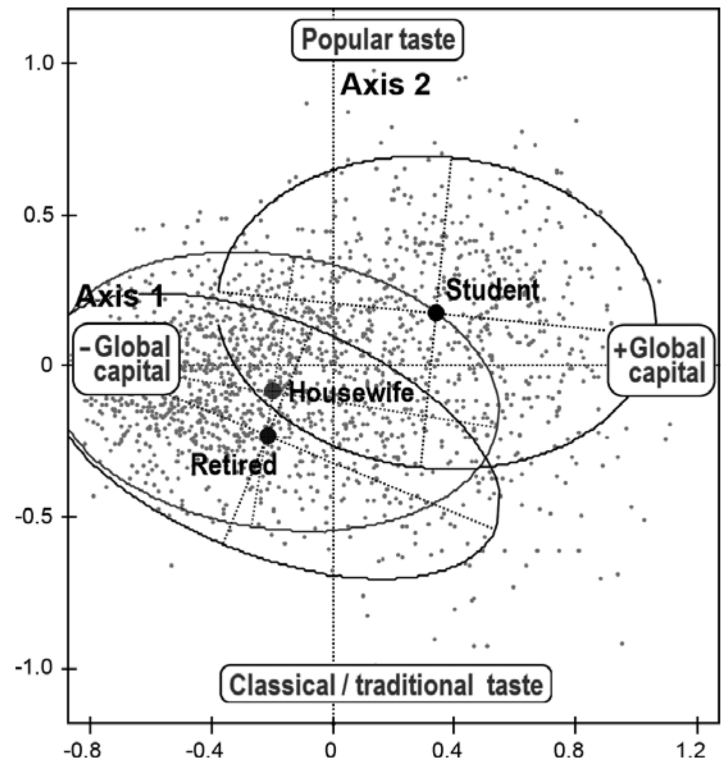


*Figure 16.9* Subclouds of economically inactive population with concentration ellipses

according to the global volume of capital of Mexicans. The successive axes do not categorically show the contrast between economic capital and cultural capital, but indicate other factors structuring the differentiation in consumption, such as age and sex. The above phenomenon is similar to that observed in countries like the United Kingdom (Bennett *et al.*, 2009) and Australia (Bennett *et al.*, 2013). Both empirical and methodological aspects can explain this fact. Regarding the empirical reasons, age plays a role in differentiation that tends to be considered as a generational effect: the use of new communication technologies, the rise in the university population and the trade agreements have considerably increased the exchange of cultural goods and services over the past two decades. On the other hand, sex reveals differences in cultural consumption as an effect of structural inequalities between genders, considering that gender inequality is higher in Mexican society than in Western countries. As for the methodological reasons, Bourdieu does not apply the MCAs to the entire population of France, but rather uses one MCA for the upper class and another for the middle class (Bourdieu, 1979: 588). This methodological choice allows him to reduce the effect of variables that cut across social classes (such as age and sex), highlighting the structural characteristics that differentiate fractions at the heart of each class. Social stratification is thus the starting point of Bourdieu's use of the MCA statistical method in *Distinction*.[20]

## Conclusion

It was not our intention initially to faithfully apply Bourdieu's parameters to construct a space of cultural practices in Mexico: our analysis is based on a representative sample of the Mexican population, whereas in the data employed in *Distinction*, the upper and middle classes are over-represented, as mentioned above. Moreover, the Conaculta survey, as it was designed, presents certain limitations for a more profound sociological analysis and to test the difference in capital structure, such as the absence of socio-professional variables, and a lack of information more accurately reflecting the polarisation of tastes within classes, such as food, religion, fashion, political orientation, type of (private/public) education, etc.. However, the results of this research suggest that our initial hypothesis—that there is a structural homology between the space of social positions and the space of lifestyles—is confirmed in Mexico. If the conclusions of *Distinction* cannot necessarily be extrapolated to other national contexts without prior adjustments, there is nothing to prevent the method—adapted to the available information and the specificity of other countries—from being put into practice in order to highlight the social and symbolic logics that lie behind cultural consumption. Its application to the case of Mexico reveals that cultural practices and tastes respond to social mechanisms that constitute an element of distinction.

Furthermore, the 'omnivore–univore' thesis (Peterson, 1992) does not appear to be valid for certain categories. In 2000, 9.5 per cent of the Mexican population were illiterate and 18 per cent of the respondents declared that they had never been to the cinema (of whom 12 per cent never watched television). In consequence, could we categorise them as 'nullivores' as far as literary or cinematographic taste

*Table 16.2* Contribution of the active categories

| *Labels of variables and modalities* | *Variables and modalities* | *%* | *Contribution axis 1* | *Contribution axis 2* | *Contribution axis 3* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TELEVISION (4 questions. 14 active modalities)** | | | | | |
| **TV frequency** | **How many hours do you watch TV per day?** | | | | |
| Tv++ | Less than 2 hours | 23.50 | 0.00 | 2.50 | 2.39 |
| Tv+ | Between 2 and 4 hours | 49.40 | 0.01 | 0.06 | 0.16 |
| Tv– | More than 4 hours | 27.10 | 0.02 | 1.29 | 3.96 |
| **TV taste** | **What kind of programs do you prefer?** | | | | |
| Tv.no (p) | Don't watch TV | 2.60 | – | – | – |
| Tv.comedy | Comedy | 7.40 | 0.00 | 1.25 | 0.01 |
| Tv.cult/doc | Cultural or documentary | 9.70 | 1.90 | 3.88 | 0.13 |
| Tv.sports | Sport | 12.60 | 0.12 | 3.99 | 6.07 |
| Tv.news | News | 23.70 | 0.06 | 1.65 | 1.75 |
| Tv.film.int | International films | 9.80 | 0.10 | 0.85 | 0.12 |
| Tv.film.nat | National films | 6.70 | 0.17 | 0.01 | 0.00 |
| Tv.soap-opera | Soap-opera | 22.40 | 1.12 | 0.00 | 10.07 |
| Tv.junk (p) | Other programs | 5.20 | – | – | – |
| **TV cultural channel** | **Do you watch any cultural channel?** | | | | |
| Tv.cult+ | Yes | 28.80 | 4.30 | 2.86 | 0.13 |
| Tv.cult– | No | 71.20 | 1.74 | 1.16 | 0.05 |
| **TV video** | **How often do you watch videos?** | | | | |
| Tv.video+ | At least once a week | 57.50 | 2.46 | 0.57 | 0.44 |
| Tv.video– | Less frequently or never | 42.50 | 3.34 | 0.77 | 0.60 |
| **FILM (5 questions. 15 active modalities)** | | | | | |
| **Film frequency** | **Generally speaking, how many times a month do you go to the cinema?** | | | | |
| Film– | Never had been or at least once a month | 64.20 | 2.35 | 0.93 | 0.33 |
| Film+ | At least once a month | 20.00 | 1.18 | 0.39 | 0.44 |
| Film++ | More than once a month | 15.90 | 3.48 | 1.53 | 0.17 |
| **National film** | **Among the films you saw this year, most were Mexican or American?** | | | | |
| F.mex | Mexican | 25.10 | 0.18 | 1.57 | 0.00 |
| F.usa | American | 51.30 | 1.79 | 1.24 | 0.16 |
| F.junk (p) | From other countries, don't know, no answer | 23.60 | – | – | – |
| **Film taste** | **What kind of films do you prefer?** | | | | |
| F.action | Action | 37.70 | 0.23 | 2.96 | 1.01 |
| F.comedy/romance | Comedy or romance | 22.90 | 0.00 | 0.68 | 3.87 |
| F.drama | Drama | 8.30 | 0.18 | 1.52 | 0.00 |
| F.historical | Historical | 5.60 | 0.15 | 2.79 | 1.89 |
| F.susp/terror | Suspense or terror | 9.50 | 0.17 | 0.08 | 0.36 |
| F.no (p) | Never been to the cinema | 14.00 | – | – | – |
| F.junk (p) | Other films | 2.00 | – | – | – |

*(Continued)*

*Table 16.2* Contribution of the active categories (Continued)

| *Labels of variables and modalities* | *Variables and modalities* | *%* | *Contribution axis 1* | *Contribution axis 2* | *Contribution axis 3* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Film art** | **How often do you see art films?** | | | | |
| F.art++ | Very frequently or regularly | 14.30 | 3.02 | 1.40 | 0.35 |
| F.art+ | Rarely | 30.30 | 1.30 | 0.03 | 0.48 |
| F.art– | Never | 55.40 | 2.99 | 0.52 | 0.04 |
| **Film billboard** | **When you go to the cinema, do you consult the billboard or just see what films are in the cinema?** | | | | |
| F.billboard+ | Yes | 60.50 | 1.77 | 0.01 | 0.04 |
| F.billboard– | No | 39.50 | 2.72 | 0.02 | 0.06 |
| **MUSIC (4 questions. 15 active modalities)** | | | | | |
| **Music live frequency** | **When did you last attend a musical concert?** | | | | |
| M.live– | Never | 45.70 | 1.66 | 0.20 | 0.26 |
| M.live+ | Over a year ago | 23.70 | 0.11 | 0.42 | 0.09 |
| M.live++ | Less than a year ago | 30.60 | 1.63 | 1.26 | 0.13 |
| **Music taste** | **What kind of music do you listen to most often?** | | | | |
| M.na (p) | No answer | 18.60 | – | – | – |
| M.ballad | Ballads, romantic, pop | 25.40 | 0.57 | 0.10 | 5.28 |
| M.boleros | *Boleros* | 9.00 | 0.03 | 1.29 | 0.04 |
| M.classical | Classical | 5.10 | 0.61 | 3.82 | 0.26 |
| M.grupera | *Grupera* | 13.70 | 0.20 | 3.03 | 0.00 |
| M.ranchera | *Ranchera* | 12.70 | 0.71 | 0.00 | 2.42 |
| M.rock | Rock | 10.80 | 2.03 | 1.28 | 0.53 |
| M.tropical | Tropical (*salsa, merengue*) | 4.30 | 0.03 | 0.08 | 0.08 |
| M.junk (p) | Other music | 0.30 | – | – | – |
| **Music place** | **Where do you usually go to hear musical performances?** | | | | |
| M.auditorium | Auditorium, concert hall | 23.60 | 2.87 | 0.24 | 0.06 |
| M.square | Public square | 18.90 | 0.0 | 0.13 | 0.03 |
| M.party | *Ferias*, community party, restaurant or disco | 10.10 | 0.01 | 1.74 | 0.29 |
| M.no (p) | Never | 45.20 | – | – | – |
| M.junk (p) | Other | 2.20 | – | – | – |
| **Music recorded** | **Are you used to listening to recorded music?** | | | | |
| M.rec+ | Yes | 83.30 | 0.28 | 0.20 | 0.18 |
| M.rec– | No | 16.70 | 1.39 | 0.99 | 0.90 |
| **READING (2 questions. 14 actives modalities)** | | | | | |
| **Book taste** | **What kind of books did you read this year?** | | | | |
| B.no | None | 34.70 | 3.8 | 0.01 | 0.02 |
| B.history | History, biography | 14.10 | 0.87 | 0.03 | 0.01 |
| B.scientific/tech | Scientific/technical, encyclopaedias | 11.40 | 1.49 | 0.00 | 0.87 |
| B.manuals (p) | Cooking, guides, manuals | 4.10 | – | – | – |

*Table 16.2* Contribution of the active categories (Continued)

| *Labels of variables and modalities* | *Variables and modalities* | *%* | *Contribution axis 1* | *Contribution axis 2* | *Contribution axis 3* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B.literature | Novels, poetry and stories | 18.30 | 0.83 | 0.09 | 1.79 |
| B.religion | Religion | 4.60 | 0.12 | 1.97 | 0.11 |
| B.pers.dvlp | Personal development | 6.20 | 0.38 | 0.00 | 0.24 |
| B.comics | Comics | 6.60 | 0.13 | 3.54 | 0.89 |
| **Magazine taste** | **What kind of magazines you usually read?** | | | | |
| Mag.no | Never | 34.40 | 2.14 | 0.77 | 1.58 |
| Mag.art/cult | Social, travel, art and culture | 7.10 | 1.03 | 0.83 | 0.28 |
| Mag.deco | Arts and crafts, decoration, women's, cooking, health, beauty | 12.10 | 0.01 | 0.56 | 8.01 |
| Mag.science | Scientific-technical, computing | 6.00 | 1.24 | 0.03 | 0.89 |
| Mag.sports (p) | Sports | 9.70 | – | – | – |
| Mag.hobby | Comics, hobbies | 5.60 | 0.01 | 4.11 | 2.17 |
| Mag.politics | Politics | 6.00 | 0.29 | 0.98 | 1.92 |
| Mag.shows | TV shows | 19.20 | 0.00 | 0.73 | 5.85 |
| **RADIO (5 questions. 15 actives modalities)** | | | | | |
| **Radio frequency** | **How many hours a day do you listen to the radio?** | | | | |
| Radio– | Never or at least 2 hours a day | 37.70 | 0.08 | 1.41 | 0.00 |
| Radio+ | Between 2 and 4 hours a day | 37.20 | 0.03 | 0.33 | 0.01 |
| Radio++ | More than 4 hours a day | 25.10 | 0.02 | 0.57 | 0.02 |
| **Radio cultural** | **Do you listen to a cultural broadcast?** | | | | |
| R.cult+ | Yes | 16.70 | 1.95 | 3.68 | 1.08 |
| R.cult– | No | 83.30 | 0.39 | 0.74 | 0.22 |
| **Radio workplace** | **Do you listen to the radio at work?** | | | | |
| R.wp+ | Yes | 21.80 | 0.15 | 1.76 | 7.16 |
| R.wp– | No | 78.20 | 0.04 | 0.49 | 2.00 |
| **Radio transport** | **Do you listen to the radio in the car, in the bus?** | | | | |
| R.transport+ | Yes | 25.30 | 2.50 | 0.05 | 1.59 |
| R.transport– | No | 74.70 | 0.84 | 0.02 | 0.54 |
| **Radio taste** | **What programs do you prefer?** | | | | |
| R.no (p) | None | 9.90 | – | – | – |
| R.comedy/ contest | Comedy, contest | 4.90 | 0.02 | 0.48 | 0.20 |

*(Continued)*

*Table 16.2* Contribution of the active categories (Continued)

| *Labels of variables and modalities* | *Variables and modalities* | *%* | *Contribution axis 1* | *Contribution axis 2* | *Contribution axis 3* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R.sports | Sports | 8.50 | 0.07 | 4.67 | 5.93 |
| R.politics | Political discussion, interviews | 7.20 | 0.14 | 0.58 | 0.12 |
| R.news | News | 33.40 | 0.01 | 2.12 | 1.34 |
| R.adv/complaints | Advice/orientation, complaints | 5.60 | 0.00 | 0.20 | 0.07 |
| R.music | Music (second mention) | 30.50 | 0.02 | 1.25 | 3.39 |
| **LEISURE (6 questions. 18 active modalities)** | | | | | |
| **Leisure taste** | **In your leisure time, can you mention 3 of your favourite outdoor activities?** | | | | |
| L.film | Going to the cinema | 8.80 | 1.34 | 0.78 | 1.20 |
| L.artistic/manif | Going to theatre presentations, dance, expositions, concerts or libraries | 4.80 | 0.35 | 0.71 | 0.58 |
| L.party | Going to parties, bars, billiards or canteens | 8.30 | 0.13 | 2.12 | 0.94 |
| L.shopping | Going shopping | 7.90 | 0.06 | 0.70 | 1.36 |
| L.sport | Playing sports | 17.60 | 0.96 | 0.37 | 0.65 |
| L.country | Going for walks in the countryside | 9.90 | 0.15 | 1.29 | 0.19 |
| L.fam/friends | Meeting with friends or family | 25.40 | 1.09 | 0.41 | 0.33 |
| L.concert | Dancing or going to a show | 5.30 | 0.01 | 0.92 | 0.06 |
| L.city (p) | Going to the city | 3.80 | – | – | – |
| L.junk (p) | Other | 8.20 | – | – | – |
| **Archaeological/ museum** | **Have you ever been to an archaeological site or museum?** | | | | |
| L.arch/museum– | No | 24.50 | 4.26 | 0.58 | 0.12 |
| L.arch/museum+ | Yes | 75.50 | 1.38 | 0.19 | 0.04 |
| **Cultural center/theatre** | **Have you ever been to a cultural house, a cultural centre or a theatre?** | | | | |
| L.cult.center– | Never | 42.90 | 3.97 | 1.41 | 0.16 |
| L.cult.center + | Little or so | 57.10 | 2.98 | 1.06 | 0.12 |
| **Artistic practice** | **How often do you practise writing or any other artistic activity?** | | | | |
| L.art.pract– | Nothing | 50.90 | 2.12 | 0.03 | 0.05 |
| L.art.pract+ | Little or so | 49.10 | 2.19 | 0.03 | 0.05 |
| **Computer** | **Do you use a computer?** | | | | |
| L.compu+ | Yes | 31.40 | 6.07 | 0.30 | 0.05 |
| L.compu– | No | 68.60 | 2.78 | 0.14 | 0.02 |
| **Video games** | **Do you play video games?** | | | | |
| L.v.games+ | Yes | 13.30 | 2.21 | 4.90 | 0.14 |
| L.v.games– | No | 86.70 | 0.34 | 0.75 | 0.02 |

is concerned? This is perhaps where we find the limit of 'omnivorism'. Aside from wondering, as Peterson (2004) does, if this hypothesis is applicable to societies in the developing countries, it would be relevant to find out first of all if this theory is capable of accounting for all the possible social configurations (without excluding the ones that have already been left out). On the contrary, the transferability in space and time of Bourdieu's model is possible because it depends on its relational nature: it is not the cultural practices in themselves that produce an effect of distinction or differentiation, but rather the use that each group makes of them in respect of those of the other social groups (Sapiro, 2013).

The differentiation between cultural and economic capital—for the aforementioned methodological reasons—is not shown in a way that is sufficiently clear. However, we can also formulate the hypothesis that these two types of capital are structurally intertwined, which can be explained by the inequality of access to education and culture. Access to quality education in Mexico is, generally speaking, in direct proportion to economic resources, which might explain the strong connection between economic and cultural capital, as suggested by the growing expansion of the private education sector.

The preliminary results of this incipient research offer circumstantial evidence to prove that the specific social context of this country makes culture an important factor in social differentiation. Among the aspects that characterise Mexican society we can observe some forms of vernacular culture, linked to the construction of a national identity, that often transcend the social classes.[21] In this vein, while the state promotes the liberalisation of the cultural market, one can perceive, at the same time, an institutional desire to reassess the indigenous cultures. This kind of double-game policy participates in the constant redefinition of cultural legitimacy and in the reconfiguration of representations connected with Mexican national identity. Moreover, its position in the international circuit of cultural goods and services makes it more permeable to expressions and tastes that are defined as international, particularly among the more socially favoured fractions. Finally, culture continues to crystallise social relationships in their broadest sense, and its study offers nuances that help us identify the symbolic boundaries distinguishing the different groups that make up society.

## Notes

* Translated from the Spanish by Lesley Clarke.

1 The responsibility for this contribution lies with each of the authors; nevertheless, this article is indebted to Julien Duval, Remi Lenoir and Brigitte Le Roux for their advice, remarks and subsequent recommendations. We would like also to thank Elsa Abou Assi, Fruela Fernández, Sophie Noël and Russel Clarke for their pertinent comments which helped us to improve the preliminary drafts of this version.

2 Ever since Bourdieu's pioneer work in France (1979), numerous research projects have been carried out in other countries which have contributed certain nuances without calling into question the principle observed by Bourdieu. Of these we can mention the ones carried out in the United States (Lamont, 1992), Norway (Rosenlund, 2000), Portugal (Borges, 2005), Denmark (Prieur *et al.*, 2008), United Kingdom (Bennett *et al.*, 2009) and Australia (Bennett *et al.*, 2013). For a general discussion of the so-called *Distinction* studies, see Duval (2010).

3 The main studies on cultural practices in Mexico that include statistical information are, in chronological order: The *Bibliotecas públicas y conducta lectora* survey (SEP, 1988); the *El cine, la televisión y el vídeo en México* survey (García Canclini, 1994), the *Encuesta Nacionales de Juventud* (Pérez, 2000, 2005), the *Encuestas sobre el mundo estudiantil universitario* by Adrián de Garay (2001, 2004), the *Encuesta Nacional de Prácticas y Consumo Culturales* by Conaculta that we are studying here (Flores, 2004) and the *Encuesta Nacional de Lectura* by Conaculta (Ávalos *et al*., 2006).

4 However, the research of Adrián de Garay (2004) about the world of the university student constitutes an exception and deserves special attention as it combines qualitative and quantitative methods. The restrictions that impede the elaboration of social class variables are not a Mexican specificity.

5 Embodied since the start of the twentieth century by France principally and, to a lesser extent, by England, without forgetting, obviously, the legacy of Spain.

6 Represented by the ancient indigenous peoples of the region (Mayans, Aztecs, Huichols, etc.).

7 *Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques*.

8 University enrolment has increased from 78,000 to 2.5 million students between 1960 and 2010.

9 From a post-modern perspective, Néstor García Canclini suggests that cultural stratification, the consumption of symbolic goods and the legitimacy referents have fallen apart. In his opinion, this is an effect of the weight of the media and deterritorialisation (loss of geographic and social bases). Popular and elitist culture belongs to modernity, whereas, on the contrary, mass culture corresponds to post-modernity. His concept of 'hybrid culture' is a mixture of elitist, popular and mass culture (García Canclini, 1990).

10 Multidimensional poverty, according to the INEGI, includes three necessary dimensions for the development of the population (economic wellbeing, social rights and the territorial environment) (INEGI, 2013b).

11 Social expenditure, without counting the investment in education, corresponds to 7.5 per cent of the GIP in 2009, in other words a third of the average for the countries of the OECD.

12 This survey has 109 closed and 26 open questions, including socio-demographic information.

13 For example, individuals who do not go to the cinema do not answer the next question (what type of films do you prefer?).

14 However, we verified the correlation of the first five axes. A correlation was observed with the first axis of 0.90, second axis of 0.96, third axis of 1, fourth axis of 0.96 and the fifth axis of 0.97. In other words, the axes are relatively stable (Le Roux and Rouanet, 1998).

15 *Grupera* music is a genre of folklore that regroups a variety of styles, such as *cumbia*, *norteña* and *ranchera*, and is very popular in northern Mexico.

16 'Tropical' music corresponds to rhythmic and dance genres from the Caribbean and includes *salsa*, *merengue*, *bachata*, etc.

17 *Ranchera* music is a traditional genre of Mexican popular music that dates back to the Revolution and generally deals with rural life, honour, patriotism and the national conscience.

18 These are motivational texts to help people overcome all manner of obstacles through their own individual abilities. This category of reading tends to raise the national average, which is relatively low: the average number of books read in Mexico is 2.9 books per person a year (Ávalos *et al*., 2006).

19 Within this category, 26.6 per cent are students, 46.8 per cent people devoted to domestic work (of whom 99 per cent are women), 3.2 per cent retirees, and 23.5 per cent have another type of inactivity.

20 This is also supported by a French tradition in the use of socio-professional variables (Desrosières, 2000).

21 There are, for example, some cultural expressions, in gastronomy, that come from the lower classes and yet are considered to be 'authentic' and that the Mexican elites—under certain configurations—associate with a form of social distinction (Pilcher, 2012).

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# 17

# On 'knowingness', cosmopolitanism and busyness as emerging forms of cultural capital

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This chapter starts from the recognition that, compared with the society analysed by Bourdieu in *Distinction* (1984), the number of possible aesthetic choices has expanded enormously in Western societies today. The media's increased presence in everyday life subjects us all to more information on the range of possible choices, and exposes us to a new and shorter time horizon. What is fashionable today may be 'so yesterday' tomorrow, while vulgarity may just as rapidly become 'cool'. Cultural production has been through enormous changes, which are reflected in cultural consumption. Our starting point is that these changes may displace how distinction is achieved, with less emphasis on the choices of particular objects and more on their mode of appreciation and consumption. The choice of objects may not correspond too well to the Kantian pure taste dissected by Bourdieu, but in this chapter we will argue that the somewhat distanced attitude towards them does. It is thus possible that the privileged may relate to this proliferation of choices in particularly 'discerning' ways.

Whereas numerous critics of Bourdieu have taken these cultural developments as markers of the breakdown of cultural capital in favour of more 'culturally omnivorous' patterns, we instead argue that these developments point to the value of the concept of 'emerging cultural capital'. In the latter part of this chapter, we excavate this argument theoretically through returning to Bourdieu's own thinking and by reflecting on what 'the scholastic point of view' entails in contemporary culture. Before returning to this, we begin by laying out (and summarising the arguments of Prieur and Savage, 2011, 2013) the now considerable empirical evidence from a wide range of studies across the globe which point towards the value of the conception of emerging forms of cultural capital. We will particularly draw on our own experiences from the British study of cultural distinctions and class (Bennett *et al.*, 2009) and from the Danish study of the same topics (Prieur *et al.*, 2008; Harrits *et al.*, 2010).

## New modes of cultural capital in European studies

The foundation of our argument was elaborated by Douglas Holt's argument that the 'crux of the postmodern condition is the breakdown of the hierarchy distinguishing legitimate "high" culture from mass "low" culture' (Holt, 1997: 103), as well as the breakdown of the direct relationship between such classifications and class. This implies that the objectified form of cultural capital loses efficacy as a mechanism for exclusionary class boundaries: 'As popular cultural objects become aestheticized and as elite objects become popularized, the objectified form of cultural capital has in large part been supplanted by the embodied form', Holt continued (pp. 103–104): 'In other words, to express distinction through embodied tastes leads cultural elites to emphasize the distinctiveness of consumption practices themselves, apart from the cultural contents to which they are applied.' In order not to be simple followers of fashion, they strive to be updated on the upcoming. Knowledge of particular objects, like restaurants or dishes, is not enough, as they are constantly changing. What is needed is to participate and to have 'conversational competence in this specialized, esoteric, and dynamic aesthetic' (p. 104).

Evidence for this orientation emanates from numerous studies. Bennett *et al.*'s (2009) wide-ranging study of cultural capital in Britain points to a 'reflexive appropriation' of culture 'in a spirit of openness' (p. 194) as a middle-class ideal. All cultural appropriation is reflexive in some sense of the word, but implicit here is a particularly distanced and ironic attitude, and involving verbalisation (where the choice of every single item—be it for decoration, for composing a meal, for a personal outfit or other usages—may be explained and accompanied by a justificatory narrative). This involves a 'knowing' way of referring to cultural artefacts, which easily slips into ironic references. Thus Savage *et al.* (2010) explore the popularity of 'crap TV' amongst young British professionals, in which the ability to identify certain programmes in derogatory terms allowed them to show they 'knew' the signifiers of taste, with the result that they could watch lowbrow programmes without categorising themselves in derogatory ways (cf. also Gripsrud, 1995 on the reception of *Dynasty* and other soaps).

The Danish study (Prieur *et al.*, 2008) found some signs that this kind of distanced or ironic attitude is fancied among the culturally privileged, especially the young, for instance with the liking of a satirical TV comedy as a particularly significant distinguishing modality in the survey analysis. This comedy (*Drengene fra Angora*) is seemingly vulgar and coarse, even scatological, but becomes object of a second-order reading, whereby its transgressions appear sophisticated to the public who know how to decode it. Qualitative research techniques are, however, more adept at revealing these kinds of ironic refrains.

Thus Friedman and Kuipers (2013) have studied comedy reception in Britain and in the Netherlands. Comedy is in itself a popular and 'light' cultural object, evidently aimed at entertainment, so if the cultivated classes use their time on this, it might in itself be sign of a lack of snobbery. Friedman and Kuipers state, however, that even if people with high education have a broad and seemingly omnivorous taste, including popular culture, they may at the same time be strongly dismissive of lowbrow comedy (p. 180): 'these omnivores are also snobs'. They may admire enjoyment of comedy shows that less educated people will simply not have the tools to decode. They may enjoy jokes that other people would find shocking, as they have the appropriate ironic attitude. They may classify those who enjoy lowbrow comedy quite harshly—as idiots, or as people who have done nothing with their lives. What makes people laugh is regarded as something quite fundamental for their personalities, and thereby it becomes a seemingly 'natural' criterion both for social bonds and for social boundary-drawing.

In a study of French high school pupils' relations to popular music and movies, Legon (2010) comes to expose the shallowness of simple classifications by genres (such as those used in most studies drawing conclusions about omnivorousness). Apparently, genres are appreciated across different socioeconomic backgrounds, and also young people from homes with a high level of education have preferences for popular musical genres. While rock is somewhat more coveted among French teenagers from higher classes, and rap among those from more popular classes (Pasquier, 2005), Legon shows the fine distinctions in the many different ways of consuming, for instance, rap music. While the teenagers from homes with lower education typically have a preference for the most downloaded music pieces, or the ones transmitted by radio or TV, the teenagers from homes with higher education will more often rely on personal advice, and would like to find the good pieces themselves ('I will not seek to listen to the new rap, the top 10, because, well, I know that's crap.'). It is hence the mode by which cultural artefacts are judged which is discriminating.

The classical highbrow style as depicted by Bourdieu can be recognised in Legon's study, not only in some fine distinctions concerning the choice of objects (like the least popular within a popular genre), but also in the attention to form, not only to function. The pupils from more educated homes will more often listen to music without doing anything else, 'concentrating' on it, they will more often buy the album, and more often even buy vinyl records. The pupils from less educated homes, in contrast, will more often not see the point in having the original album if you can burn it for free. The same logic goes for movies. Those from the most educated homes more often emphasise good acting and a story that makes you think, while those from less educated homes rate action relatively higher. The former also make a point of seeing a good movie in a theatre/cinema. Legon also shows that these apparently quite small differences in consumption practices may be sustained by quite harsh classifications of 'the others'' taste.

Based on 46 thorough interviews in the Norwegian city Stavanger, Jarness (2013) analyses lifestyle choices within differently positioned groups, as well as aesthetic and moral boundary-drawing towards other groups. To have a broad taste seems to have become the norm for the educated elite. As an example, one of his interviewees, a journalist, makes a point of being able to 'combine the high and the low' and move 'elegantly between different taste cultures', and even claims 'you're considered weird if you're too strict', for instance in not allowing oneself to watch reality TV (p. 100). Jarness argues that these examples are not simply signs of the cultural elite's omnivorousness, as there is absolutely not an 'anything goes' attitude about their cultural choices. They may strive for 'quality goods' from vulgar genres, for instance

Bollywood films, crime novels or country music (p. 103), and take a pride in their ability to 'dig up obscurities' (p. 104), as a high school teacher put it. These interviewees accentuated a knowing, but also a playful and ironic, mode of appropriation, which they typically put to work when relating to cultural products usually considered as popular, or even as 'bad taste' or 'kitsch'. A musician appreciated a particular movie because (p. 106): 'It's so bad it becomes good', while another musician collected 'bad records' because of their expressions of 'personality'. Far from the fall of cultural hierarchies that this choice of cultural products might reveal, the ironic and distanced way of appropriating these cultural products betrays a clear sense of distinction. And far from a blurring of boundaries between high and low culture, what we witness is a sophisticated use of what Bourdieu (1991: 124) named strategies of condescension.

We therefore argue that the mode of relating to culture may now be more important in games of distinction than the precise choice of cultural objects in themselves. We regard this as an alternative to the omnivore hypothesis, which fixates on the apparently plural choice of cultural objects (usually in the form of genres), not on the mode in which these objects are consumed. We also see a link between this kind of 'knowing' appropriation of culture and a certain 'cosmopolitan' orientation. In an earlier article (Prieur and Savage, 2013) we have picked up on claims regarding the cosmopolitan orientations of professionals and managers (e.g. Calhoun, 2003), and in particular the important remarks of Fligstein (2008) on how the European middle classes are key agents in the formation of a distinctively European cultural field. We were not claiming that the working classes are 'immobile'—as they may have extensive experience of migration, sometimes forced—but rather that the capacity to stand outside one's own national frame of reference may itself be an important cultural marker. It is the capacity to pass judgements on one's own national frame of reference (even though such judgements are also inevitably associated with one's location), rather than take that national frame as a cultural given, which is a major indicator of this difference.

Here again, Holt's arguments (1997: 112) are useful. He found that his respondents with a high level of cultural capital understood their world as more expansive than those with a low level. Many had lived in other states or countries, and they all travelled regularly. 'The most powerful expression of cosmopolitan versus local tastes is through perceptions of and desires for the exotic'—within food as well as entertainment.

In Finland, Kahma and Toikka (2012) also found an opposition between 'traditional' and 'modern' culture, where 'traditional' seems to cover basically Finnish culture, and Heikkilä and Rahkonen (2011) found that the Swedish-speaking upper class regarded continental European habits as sophisticated. The tradition of identifying the foreign as the most refined is a point also in Karadag's (2009) study of transformations in class formation in Turkey.

A similar opposition between an international versus a local or national orientation was also found in the Danish study, within areas as diverse as TV preferences, musical likes and food consumption (Prieur *et al.*, 2008), but also in political attitudes (Harrits *et al.*, 2010). This opposition appears through the use of multiple correspondence analysis (MCA, also called geometric data analysis, GDA). This social space was constructed with the use of variables on the possession of economic and cultural capital as well as on current employment. When answers about moral–political attitudes and lifestyle choices related to local versus international orientations were superposed on the previous space of social positions, a clear opposition in attitudes and lifestyle appeared, running along the opposition between high and low levels of cultural capital (see Skjott-Larsen, 2012). On one side, there were individuals who oriented themselves globally in different respects: they paid more attention to news about the presidential election in the USA than to news about the Danish royal family; they made use of the internet to seek information and communicate; and they had 'cosmopolitan' preferences for food ('exotic dishes' rather than 'traditional Danish food') and music (international artists rather than Danish). These cultural preferences went together with political attitudes like rejecting that one ought to hire natives before immigrants if jobs were scarce; supporting aid to developing countries; and denying any pride in being Danish or coming from Aalborg. On the other side were people with the opposite attitudes or preferences. All these choices had a clear connection to capital possession, first and foremost cultural capital (the only choice that was more related to possession of economic capital was actually the attitude to whether Denmark ought to adopt the euro as national currency).

One might think that whether people prefer local or international dishes and music is not a big deal, but it connects to more fundamental divisions, as becomes clear when followed up in interviews, as when an engineer talks about the village where he was brought up (Skjott-Larsen, 2012: 675): 'Well, I'm glad I didn't stay in [village]. The friends and acquaintances we have there, it's not like I wouldn't see them today, but I can see somehow that they're a little stuck, and there's no ambition to try anything new.' He later gives the example of some of these friends who cancelled a trip they had planned together to London, and describes them as 'too rooted in the local soil'. He talks calmly and matter-of-factly about his old friends, without any arrogance, it is just a banal story about a sense of community that is lost. What is interesting are the implicit oppositions drawn of the countryside against the city, and the immobile against the mobile, with the association that geographical immobility is a form of cultural limitation. This is very similar to the arguments of Savage *et al.* (2005) who showed that middle-class residents of Manchester were likely to be condescending to those who simply happened to be living where they grew up, and had not made a conscious decision to move to a place appropriate for 'someone like them'.

Most of the Danish interviewees expressed their distance towards other people only in subtle and rather polite ways. The exception was when the highly educated expressed their lack of tolerance for intolerant people, in some cases specified as people who vote for the Danish nationalist party (the Danish People's Party). As a schoolteacher in a managerial position said about the kind of people he avoided at parties (Skjott-Larsen, 2012: 673): 'If people are too shallow, too stereotyping, and too loud, and you can see this is not leading to a sensible conversation. If it is too racist or too discriminating, I won't just sit there and listen to it.' And an upper secondary school teacher who first referred to people 'who are a bit Danish People's Party-like' as people to avoid, and then adjusted this to a reference to people with little or no education, explaining that they had a completely different approach to life from her: 'I look at things in a much more nuanced way than they do. Their world is very much black and white and they often generalise a lot' (Faber and Prieur, 2013: 20). The ability to generalise and use stereotypes does not seem to be a privilege for the lower classes …

A Norwegian journalist (Marsdal, 2007) has studied the Norwegian nationalist party (*Fremskrittspartiet*—the Progress Party) and accused the educated elite, supported by the Norwegian Labour Party, of pushing the working class into the arms of the nationalist party through their display of contempt not only for some working-class people's attitudes, but also for quite ordinary working-class lifestyles and cultural preferences. It is seen as perfectly legitimate among the highly educated to mock and ridicule habits such as taking camping holidays, wearing jogging suits, eating fatty foods, giving American first names to one's kids, etc.—all quite common among the traditional working class in Norway. It is also quite legitimate for educated people to declare that they 'hate' people who vote for the Progress Party, and label them as racist and as egoistic—not minding that the Progress Party's electorate actually is the economically poorest of all electorates.

Jarness (2013: 186) provides another example, when a head of a Norwegian cultural enterprise declares in an interview: 'I want my children to become socially minded, and not egoists that dream of fat salaries and expensive cars. And I have forbidden my children to ever vote for the Progress Party. [Laughs]'. That the Progress Party's electorate must content themselves with dreaming about expensive cars, as they rarely can afford to drive them, is not recognised by the cultural elite.

These Scandinavian examples show that a cultural opposition may reinforce a political opposition, which may also become a profound political cleavage. In Cvetičanin and Popescu's (2009, 2011) study from Serbia, based on a survey on cultural consumption followed up with qualitative interviews, the authors identified a main opposition between, on one side, three clusters: elite style (classical highbrow), elite omnivores and (global) urban style; and on the other, a cluster around folk style and another labelled 'rural omnivores', where the two latter in particular prefer folk music and turbo-folk music—both according to a quite specific Serbian classification of styles. Serbian folk bears a certain mark of nostalgia and national romanticism, while turbo-folk is a more hard-rock genre with songs in the Serbian language, but with visual aesthetics in the spectrum from Eurovision song contest to S&M porn. As the greatest turbo star is the widow of the deceased warlord and war-crimes suspect Erkan Raznatovic, there is a clear link to Serbian nationalism. What is interesting—and scary—is how this opposition in musical taste links to the cleavages in Serbian society between the educated and the uneducated; the urban and the rural or recently urbanised; the more European north and the more oriental south; and between 'cosmopolitans' and 'patriots'. The former label themselves as 'civilised' and the others as 'primitive', while the latter label themselves as the people and the others as alienated, inauthentic or feminine (gender stereotyping is always useful). So we see the stereotyping in play, just as in the Danish case, but the consequences are bigger. The two groups live in completely separate cultural worlds, and the analysis thus reveals a profound cleavage in Serbian society. One might indeed conclude with Bourdieu (on the back of the English translation of *Distinction*): 'No judgment of taste is innocent.'

We see strong cleavages related to the opposition between a national and an international political orientation in several European countries today, with Greece and Hungary as particularly striking examples. There is a need for more research on whether this cleavage is supported by oppositions in cultural preferences, as in Serbia, as well as in the softer versions to be seen in Denmark and in Norway. But the suggestions are that these new fault lines have increasing provenance.

This dividing line may be different in countries like the UK or France, where the national culture is more often seen in opposition to American culture, which is identified as more vulgar. And, of course, the cultural elites in Serbia and in Aalborg do not regard eating hamburgers or listening to Lady Gaga as particularly cosmopolitan and sophisticated habits, a fact that clearly should draw attention towards which features are regarded as representing an international orientation. Denmark and Serbia have in common that they are small countries. In contrast, the British study, just like Bourdieu's French study, found older elites being predominantly oriented towards their national culture. Even so, Bennett *et al.* (2009) found a 'cosmopolitan cultural capital' circulating amongst younger age groups. Younger professionals show an interest in 'trendy' American cultural forms, marking them out from their older peers who are more oriented to national, British, cultural forms. Here they were drawn towards 'quirky' anglophone cultural forms, often from North America or Australasia, which they could venerate as non-snobbish yet also 'cult'. Thus programmes such as *ER*, *The Wire*, *Friends* and such like serve to define a form of contemporary cosmopolitan taste which is also nationally specific. This kind of cosmopolitanism implies replacing a more Eurocentric, 'highbrow' orientation with a more anglophone orientation.

## Conceptualising 'emerging cultural capital'

Our argument hitherto has proceeded by inductively unravelling the existence of new modes of cultural distinction from a range of European studies, including our own. In the final part of this chapter we want to theorise these patterns in a more developed way, to reflect on what our findings entail for Bourdieu's own conception of cultural capital. This is an important exercise, in part because of the difficulty in clearly labelling these emerging modes of distinction. There is a risk that the wrong naming of the oppositions involved may contribute to a reinforcement of the social cleavages underlying them.

Thus the term 'cosmopolitan' can be defined as 'belonging to all parts of the world, not restricted to any country or its inhabitants'—and might be chosen by the elite to complacently designate themselves as more broad-minded than those without such an orientation. There is a danger of indirectly supporting a normative discourse in which the educated middle classes are indeed seen to be modern, international, tolerant, open-minded etc., whereby the non-cosmopolitan must be traditional, local, intolerant and narrow-minded. As Calhoun (2003) has outlined in his article 'The class consciousness of frequent travellers: toward a critique of actually existing cosmopolitanism' (the title says it all): 'Cosmopolitan discourse too easily encourages the equation of the global with the modern and the national or local with the backwardly traditional' (p. 107). Calhoun articulates (p. 88) 'a plea for the local and particular—not least as a basis for democracy' and warns that (p. 90) 'cosmopolitanism without the strengthening of local democracy is likely to be a very elite affair'. We would argue that it is precisely this point which leads us to follow the logic of Bourdieu's own move forty years ago in subjecting such discourses to a 'social critique'.

We suggest that the concept of 'emerging cultural capital' might be the best means for recognising how the stakes of cultural capital have been redefined in the early twenty-first century. Here the term 'emerging' signifies the relative novelty of these developments, but also points to its 'mobile' character so that it is not simply identified with particular 'cosmopolitan' or 'reflexive' practices. However, simply coining a new label is not enough. We need to excavate conceptually how we can understand these modes of cultural appropriation as a form of 'cultural capital'. This is a necessary step in order to comprehend why the cultural orientations we have unravelled can meaningfully be identified as forms of cultural *capital* rather than just 'lifestyles'. To do this, we need to return to Bourdieu's thinking.

Famously, Bourdieu never provides a formal definition of cultural capital in *Distinction.* Although positivist critics (e.g. Goldthorpe, 2007) have used this to lambast his thinking, it is actually a logical consequence of his view that, since cultural capital is based on its relational oppositions, which are subject to change, they cannot be distilled into fixed or absolute qualities (see further Prieur and Savage, 2011). This having been said, it is also clear that he sees the 'scholastic point of view' as central to the operation of cultural capital. He returns to the importance of the *skhole* at numerous points in his work, including in his final major book, *Pascalian Meditations*, and it provides a conceptual underpinning for his thinking.

Let us start with Bourdieu's famous elaboration of the scholastic point of view:

> The scholastic point of view is a very peculiar point of view on the social world, on language, on any possible object of thought that is made possible by the situation of skhole, of leisure … *Homo scholasticus* or *homo academicus* is someone who is paid to play seriously: placed outside the urgency of a practical situation and oblivious to the ends which are immanent in it, he or she earnestly busies herself with problems that serious people ignore – active or passively.
>
> *(Bourdieu, 1990: 381)*

This is a telling formulation. This formulation exemplifies Lizardo's (2011) insistence that Bourdieu sees culture as affiliated to practice, rather than as the product of symbolic systems of classification. We can note here Bourdieu's characteristic up-ending of assumed hierarchies. It is scholars who play, whereas ordinary people are serious. And it is around this tension that Bourdieu constructs his relational conception of cultural capital.

However, there is a telling ambiguity at the heart of this formulation which Bourdieu does not unravel. On one hand, the practical situation is one of 'urgency', of the bustle of daily life, which is a theme he returns to in his more phenomenonological musings in *Pascalian Meditations*. Here the scholastic point of view stands in opposition to the hurly burly of daily life and allows distance and abstraction from it. However, in another sense, the practical also stands opposed to 'leisure' and implicitly seems bound up with the world of manual, physical work. Thus, in this reading, the scholastic point of view celebrates the power of mental over manual, of brain over body—in a way consistent with his deployment of the idea of the 'Kantian aesthetic'. No doubt we see the traces of Bourdieu's early studies of Bearn peasants and the Kabyle, where these two worlds of daily life and physical work largely coincide in the sheer physical graft of these people.[1]

However, the point to emphasise for our discussion here is that this coincidence is becoming increasingly tenuous. As numerous scholars in media and communication scholars have emphasised, and as we have elaborated above, the daily lives of even relatively poor populations are thoroughly mediatised (e.g. Slater, 2013). Substantial 'leisure' is now embedded in mundane practices. Indeed, it has been argued that it is now the professional and managerial middle classes who are more 'time-hungry', whereas the lives of the poor are characterised by long periods of enforced leisure—often taking the form of unemployment, casual and part-time work, etc.. The studies we have discussed above nearly all point out that those without cultural capital are more likely to watch television, for instance.

In *Pascalian Meditations*, Bourdieu (2000, ch. 6) argues that the basic drive for human beings is the quest for social recognition. The justification of one's existence is to be found in the judgements of others. Faced with the contingency of human existence we grab all kinds of signs of social recognition, that becomes a symbolic capital (p. 240): 'To be expected, solicited, overwhelmed with obligations and commitments is not only to be snatched from solitude or insignificance, but also to experience, in the most continuous and concrete way, the feeling of counting for others, being *important* for them, and therefore in oneself, and finding in the permanent plebiscite of testimonies of interest—requests, expectations, invitations—a kind of continuous justification for existing.'

Bourdieu states this in a (for him unusual) timeless, ahistorical way, as it is a basic condition for human existence. But actually, the relationship to time is historical, and has been subject to a dramatic change: while the dominant classes could be characterised as leisure classes not so long ago, distinguishing themselves by the time they had for all kinds of 'useless' activities, today being busy, as opposed to idle, appears as more characteristic of the classes rich in cultural and economic capital. Have signs of busyness become a symbolic capital?

Therefore, if one recognises that 'daily life' for many of the 'dominated classes' is full (indeed, perhaps too full) of 'leisure', much of which is oriented around mediatised forms of 'entertainment', then the culture of necessity nonetheless has lots of 'free' (perhaps better seen as 'dead') time built into it, and is fully 'culturalised' and aestheticised, albeit not in ways that cultural elites approve of. Following the logic of Bourdieu's argument in *Pascalian Meditations* suggests that the quest for social recognition may be changing in this context. To claim distinction, one needs to be able to differentiate oneself not only from the daily grind of physical labour (as in the

'Kantian aesthetic'), but also from the 'undiscriminating' use of leisure pursuits and the media by those with too much time on their hands. It is in this second reaction where 'emerging cultural capital' can be seen as a response. In celebrating the sophistication and knowingness of its protagonists, it draws contrasts with those who lack the capacity to handle culture 'knowingly'.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have argued that a concept of emerging cultural capital might be a useful tool for further analysis. It recognises that class-structured cultural differences prevail, even though classical high culture now enjoys a more marginal status than before. It thus means we can recognise the trends which cultural sociologists have empirically identified towards 'omnivorousness' and the like, but read them in a very different way. We need to move away from the view that, because we cannot identify 'highbrow' culture in the way that it appears in *Distinction*, cultural capital does not exist. We have insisted that the identification of distinguishing practices and preferences does not necessarily turn these attributes into cultural capital. For an asset to serve as a capital in a bourdieusian sense, it should be linked to legitimacy, convertibility and domination, and this link has to be shown. It is not a given that the cultural specificities of the highly educated, like those mentioned here, enjoy any wider recognition as good taste, and it is not a given that they may be converted to social or economic capital. Neither is it a given that they may be experienced as linked to domination. But all this is possible—however, it demands more research on the other social classes, on their experiences and attitudes. And it seems quite evident, in any case, that such features may serve in processes of social closure, as people who resemble each other in matters of both social position and cultural positioning practices will tend to lump together: settling in the same neighbourhoods, marrying each other, choosing the same schools for their children, etc.. For this reason, taste is not innocent.

This chapter has suggested that we might be able to define a form of emerging cultural capital, where a 'knowing' capacity might underpin the various features we have unpicked here: the knowing mode of cultural appreciation, the cosmopolitan orientation and 'busyness'. In underscoring this point, we need to emphasise that possible empirical indicators of emerging cultural capital (such as those explicated in Savage *et al.*'s (2013) study on the Great British Class Survey) are not to be conflated with 'emerging cultural capital' itself. This point is a natural consequence of our argument, following Holt, that cultural capital is increasingly defined by the mode of consumption rather than by the object of consumption.

Finally, and concluding our argument, we are also aware that more research needs to take place on how such 'knowing' practices are instantiated in forms of accumulation and advantage which might constitute them as capital. Future research needs to examine how economic processes and corporations value workers, to see if and how 'emerging cultural capital' is rewarded. There is a need to look in greater detail at the way that a 'knowing mode of appropriation of culture' and 'cosmopolitan taste' can circulate in powerful and pervasive forms through new technological forms, and in various kinds of 'popular' culture. In this context, the concept of 'emerging cultural capital' might be a useful hypothesis to explore.

## Note

1 However, as Lizardo (2011) brings out, Bourdieu is also clear that 'practice' is implicated in all cultural activities, including 'legitimate' ones, through reflecting on how Baxendall's concern with the 'period eye' allows the appreciation of renaissance art embedded in specific ocular practices.

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