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## *Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction*

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The specific role of the sociology of education is assumed once it has established itself as the science of the relations between cultural reproduction and social reproduction. This occurs when it endeavours to determine the contribution made by the educational system to the reproduction of the structure of power relationships and symbolic relationships between classes, by contributing to the reproduction of the structure of the distribution of cultural capital among these classes. The science of the reproduction of structures, understood as a system of objective relations which impart their relational properties to individuals whom they pre-exist and survive, has nothing in common with the analytical recording of relations existing within a given population, be it a question of the relations between the academic success of children and the social position of their family or of the relations between the positions filled by children and their parents. The substantialist mode of thought which stops short at directly accessible elements, that is to say individuals, claims a certain fidelity to reality by disregarding the structure of relations whence these elements derive all their sociologically relevant determinations, and thus finds itself having to analyse intra- or inter-generational mobility processes to the detriment of the study of mechanisms which tend to ensure the reproduction of the structure of relations between classes; it is unaware that the controlled mobility of a limited category of individuals, carefully selected and modified by and for individual ascent, is not incompatible with the permanence of structures, and that it is even capable of contributing to social stability in the only way conceivable in societies based upon democratic ideals and thereby may help to perpetuate the structure of class relations.

Any break with substantialist atomism, even if it does not mean going as far as certain structuralists and seeing agents as the simple 'supports' of structures invested with the mysterious power of

determining other structures, implies taking as our theme the process of education. This means that our object becomes the production of the habitus, that system of dispositions which acts as a mediation between structures and practice; more specifically, it becomes necessary to study the laws that determine the tendency of structures to reproduce themselves by producing agents endowed with the system of predispositions which is capable of engendering practices adapted to the structures and thereby contributing to the reproduction of the structures. If it is conceived within a theoretical framework such as this, the sociology of educational institutions and, in particular, of institutions of higher education, is capable of making a decisive contribution to the science of the structural dynamics of class relations, which is an often neglected aspect of the sociology of power. Indeed, among all the solutions put forward throughout history to the problem of the transmission of power and privileges, there surely does not exist one that is better concealed, and therefore better adapted to societies which tend to refuse the most patent forms of the hereditary transmission of power and privileges, than that solution which the educational system provides by contributing to the reproduction of the structure of class relations and by concealing, by an apparently neutral attitude, the fact that it fills this function.

#### THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE REPRODUCTION OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF CULTURAL CAPITAL

By traditionally defining the educational system as the group of institutional or routine mechanisms by means of which is operated what Durkheim calls 'the conservation of a culture inherited from the past', i.e. the transmission from generation to generation of accumulated information, classical theories tend to dissociate the function of cultural reproduction proper to all educational systems from their function of social reproduction. Transposing, as they do, the representation of culture and of cultural transmission, commonly accepted by the ethnologists, to the case of societies divided into classes, these theories are based upon the implicit assumption that the different pedagogic actions which are carried out within the framework of the social structure, that is to say, those which are carried out by families from the different social classes as well as that which is practised by the school, work together in a harmonious way to transmit a cultural heritage

which is considered as being the undivided property of the whole society.

In fact the statistics of theatre, concert, and, above all, museum attendance (since, in the last case, the effect of economic obstacles is more or less nil) are sufficient reminder that the inheritance of cultural wealth which has been accumulated and bequeathed by previous generations only really belongs (although it is *theoretically* offered to everyone) to those endowed with the means of appropriating it for themselves. In view of the fact that the apprehension and possession of cultural goods as symbolic goods (along with the symbolic satisfactions which accompany an appropriation of this kind) are possible only for those who hold the code making it possible to decipher them or, in other words, that the appropriation of symbolic goods presupposes the possession of the instruments of appropriation, it is sufficient to give free play to the laws of cultural transmission for cultural capital to be added to cultural capital and for the structure of the distribution of cultural capital between social classes to be thereby reproduced. By this is meant the structure of the distribution of instruments for the appropriation of symbolic wealth socially designated as worthy of being sought and possessed.

In order to be persuaded of the truth of this, it must first be seen that the structure of the distribution of classes or sections ('fractions') of a class according to the extent to which they are consumers of culture corresponds, with a few slight differences such as the fact that heads of industry and commerce occupy a lower position than do higher office staff, professionals, and even intermediate office staff, to the structure of distribution according to the hierarchy of economic capital and power (see *Table 1*).<sup>1</sup>

The different classes or sections of a class are organized around three major positions: the lower position, occupied by the agricultural professions, workers, and small tradespeople, which are, in fact, categories excluded from participation in 'high' culture; the intermediate position, occupied on the one hand by the heads and employees of industry and business and, on the other hand, by the intermediate office staff (who are just about as removed from the two other categories as these categories are from the lower categories); and, lastly, the higher position, which is occupied by higher office staff and professionals.

The same structure is to be seen each time an assessment is made of cultural habits and, in particular, of those that demand a cultured

TABLE I  
*Expenditure on culture<sup>2</sup>*

| <i>Annual<br/>budget<br/>coefficients</i> | <i>Agricultural<br/>workers</i> | <i>Farmers</i> | <i>Workers</i> | <i>Small<br/>tradespeople</i> | <i>White-collar<br/>workers</i> | <i>Intermediate<br/>office<br/>staff</i> | <i>Heads of<br/>industry and<br/>commerce</i> | <i>Professionals<br/>and higher<br/>office staff</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Durable<br>goods                          | 0.6                             | 0.5            | 0.8            | 0.8                           | 1.4                             | 2.8                                      | 1.5   | 3.6  |
| Other<br>expenditure                      | 1.6                             | 1.9            | 2.2            | 2.2                           | 3.2                             | 3.6                                      | 3.3   | 6.2  |

disposition, such as reading, and theatre, concert, art-cinema, and museum attendance. In such cases, the only distortions are those that introduce the use of different principles of classification (*Table 2*).

Although statistics based like these upon the statements of those being questioned and not upon direct observation tend to overestimate the extent to which an activity is practised by reason of the propensity of the persons questioned to align themselves, at least when talking, to the activity that is recognized as legitimate, they do make it possible to make out the real structure of the distribution of cultural capital. In order to achieve this, it is sufficient to note that the statistics for

TABLE 2  
*Cultural activities of different occupational categories*

| <i>Purchasers of books during last month<sup>3</sup></i> |    | <i>Readers of books<sup>4</sup></i>                   |      | <i>Regular theatre, concert, cinema attendance in the Parisian region<sup>5</sup></i> |          | <i>Have been to the theatre at least once in year 1964<sup>6</sup> (all of France)</i> |
|--|----|---|------|---|----------|--|
| Farmers  | 14 | Farmers, agricultural workers                         | 15.5 | Farmers   |          | 18   |
| Workers  | 22 | Workers   | 33   | Workers   | 21 8 70  | 17   |
| Heads of industry & commerce                             | 31 | White-collar workers                                  | 53.5 | Tradespeople & craftsmen  | 46 14 71 | 22   |
| White-collar workers, intermediate office staff          | 39 | Craftsmen & tradespeople, intermediate office staff   | 51.5 | White-collar workers, intermediate office staff                                       | 47 22 80 | 32   |
| Professionals, higher office staff                       | 50 | Heads of industry, professionals, higher office staff | 72   | Heads of industry, professionals, higher office staff                                 | 65 33 81 | 63   |

the purchase of books omit all distinction between small self-employed craftsmen and tradespeople, whose activities are known to be very similar to those of the workers, and industrial and business management, whose cultural consumption is close to that of intermediate office staff; it is also to be noticed that the statistics for the readers of

books (books which have been purchased, but doubtless also books which have been borrowed or read in libraries, which explains the movement of the structure towards the upper part) group together small self-employed craftsmen and tradespeople, who seldom practise a cultural activity, and intermediate office staff, who practise cultural activities to a greater extent than do white-collar workers.

Although they remain relatively disparate, the categories made use of in terms of level of education make possible a more direct comparison, and all throw light upon the existence of an extremely pronounced relationship between the different 'legitimate' activities and the level of education (*Table 3*).

If, of all cultural activities, cinema attendance in its common form is the one that is least closely linked to level of education, as opposed to concert-going, which is a rarer activity than reading or theatre-going, the fact remains that, as is shown by the statistics for art-cinema attendance, the cinema has a tendency to acquire the power of *social distinction* that belongs to traditionally approved arts.

The greater reliability of the survey carried out by the Centre of European Sociology (Centre de Sociologie Européenne) of the European museum public is due to the fact that it was based upon the degree of effective practice and not on the statements of those being questioned. It makes it possible, moreover, to construct the system of social conditions for the production of the 'consumers' of cultural goods considered as the most worthy of being consumed, i.e. the mechanisms of reproduction of the structure of the distribution of cultural capital which is seen in the structure of the distribution of the consumers of the museum, the theatre, the concert, the art cinema, and, more generally, of all the symbolic wealth that constitutes 'legitimate' culture. Museum attendance, which increases to a large extent as the level of education rises, is almost exclusively to be found among the privileged classes. The proportions of the different socio-professional categories figuring in the public of the French museums are almost exactly the inverse ratio of their proportions in the overall population. Given that the typical visitor to French museums holds academic qualifications (since 55 per cent of visitors have at least the *baccalauréat*, the French school-leaving certificate), it is not surprising that the structure of the public distributed according to social category is very similar to the structure of the population of the students of the French faculties distributed according to social origin: the proportion of farmers is 1 per cent, that of workers 4 per cent, that of skilled

TABLE 3  
*Cultural activities and level of education*

| <i>Have purchased<br/>a book in the<br/>last month<sup>3</sup></i> | <i>Readers of<br/>books<sup>4</sup></i> | <i>Regular attendance at:</i> |                             |                           | <i>Have been to the theatre:<br/>at least 4 times<br/>once in 1964 or more</i> |       |
|--|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--|-------|
|  |   | <i>Theatre<sup>5</sup></i>    | <i>Concerts<sup>5</sup></i> | <i>Cinema<sup>5</sup></i> | <i>Art<br/>cinema</i>  |       |
| Primary 15   | 28                                      | 18                            | 7                           | 62                        | 3  | 15 2  |
| Primary,<br>Higher,<br>Commercial<br>& technical                   | 60                                      | 41                            | 15                          | 76                        |  | 24 5  |
| Secondary 44   | Secondary<br>& Higher 80                | Secondary 57                  | 25                          | 79                        | 15   | 38 12 |
| Higher 64  |   | Higher 69                     | 43                          | 88                        | 32   | 49 21 |

workers and tradesmen is 5 per cent, that of white-collar workers and intermediate office staff is 23 per cent (of whom 5 per cent are primary-school teachers), and the proportion of the upper classes is 45 per cent. If, for the rate of attendance of the different categories of visitors in the whole of the museum public, we substitute the probability of their going into a museum, it will be seen (in *Table 4*) that, once the level of education is established, knowledge of the sex or socio-professional category of the visitors generally provides only a small amount of additional information (although it may be noted in passing that, when the level of education is the same, teachers and art specialists practise this activity to a distinctly greater extent than do other categories and, particularly, other sections of the dominant classes).

TABLE 4

*Annual attendance rates for the French museums according to occupational categories<sup>7</sup>*

(mathematical expectation of visits over a period of a year expressed as a percentage)

|   | Without diploma | Certificate of primary studies | Certificate of secondary studies | Baccalauréat | Licence (=BA, BSc) and beyond | Total |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-------|
| Farmers   | 0.2             | 0.4                            | 20.4                             |              |                               | 0.5   |
| Workers   | 0.3             | 1.3                            | 21.3                             |              |                               | 1     |
| Craftsmen & tradespeople                              | 1.9             | 2.8                            | 30.7                             | 59.4         |                               | 4.9   |
| White-collar workers, intermediate office staff       |                 | 2.8                            | 19.9                             | 73.6         |                               | 9.8   |
| Higher office staff, heads of industry, professionals |                 | 2.0                            | 12.3                             | 64.4         | 77.6                          | 43.3  |
| Teachers, art specialists                             |                 |                                | (68.1)                           | 153.7        | (163.8)                       | 151.5 |
| Total   | 1               | 2.3                            | 24                               | 70.1         | 80.1                          | 6.2   |
| Men   | 1               | 2.3                            | 24.4                             | 64.5         | 65.1                          | 6.1   |
| Women   | 1.1             | 2.3                            | 23.2                             | 87.9         | 122.8                         | 6.3   |

In short, all of the relations observed between museum attendance and such variables as class or section of a class, age, income, or residence come down, more or less, to the relation between the level of education and attendance. The existence of such a powerful and exclusive relationship between the level of education and cultural



practice should not conceal the fact that, in view of the implicit pre-suppositions that govern it, the action of the educational system can attain full effectiveness only to the extent that it bears upon individuals who have been previously granted a certain familiarity with the world of art by their family upbringing. Indeed, it would seem that the action of the school, whose effect is unequal (if only from the point of view of duration) among children from different social classes, and whose success varies considerably among those upon whom it has an effect, tends to reinforce and to consecrate by its sanctions the initial inequalities. As may be seen in the fact that the proportion of those who have received from their families an early initiation into art increases to a very marked extent along with the level of education, what is measured by means of the level of education is nothing other than the accumulation of the effects of training acquired within the family and the academic apprenticeships which themselves presupposed this previous training.

If this is the case, the main reasons are, first, that the appropriation of works of art depends in its intensity, its modality, and its very existence upon the mastery that the spectator has of the available instruments of appropriation and, more specifically, of the generic and particular code of the work or, if it is preferred, of the peculiarly artistic lines of interpretation that are directly appropriate to each particular work and are the necessary condition for the deciphering of the work;<sup>8</sup> second, that, in the specific case of works of 'high' culture, mastery of the code cannot be totally acquired by means of the simple and diffuse apprenticeships provided by daily existence but presupposes an education methodically organized by an institution specially equipped for this purpose. It is to be noted, however, that the yield of pedagogic communication, entrusted, among other functions, with the responsibility of transmitting the code of works of 'high' culture, along with the code according to which this transmission is carried out, is itself a function of the cultural competence that the receiver owes to his family upbringing, which is more or less close to the 'high' culture transmitted by the colleges and to the linguistic and cultural models according to which this transmission is carried out. In view of the fact that reception of the pictorial message and the institutionally organized acquisition of cultural competence, which is the condition for the reception of this message, are subject to the same laws, it is not surprising that it is difficult to break the circle in which cultural capital is added to cultural capital. The museum that

demarcates its public and legitimizes its social quality by the mere effect of its 'level of emission',<sup>9</sup> i.e. by the simple fact that it presupposes the possession of the fairly complex, and therefore fairly rare, cultural code which is necessary in order to decipher the works exhibited, may be seen as the limit towards which an educational action is directed (it might be possible to use the words 'pedagogic action' here were it not for the fact that it is rather, in this case, a non-pedagogic action), implicitly requiring of those on whom it bears that they possess the conditions necessary to its full productivity.

The educational system reproduces all the more perfectly the structure of the distribution of cultural capital among classes (and sections of a class) in that the culture which it transmits is closer to the dominant culture and that the mode of inculcation to which it has recourse is less removed from the mode of inculcation practised by the family. Inasmuch as it operates in and through a relationship of communication, pedagogic action directed at inculcating the dominant culture can in fact escape (even if it is only in part) the general laws of cultural transmission, according to which the appropriation of the proposed culture (and, consequently, the success of the apprenticeship which is crowned by academic qualifications) depends upon the previous possession of the instruments of appropriation, to the extent and only to the extent that it explicitly and deliberately hands over, in the pedagogic communication itself, those instruments which are indispensable to the success of the communication and which, in a society divided into classes, are very unequally distributed among children from the different social classes. An educational system which puts into practice an implicit pedagogic action, requiring initial familiarity with the dominant culture, and which proceeds by imperceptible familiarization, offers information and training which can be received and acquired only by subjects endowed with the system of predispositions that is the condition for the success of the transmission and of the inculcation of the culture. By doing away with giving explicitly to everyone what it implicitly demands of everyone, the educational system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give. This consists mainly of linguistic and cultural competence and that relationship of familiarity with culture which can only be produced by family upbringing when it transmits the dominant culture.

In short, an institution officially entrusted with the transmission of the instruments of appropriation of the dominant culture which

neglects methodically to transmit the instruments indispensable to the success of its undertaking is bound to become the monopoly of those social classes capable of transmitting by their own means, that is to say by that diffuse and implicit continuous educational action which operates within cultured families (often unknown to those responsible for it and to those who are subjected to it), the instruments necessary for the reception of its message, and thereby to confirm their monopoly of the instruments of appropriation of the dominant culture and thus their monopoly of that culture.<sup>10</sup> The closer that educational action gets to that limit, the more the value that the educational system attributes to the products of the educational work carried out by families of the different social classes is directly a function of the value as cultural capital which is attributed, on a market dominated by the products of the educational work of the families of the dominant classes, to the linguistic and cultural competence which the different classes or sections of a class are in a position to transmit, mainly in terms of the culture that they possess and of the time that they are able to devote to its explicit or implicit transmission. That is to say that the transmission of this competence is in direct relation to the distance between the linguistic and cultural competence implicitly demanded by the educational transmission of educational culture (which is itself quite unevenly removed from the dominant culture) and the linguistic and cultural competence inculcated by primary education in the different social classes.

The laws of the educational market may be read in the statistics which establish that, from the moment of entering into secondary education right up to the *grandes écoles*, the hierarchy of the educational establishments and even, within these establishments, the hierarchy of the sections and of the fields of study arranged according to their prestige and to the educational value they impart to their public, correspond exactly to the hierarchy of the institutions (see Appendix to this paper, *Table II* and *Figure I*) according to the social structure of their public, on account of the fact that those classes or sections of a class which are richest in cultural capital become more and more over-represented as there is an increase in the rarity and hence in the educational value and social yield of academic qualifications. If such is the case, the reason is that, by virtue of the small real autonomy of an educational system which is incapable of affirming the specificity of its principles of evaluation and of its own mode of production of cultured dispositions, the relationship between the

pedagogic actions carried out by the dominated classes and by the dominant classes may be understood by analogy with the relationship which is set up, in the economic field, between modes of production of different epochs when for example, in a dualist economy, the products of a traditional local craft industry are submitted to the laws of a market dominated by the chain-produced products of a highly developed industry: the symbolic products of the educational work of the different social classes, i.e. apart from knowledge and know-how, styles of being, of speaking, or of doing, have less value on the educational market and, more widely, on the symbolic market (in matrimonial exchanges, for instance) and on the economic market (at least to the extent that its sanctions depend upon academic ratification) in that the mode of symbolic production of which they are the product is more removed from the dominant mode of production or, in other words, from the educational norms of those social classes capable of imposing the domination of criteria of evaluation which are the most favourable to their products. It is in terms of this logic that must be understood the prominent value accorded by the French educational system to such subtle modalities in the relationship to culture and language as affluence, elegance, naturalness, or distinction, all of which are ways of making use of the symbolic products whose role of representing excellence in the field of culture (to the detriment of the dispositions produced by the school and paradoxically devalued, by the school itself, as being 'academic') is due to the fact that they belong only to those who have acquired culture or, at least, the dispositions necessary for the acquisition of academic culture, by means of familiarization, i.e. imperceptible apprenticeships from the family upbringing, which is the mode of acquisition of the instruments of appropriation of the dominant culture of which the dominant classes hold the monopoly.

The sanctions of the academic market owe their specific effectiveness to the fact that they are brought to bear with every appearance of legitimacy: it is, in fact, as though the agents proportioned the investments that are placed in production for the academic market—investments of time and enthusiasm for education on the part of the pupils, investments of time, effort, and money on the part of families—to the profits which they may hope to obtain, over a more or less long term, on this market, as though the price that they attribute to the sanctions of the academic market were in direct relation to the price attributed to them by the sanctions of this market and to the

extent to which their economic and symbolic value depends on the value which they are recognized to possess by the academic market. It follows from this that the negative predispositions towards the school which result in the self-elimination of most children from the most culturally unfavoured classes and sections of a class—such as self-depreciation, devaluation of the school and its sanctions, or a resigned attitude to failure and exclusion—must be understood as an anticipation, based upon the unconscious estimation of the objective probabilities of success possessed by the whole category, of the sanctions objectively reserved by the school for those classes or sections of a class deprived of cultural capital. Owing to the fact that it is the product of the internalization of value that the academic market (anticipating by its formally neutral sanctions the sanctions of the symbolic or economic market) confers upon the products of the family upbringing of the different social classes, and of the value which, by their objective sanctions, the economic and symbolic markets confer upon the products of educational action according to the social class from which they originate, the system of dispositions towards the school, understood as a propensity to consent to the investments in time, effort, and money necessary to conserve or increase cultural capital, tends to redouble the symbolic and economic effects of the uneven distribution of cultural capital, all the while concealing it and, at the same time, legitimating it. The functionalist sociologists who announce the brave new world when, at the conclusion of a longitudinal study of academic and social careers, they discover that, as though by a pre-established harmony, individuals have hoped for nothing that they have not obtained and obtained nothing that they have not hoped for, are simply the least forgivable victims of the ideological effect which is produced by the school when it cuts off from their social conditions of production all predispositions regarding the school such as ‘expectations’, ‘aspirations’, ‘inclinations’, or ‘desire’, and thus tends to cover up the fact that objective conditions—and in the individual case, the laws of the academic market—determine aspirations by determining the extent to which they can be satisfied.

This is only one of the mechanisms by which the academic market succeeds in imposing upon those very persons who are its victims recognition of the existence of its sanctions by concealing from them the objective truth of the mechanisms and social motives that determine them. To the extent to which it is enough for it to be allowed to run its own course, that is to say to give free play to the laws of cultural

transmission, in order to ensure the reproduction of the structure of distribution of cultural capital, the educational system which merely records immediate or deferred self-elimination (in the form of the self-relegation of children from the underprivileged classes to the lower educational streams) or encourages elimination simply by the effectiveness of a non-existent pedagogical practice (able to conceal behind patently obvious procedures of selection the action of mechanisms tending to ensure in an almost automatic way—that is to say, in a way which conforms to the laws governing all forms of cultural transmission—the exclusion of certain categories of recipients of the pedagogic message), this educational system masks more thoroughly than any other legitimization mechanism (imagine for example what would be the social effects of an arbitrary limitation of the public carried out in the name of ethnic or social criteria) the arbitrary nature of the actual demarcation of its public, thereby imposing more subtly the legitimacy of its products and of its hierarchies.

#### CULTURAL REPRODUCTION AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

By making social hierarchies and the reproduction of these hierarchies appear to be based upon the hierarchy of 'gifts', merits, or skills established and ratified by its sanctions, or, in a word, by converting social hierarchies into academic hierarchies, the educational system fulfils a function of legitimization which is more and more necessary to the perpetuation of the 'social order' as the evolution of the power relationship between classes tends more completely to exclude the imposition of a hierarchy based upon the crude and ruthless affirmation of the power relationship. But does the continual increase, in most highly industrialized societies, in the proportion of the members of the ruling classes who have passed through the university system and the best universities lead one to conclude that the transmission of cultural capital is tending to be substituted purely and simply for the transmission of economic capital and ownership of the means of production in the system of mechanisms of reproduction of the structure of class relationships?

Apart from the fact that the increase in the proportion of holders of the most prestigious academic qualifications among the members of the ruling classes may mean only that the need to call upon academic approval in order to legitimate the transmission of power

and of privileges is being more and more felt, the effect is as though the cultural and educational mechanisms of transmission had merely strengthened or taken over from the traditional mechanisms such as the hereditary transmissions of economic capital, of a name, or of capital in terms of social relations; it is, in fact, as if the investments placed in the academic career of children had been integrated into *the system of strategies of reproduction*, which strategies are more or less compatible and more or less profitable depending on the type of capital to be transmitted, and by which each generation endeavours to transmit to the following generation the advantages it holds. Considering that, on the one hand, the ruling classes have at their disposal a much larger cultural capital than the other classes, even among those who constitute what are, relatively, the least well-off sections of the ruling classes and who, as has been seen, still practise cultural activities to at least as great an extent as the most favoured sections of the middle class, and considering that, on the other hand, they also have at their disposal the means of ensuring for this capital the best academic placing for its investment (that is to say the best establishments and the best departments), their academic investments cannot fail to be extremely profitable, and the segregation that is established right at the beginning of secondary education among students from different establishments and different departments cannot help but be reinforced the further one gets into the academic course by reason of the continual increase in the differences resulting from the fact that the most culturally privileged find their way into institutions capable of reinforcing their advantage. Institutions of higher education which ensure or legitimate access to the ruling classes, and, in particular, the *grandes écoles* (among which must be counted the *internat de médecine*) are therefore to all intents and purposes the monopoly of the ruling classes. The objective mechanisms which enable the ruling classes to keep the monopoly of the most prestigious educational establishments, while continually appearing at least to put the chance of possessing that monopoly into the hands of every generation, are concealed beneath the cloak of a perfectly democratic method of selection which takes into account only merit and talent, and these mechanisms are of a kind which converts to the virtues of the system the members of the dominated classes whom they eliminate in the same way as they convert those whom they elect, and which ensures that those who are 'miraculously elected' may experience as 'miracu-

lous' an exceptional destiny which is the best testimony of academic democracy.

Owing to the fact, first, that the academic market tends to sanction and to reproduce the distribution of cultural capital by proportioning academic success to the amount of cultural capital bequeathed by the family (as is shown, for example, by the fact that, among the pupils of the *grandes écoles*, a very pronounced correlation may be observed between academic success and the family's cultural capital measured by the academic level of the forbears over two generations on both sides of the family), and, second, because the most privileged sections of the dominant classes from the point of view of economic capital and power are not necessarily the most well-off in terms of cultural capital, it may be expected that the hierarchy of values attributed by the academic market to the products of the educational work of the families of the different sections will not correspond very closely to the hierarchy of these sections with regard to economic capital and power. Should it be concluded from this that the relative autonomy of the mechanisms of reproduction of the structure of cultural capital in relation to the mechanisms ensuring the reproduction of economic capital is of a kind to cause a profound transformation, if not in the structure of class relationships (despite the fact that the most culturally privileged sections of the middle class such as the sons of primary school and secondary school teachers are able triumphantly to hold their own on the academic market against the least culturally privileged sections of the upper class), at least in the structure of relationships between the sections of the dominant classes?

The structure of the distribution of cultural capital among the different sections of the dominant classes may be constructed on the basis of the collection of convergent indices brought together in the following conspectus (see *Table 5*).<sup>11</sup>

With the exception of a few inversions in which is expressed the action of secondary variables such as place of residence, along with the objective possibilities of cultural practice which are closely linked to it, and income,<sup>12</sup> along with the possibilities which it offers, it can be seen that the different sections are organized according to a single hierarchy with the differentiation of the cultural capital possessed in terms of the kind of training received being shown above all in the fact that engineers give proof of a greater interest in music (and in other leisure activities demanding the application of logical skills, such as bridge and chess) than in literary activities (reading of *Le Figaro*



TABLE 5

*The distribution of cultural capital among different sections of the dominant classes*

|  | 1        | 2                | 3             | 4         | 5        | 6                    | 7                    |
|--|----------|------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----------------------|----------------------|
|  | Teachers | Public<br>admin. | Professionals | Engineers | Managers | Heads of<br>industry | Heads of<br>commerce |
| Readers of <i>Le Monde</i> (penetration index per 1000)    | 410      | 235              | 210           | 145       | 151      | 82                   | 49                   |
| Readers of <i>Le Figaro Littéraire</i> (ditto)             | 168      | 132              | 131           | 68        | 100      | 64                   | 24                   |
| Readers of non-professional books 15 hrs and more per week | 21       | 18               | 18            | 16        | 16       | 10                   | 10                   |
| Theatre-goers (at least once every 2 or 3 months)          | 38       | 29               | 29            | 28        | 34       | 16                   | 20                   |
| Listeners to classical music                               | 83       | 89               | 86            | 89        | 89       | 75                   | 73                   |
| Visitors to museums and exhibitions                        | 75       | 66               | 68            | 58        | 69       | 47                   | 52                   |
| Visitors to art galleries                                  | 58       | 54               | 57            | 45        | 47       | 37                   | 34                   |
| Possessors of FM radio                                     | 59       | 54               | 57            | 56        | 53       | 48                   | 48                   |
| Non-possessors of television                               | 46       | 30               | 28            | 33        | 28       | 14                   | 24                   |

*Littéraire* or theatre-going). If the proportion of individuals who do not possess television (and who are distinguished from the possessors of that instrument by the fact that they go in more often for activities commonly held to be the expression of an authentically 'cultured' or refined disposition)<sup>13</sup> varies according to the same law, it is because a refusal to indulge in this activity, which is suspected of being 'vulgar' by reasons of its wide availability (*divulgar*), is one of the least expensive ways of expressing cultural pretensions (see *Table 6*).<sup>14</sup>

These indicators probably tend to minimize to a large extent the divergences between the different sections of the dominant classes. Indeed, most cultural consumer goods also imply an economic cost, theatre-going, for instance, depending not only on the level of education (in a population of executive personnel it ranges from 41 per cent

TABLE 6

*Reading habits, occupational categories, and levels of education*<sup>15</sup>

|                     | Teachers   | Top<br>civil<br>servants | Profes-<br>sionals | Engin-<br>eers | Managers | Heads of<br>industry | Heads of<br>commerce |
|---------------------|------------|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Detective novels    | 25 (6)     | 29 (1)                   | 27 (4)             | 28 (3)         | 29 (1)   | 27 (4)               | 25 (6)               |
| Adventure stories   | 16 (7)     | 20 (3)                   | 18 (6)             | 24 (1)         | 22 (2)   | 19 (4)               | 19 (4)               |
| Historical accounts | 44 (4)     | 47 (2)                   | 49 (1)             | 47 (2)         | 44 (4)   | 36 (6)               | 27 (7)               |
| Art books           | 28 (2)     | 20 (3)                   | 31 (1)             | 19 (5)         | 20 (3)   | 17 (6)               | 14 (7)               |
| Novels              | 64 (2)     | 68 (1)                   | 59 (5)             | 62 (3)         | 63 (3)   | 45 (6)               | 42 (7)               |
| Philosophy          | 20 (1)     | 13 (3)                   | 12 (5)             | 13 (3)         | 15 (2)   | 10 (7)               | 12 (5)               |
| Political essays    | 15 (1)     | 12 (2)                   | 9 (4)              | 7 (5)          | 10 (3)   | 5 (6)                | 4 (7)                |
| Economics           | 10 (1)     | 8 (3)                    | 5 (6)              | 7 (5)          | 9 (2)    | 8 (3)                | 5 (6)                |
| Sciences            | 15 (3)     | 14 (4)                   | 18 (2)             | 21 (1)         | 9 (7)    | 10 (6)               | 11 (5)               |
|                     | University | Grande école             | Secondary          | Technical      | Primary  |                      |                      |
| Detective novels    | 28         | 27                       | 27                 | 32             | 24       |                      |                      |
| Adventure stories   | 17         | 14                       | 22                 | 27             | 17       |                      |                      |
| Historical accounts | 47         | 49                       | 42                 | 41             | 25       |                      |                      |
| Art books           | 25         | 24                       | 22                 | 18             | 10       |                      |                      |
| Novels              | 65         | 54                       | 62                 | 60             | 35       |                      |                      |
| Philosophy          | 19         | 13                       | 15                 | 11             | 7        |                      |                      |
| Political essays    | 16         | 14                       | 6                  | 6              | 3        |                      |                      |
| Economics           | 12         | 19                       | 5                  | 3              | 4        |                      |                      |
| Sciences            | 18         | 27                       | 11                 | 10             | 6        |                      |                      |

to 59 and 68 per cent between the primary, secondary, and higher levels) but also on income (i.e. 46 per cent for incomes less than 20 000 francs per year against 72 per cent for incomes more than 75 000 francs); furthermore, equipment such as FM radio or hi-fi sets may be used in very different ways (e.g. to listen to modern music or dance music), and the value accorded to these different utilizations may be just as disparate, by reference to the dominant hierarchy of possible uses, as the different kinds of reading or theatre; thus, as is shown in *Table 6*, the position of the different sections, arranged in a hierarchy in terms of the interest they place in the different kinds of reading, tends to draw nearer to their position in the hierarchy set up in terms of wealth in cultural capital the more that it is a question of reading-matter which depends more upon level of education and which is placed higher in the hierarchy of degrees of cultural legitimacy.

Everything seems to indicate that the choices concerning the theatre follow the same principle. Thus, what emerges from *Table 7*, which deserves much more extensive commentary, is that the over-representation of teachers (and of students)—which is shown by the divergence between their rate of attendance at each theatre and their average rate of attendance at theatres as a whole—in the public of different theatres is continually on the decrease, whereas the over-representation of the other sections (heads of firms, higher office staff, and professionals, unfortunately all mixed up together in the statistics) undergoes a parallel increase, when one passes from the avant-garde theatre, or theatre considered as such, to the classical theatre and, particularly, from the latter to the *théâtre de boulevard* which recruits between a third and a quarter of its public from among the least 'intellectual' sections of the dominant classes.<sup>16</sup>

With the exception of the liberal professions, who occupy, in this field too, a high position, the structure of the distribution of economic capital is symmetric and opposite to the structure of the distribution of cultural capital—that is to say, in order, heads of industry and of commerce, professionals, managers, engineers, and, lastly, civil servants and teachers (see *Table 8*).<sup>17</sup>

Analysis of the mobility between sections tends to show that the dominant principle of the hierarchy formed by the sections is the possession of economic capital—to the extent, at least, that it is very closely linked to the possession of power. Thus, examination of the intra-generational mobility of the individuals from the different sec-

TABLE 7  
Theatre-going and occupational categories

|                   | <i>Theatre</i> | <i>Play</i>                              | <i>Workers</i> | <i>Trades-people, crafts-men</i> |    | <i>White-collar workers</i> |    | <i>Inter-mediate office staff</i> |    | <i>Students, pupils</i> |   | <i>Teachers</i> |  | <i>Heads of firms, higher office staff, profes-sionals</i> |  | <i>Without profes-sion</i> |  | <i>Others</i> |     |
|-------------------|----------------|--|----------------|----------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|----|-----------------------------------|----|-------------------------|---|-----------------|--|--|--|----------------------------|--|---------------|-----|
|                   |                |  |                |                                  |    |                             |    |                                   |    |                         |   |                 |  |  |  |                            |  |               |     |
| Odéon             |                | <i>La remise</i>                         | 4              | 1                                | 11 | 12                          | 28 | 26                                | 9  | 4                       | 4 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 4             | 100 |
| Monparnasse       |                | <i>Sainte-Jeanne</i>                     | 4              | 2                                | 7  | 14                          | 24 | 18                                | 17 | 13                      | 3 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 3             | 100 |
| Vieux-Colombier   |                | <i>Noces de sang</i>                     | 3              | 1                                | 4  | 16                          | 39 | 15                                | 10 | 11                      | 1 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 1             | 100 |
| TEP               |                | <i>La locandiera</i>                     | 6              | 3                                | 13 | 11                          | 33 | 13                                | 10 | 8                       | 2 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 2             | 100 |
| TNP               |                | <i>Romulus le Grand</i>                  | 7              | 1                                | 13 | 14                          | 27 | 12                                | 12 | 11                      | 2 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 2             | 100 |
| Athénée           |                | <i>Le vicaire</i>                        | 9              | 4                                | 10 | 12                          | 28 | 8                                 | 11 | 11                      | 5 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 5             | 100 |
| Odéon             |                | <i>Tartuffe</i>                          | 3              | 2                                | 2  | 9                           | 41 | 12                                | 20 | 9                       | 3 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 3             | 100 |
| Comédie-Française |                | <i>Cinna</i>                             | 4              | 2                                | 13 | 11                          | 43 | 6                                 | 12 | 9                       | 3 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 3             | 100 |
| Comédie-Française |                | <i>Cyrano</i>                            | 2              | 2                                | 8  | 12                          | 29 | 7                                 | 25 | 13                      | 3 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 3             | 100 |
| Théâtre de Paris  |                | <i>Comment réussir dans les affaires</i> | 3              | 1                                | 5  | 14                          | 11 | 12                                | 23 | 26                      | 7 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 7             | 100 |
| Ambigu            |                | <i>Charmante soirée</i>                  | 3              | 1                                | 9  | 11                          | 6  | 7                                 | 22 | 34                      | 6 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 6             | 100 |
| Antoine           |                | <i>Mary-Mary</i>                         | 8              | 4                                | 13 | 16                          | 7  | 4                                 | 26 | 31                      | 2 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 2             | 100 |
| Michodière        |                | <i>La preuche par quatre</i>             | 4              | 9                                | 7  | 14                          | 8  | 4                                 | 31 | 18                      | 3 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 3             | 100 |
| Ambassadeurs      |                | <i>Photo-finish</i>                      | 4              | 5                                | 5  | 10                          | 13 | 6                                 | 35 | 24                      | — | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | —             | 100 |
| Variétés          |                | <i>Un homme comblé</i>                   | 5              | 6                                | 5  | 17                          | 7  | 3                                 | 33 | 22                      | 3 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 3             | 100 |
| Total             |                |  | 4              | 3                                | 8  | 14                          | 23 | 13                                | 19 | 14                      | 3 | 100             |  |  |  |                            |  | 3             | 100 |

TABLE 8  
*Distribution of economic capital*

|                                       | <i>Heads of industry</i> | <i>Heads of commerce</i> | <i>Professionals</i> | <i>Managers</i> | <i>Engineers</i> | <i>Civil servants</i> | <i>Teachers</i> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Own their own residence <sup>18</sup> | 70                       | 70                       | 54                   | 40              | 44               | 38                    | 51              |
| Upper-category automobile             | 33                       | 34                       | 28                   | 22              | 21               | 20                    | 12              |
| Holidays in hotel                     | 32                       | 26                       | 23                   | 21              | 17               | 17                    | 15              |
| Boat                                  | 13                       | 14                       | 14                   | 12              | 10               | 8                     | 8               |
| Average income in thousands of francs | 33                       | 36                       | 41                   | 37              | 36               | 32                    | 33              |
| (Rate of non-declaration)             | (24)                     | (28)                     | (27)                 | (13)            | (9)              | (8)                   | (6)             |

tions who are part of the *Who's Who* census reveals that the proportion of individuals who have moved towards the bottom of the hierarchy during their career, which is more or less nil among business and industrial management, increases more and more as one descends the hierarchy of the sections as it is formed according to the economic criterion. Another index which is just as significant is the fact that the relationship between the proportion of individuals from the dominant section of the dominant classes (the heads of industry) and the proportion of individuals from other social classes in the different sections decreases steadily as one descends the hierarchy (*Table 9*).

Secondary analysis of the national survey carried out by the INSEE on inter-generational professional mobility makes it possible to check that the proportion in each section of individuals from the ruling

TABLE 9  
*An index of mobility*

|                   | <i>Proportion of sons of heads of industry</i> | <i>Proportion of individuals from other classes</i> | <i>Relationship</i> |
|-------------------|--|---|---------------------|
| Heads of industry | 42.6   | 20.5  | 2.0                 |
| Heads of commerce | 35.0   | 19.2  | 1.8                 |
| Professionals     | 20.5   | 16.1  | 1.2                 |
| Civil servants    | 11.9   | 28.0  | 0.4                 |
| Teachers          | 15.0   | 31.0  | 0.4                 |

classes and the proportion of individuals coming from the same section decrease together as one descends the hierarchy of the sections, with a pronounced division between the three sections of the upper position and the three sections of the lower position (*Table 10*).

If such is indeed the structure of relationships between the structure of the distribution of cultural capital and the structure of the distribution of economic capital among the different sections of the ruling

TABLE 10  
*Inter-generational mobility*

| <i>Father</i>      | <i>Heads of industry</i> | <i>Heads of commerce</i> | <i>Professionals</i> | <i>Engineers</i> | <i>Civil servants</i> | <i>Teachers</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Heads of industry  | 33.5                     | 2.8                      | 2.3                  | 6.1              | 4.4                   | 1.5             |
| Heads of commerce  | 1.9                      | 31.0                     | —                    | 1.8              | 5.0                   | 0.8             |
| Professionals      | 0.6                      | 0.9                      | 20.0                 | 0.9              | 2.4                   | 7.6             |
| Engineers          | —                        | —                        | 6.4                  | 6.7              | 2.3                   | 4.6             |
| Civil servants     | 1.9                      | 3.3                      | 9.9                  | 13.2             | 14.3                  | 7.6             |
| Teachers           | 0.6                      | —                        | 2.9                  | 2.7              | 0.3                   | 6.1             |
| Total ruling class | 38.5                     | 38.0                     | 41.5                 | 31.4             | 28.7                  | 28.2            |

classes, it may be expected that, to the extent that the educational system proportions success to cultural capital, the products of the pedagogic work of the different sections receive, on the academic market, values which are organized along the lines of a hierarchy which reproduces the hierarchy of the sections arranged in terms of their amount of cultural capital.<sup>19</sup> And the fact that this occurs is all the more certain in that, obeying a mechanism already analysed, the different sections must tend to invest the capital which they may transmit in the market that is capable of guaranteeing for it the best yield, and they must therefore invest all the more in the education of their children in that their social success, that is to say, at least, their being able to maintain themselves in the dominant classes, depends all the more completely upon it.

Those sections which are richest in cultural capital are more inclined to invest in their children's education at the same time as in

cultural practices liable to maintain and increase their specific rarity; those sections which are richest in economic capital set aside cultural and educational investments to the benefit of economic investments: it is to be noted, however, that heads of industry and commerce tend to do this much more than do the new 'bourgeoisie' of the managers who reveal the same concern for rational investment both in the economic sphere and in the educational sphere.<sup>20</sup> Relatively well provided for with both forms of capital, but not sufficiently integrated into economic life to put their capital to work within it, the professionals (and especially lawyers and doctors) invest in their children's education but also and above all in consumer goods capable of symbolizing the possession of the material and cultural means of conforming to the rules governing the bourgeois style of life and thereby guaranteeing a social capital or capital of social relationships which will provide, if necessary, useful 'supports': a capital of honourability and respectability which is often indispensable if one desires to attract clients in socially important positions, and which may serve as currency, for instance, in a political career.<sup>21</sup>

In fact those sections which are richest in cultural capital have a larger proportion in an educational institution to the extent that the institution is highly placed in the specifically academic hierarchy of educational institutions (measured, for instance, by the index of previous academic success); and this proportion attains its maximum in the institution responsible for ensuring the reproduction of the academic body (*École Normale Supérieure*) (*Table II*).<sup>22</sup>

Owing to the fact that the different institutions may be distinguished

TABLE II  
*Cultural capital and educational investment*

|                                    | <i>Faculty</i> |                 |                |             | <i>Prep.<br/>class<br/>for<br/>Polytech.</i> | <i>ENA</i> | <i>Poly-<br/>tech.</i> | <i>Ulm<br/>Arts</i> | <i>Ulm<br/>Sc.</i> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------|--|------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
|                                    | <i>Law</i>     | <i>Medicine</i> | <i>Science</i> | <i>Arts</i> |  |            |                        |                     |                    |
| Proportion of teachers' children   | 3.2            | 4.5             | 4.5            | 5.2         | 5.4  | 9.0        | 9.9                    | 19.4                | 17.7               |
| Index of previous academic success | 0.4            |                 | 0.3            | 0.5         | 1.2  | 2.0        | 2.9                    | 3.1                 | 3.6                |

ENA: École Nationale d'Administration

Ulm Arts: École Normale Supérieure d'Ulm (Arts)

Ulm Sc.: École Normale Supérieure d'Ulm (Science)

from each other not only in terms of the different training that they grant, and, therefore, in terms of the type of capital that they demand (the proportion of engineers' sons being particularly high in the various scientific institutions—science faculties, 8.1 per cent; preparatory classes for the scientific *grandes écoles*, 15.1 per cent; École Polytechnique, 19.7 per cent; and the science section of the École Normale Supérieure, 14.5 per cent), but also in terms of the careers to which they provide access, the specifically academic hierarchy is imposed in such a thorough way only upon the children of teachers who have been led by their family upbringing to identify success with academic success. To the extent that it records and ratifies the differences separating the different sections from the point of view of cultural capital (and, secondarily, of the type of capital) and of the propensity to invest this capital in the academic market and in the most favourable sector of this market, the educational system tends to reproduce (in the double sense of the word) the structure of relations between the structure of the distribution of cultural capital and the structure of the distribution of economic capital among the sections both in and by the relations of opposition and complementarity which define the system of institutions of higher education. In fact, to the extent that it is the product of the application of two opposed principles of hierarchical ordering, the structure of the system of institutions of higher education may be interpreted in a twofold way: *the dominant hierarchy within the educational institution*, i.e. the hierarchy which orders the institutions in terms of specifically academic criteria and, correlatively, in terms of the proportion of those sections richest in cultural capital figuring in their public, is opposed diametrically to *the dominant hierarchy outside the educational institution*, i.e. the hierarchy which orders the institutions in terms of the proportion in their public of those sections richest in economic capital (and in power) and according to the position in the hierarchy of the economic capital and power of the professions to which they lead.<sup>23</sup> The *grandes écoles* range, therefore, in a more or less continuous way, between the two extreme poles marked on the one hand by the colleges leading to economic and politico-administrative power (Polytechnique, ENA) and on the other hand by the colleges leading to teaching and, more generally, to the intellectual professions (École Normale Supérieure littéraire et scientifique), with the indices corresponding to one of the principles of hierarchization tending steadily to diminish as the indices corresponding to the other principle increase (see *Table 12*).



TABLE 12

*Proportions of students from the upper classes of the different 'grandes écoles' possessing one or other of these characteristics*

|  | Ulm<br>Lettres | Ulm<br>Sciences | Sèvres<br>Lettres | Sèvres<br>Sciences | Poly-<br>tech-<br>nique | Mines<br>Paris | EN A<br>1er<br>concours | HEC         | Cent-<br>rale |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Father's diploma <i>licence</i> or higher    | 85.8           | <b>88.8</b>     | 73.1              | 84.9               | 76                      | 68.3           | 85.4                    | 74.1        | 71.9          |
| Mother's diploma <i>licence</i> or higher    | 38.3           | <b>44.1</b>     | 39.2              | 42.7               | 30.8                    | 29.8           | 36.5                    | 22.1        | 26.2          |
| Proportion of teachers                       | 29.5           | 26.2            | 37.2              | <b>33</b>          | 15                      | 4.6            | 15.2                    | 4.2         | 7.9           |
| Section 'A' in <i>première</i>               | 29.9           | <b>44.3</b>     | 29.6              | 23.8               | 24.4                    | 24.3           | 18.7                    | 14.9        | 18.3          |
| Index of previous academic success           | <b>3.6</b>     | 3.5             | 3.2               | 2.7                | 3.1                     | 3.1            | 2                       | 1.1         | 2.3           |
| Marxism                                      | <b>51.1</b>    | 30.4            | 31.4              | 35                 | 12.2                    | 19             | 1.8                     | 7.2         | 7.7           |
| Concerts: average number                     | 1.8            | <b>2.4</b>      | 2.2               | 1.3                | 1.2                     | 1.6            | 1.1                     | 1.1         | 1.1           |
| Theatre: average number of plays             | 3.8            | 3.4             | 4.7               | 4                  | 3.6                     | 4.6            | 2.5                     | 2.3         | 2.3           |
| Size of family 4 children or more            | 40.3           | <b>50.9</b>     | 34.9              | 39.2               | 44                      | 42.2           | 36.9                    | 43.4        | 47.6          |
| Practising Catholics                         | 29.7           | 31.6            | 39.1              | 38.8               | 41.6                    | 39.1           | 39.8                    | —           | 48.9          |
| Private teaching college in secondary school | 14.6           | 17.8            | 19.4              | 9.5                | 17.9                    | 18.7           | <b>24.9</b>             | 23.9        | 13.5          |
| Right of centre, right wing, extreme right   | 3.8            | 7.2             | 3.2               | 12.6               | —                       | 12.5           | 19.9                    | <b>27.9</b> | 16.9          |
| Higher office staff                          | 41.3           | 23.2            | 44.1              | 32.6               | 36.2                    | 53.2           | 30.9                    | <b>57.4</b> | 55.7          |
| Paternal grandfather upper classes           | 56.6           | 41.7            | 44                | 31.3               | 48                      | 62.6           | 61.6                    | <b>63</b>   | 47.5          |
| Maternal grandfather upper classes           | 37.3           | 51.2            | 55.7              | 34.1               | 54.8                    | 60             | 53.6                    | <b>62</b>   | 48.6          |
| Resident in Paris                            | 32.4           | 41.3            | 41.4              | 32.6               | 45.6                    | 53.9           | <b>66.6</b>             | 55.3        | 46.5          |

Source: CSE *grandes écoles* survey.

The most marked trend in each row is shown in bold type and the second most pronounced trend in italic.

Analysis of the specifically academic mechanisms according to which apportionment is effected between the different institutions makes it possible to understand one of the most subtle forms of the trick (*ruse*) of social reason according to which the academic system works objectively towards *the reproduction of the structure of relations between the sections of the dominant classes* when it appears to make full use of its own principles of hierarchical ordering.<sup>24</sup> Knowing, first, that academic success is directly dependent on cultural capital and on the inclination to invest in the academic market (which is itself, as is known, dependent on the objective chances of academic success) and, consequently, that the different sections are recognized and approved by the school system the richer they are in cultural capital and are also, therefore, all the more disposed to invest in work and academic prowess,<sup>25</sup> and knowing, second, that the support accorded by a category to academic sanctions and hierarchies depends not only on the rank the school system grants to it in its hierarchies but also on the extent to which its interests are linked to the school system, or, in other words, on the extent to which its commercial value and its social position depend (in the past as in the future) on academic approval, it is possible to understand why the educational system never succeeds quite so completely in imposing recognition of its value and of the value of its classifications as when its sanctions are brought to bear upon classes or sections of a class which are unable to set against it any rival principle of hierarchical ordering. While those sections which are richest in economic capital authorize and encourage a life-style whose seductions are sufficient to rival the ascetic demands of the academic system and while they ensure or promise guarantees beside which the college's guarantees can only appear both costly and of little value ('academic qualifications don't give you everything'), those sections which are richest in cultural capital have nothing to set against the attraction exercised by the signs of academic approval which make their academic prowess worthwhile to them.<sup>26</sup> In short, the effectiveness of the mechanisms by means of which the educational system ensures its own reproduction encloses within itself its own limitation: although the educational system may make use of its relative autonomy to propose and impose its own hierarchies and the university career which serves as its topmost point, it obtains complete adherence only when it preaches to the converted or to lay brethren, to teachers' sons or children from the working or middle classes who owe everything to it and expect everything of it.

Far from diverting for its own profit children from the dominant sections of the dominant classes (as one may be led to believe by a few striking examples which authorize the most conservative sections of the bourgeoisie to denounce the corruption of youth and teachers or the intellectuals to believe in the omnipotence of their ideas), it puts off children from the other sections and classes from claiming the value of their academic investments and from drawing the economic and symbolic profit which the sons of the dominant section of the ruling classes know how to obtain, if necessary, better situated as they are to understand the relative value of academic verdicts.

But would the school system succeed so completely in diverting for its own profit those categories which it recognizes as possessing the greatest value (as is shown, for instance, by the difference in academic quality between students from the ENS and those from the ENA) if the diplomas that it awards were convertible at par on the market of money and power? The limits of the autonomy allowed to the school system in the production of its hierarchies coincide exactly with the limits objectively assigned to its power of guaranteeing outside the academic market the economic and symbolic value of the diplomas it awards. The same academic qualifications receive very variable values and functions according to the economic and social capital (particularly the capital of relationships inherited from the family) which those who hold these qualifications have at their disposal and according to the markets in which they use them: it is known, for instance, that the professional success of the former students of the *École des hautes études commerciales* (recruited, for the most part, among the Parisian business section) varies far more in relation to the way in which they obtained their first professional post (i.e. through family relations or by other ways) than in relation to their position in the college-leaving examination; it is also known that civil servants whose fathers were white-collar workers received in 1962 an average yearly salary of 18 027 francs as against 29 470 francs for civil servants whose fathers were industrialists or wealthy tradespeople (Praderie 1966: 346-7). And if, as has been shown by the survey carried out by the Boulloche commission over 600 firms, only 2.4 per cent of the 17 000 administrative personnel employed by these firms have degrees or are doctors of science as against 37 per cent who have diplomas from an engineering *grande école*, it is because those who possess the most prestigious qualifications also have at their disposal an inherited capital of relationships and skills which enable

them to obtain such qualifications; this capital is made up of such things as the practice of the games and sports of high society or the manners and tastes resulting from good breeding, which, in certain careers (not to mention matrimonial exchanges which are opportunities for increasing the social capital of honourability and relationships), constitute the condition, if not the principal factor, of success.<sup>27</sup> The habitus inculcated by upper-class families gives rise to practices which, even if they are without selfish motives, such as cultural activities, are extremely profitable to the extent that they make possible the acquisition of the maximum yield of academic qualifications whenever recruitment or advancement is based upon co-optation or on such diffuse and total criteria as 'the right presentation', 'general culture', etc.<sup>28</sup>

What this amounts to is that, as in a pre-capitalist economy in which a guarantee is worth as much as the guarantor, the value of the diploma, outside the specifically academic market, depends on the economic and social values of the person who possesses it, inasmuch as the yield of academic capital (which is a converted form of cultural capital) depends upon the economic and social capital which can be put to its valorization: for the industrialist's son who comes out of HEC, the diploma is only an additional qualification to his legitimately succeeding his father or to his occupying the director's post guaranteed for him by his network of family relations, whereas the white-collar worker's son, whose only way of obtaining the same diploma was by means of academic success, cannot be sure of obtaining a post of commercial attaché in the same firm.<sup>29</sup> In a word, if, as is shown by the analysis of the social and academic characteristics of the individuals mentioned in *Who's Who*, the diploma is all the more indispensable for those from families less favoured in economic and social capital, the fact remains that the educational system is less and less in a position to guarantee the value of the qualifications that it awards the further one goes away from the domain that it controls completely, namely, that of its own reproduction; and the reason for this is that the possession of a diploma, as prestigious as it may be, is in any case less and less capable of guaranteeing access to the highest positions and is never sufficient to guarantee in itself access to economic power. Inversely, as is shown by the diagram of correlation, access to the dominant classes and, *a fortiori*, to the dominant sections of the dominant classes, is relatively independent of the chances of gaining access to higher education for those individuals from sections closest

to economic and politico-administrative power, i.e. top civil servants and heads of industry and commerce (see Appendix, *Figure II* and *Table III*).<sup>30</sup> It would appear, therefore, that the further one goes away from the jurisdiction of the school system the more the diploma loses its particular effectiveness as a guarantee of a specific qualification opening into a specific career according to formalized and homogeneous rules, and becomes a simple condition of authorization and a right of access which can be given full value only by the holders of a large capital of social relationships (particularly in the liberal professions) and is, at its extreme limit, when all it does is legitimate heritage, but a kind of optional guarantee.

Thus the relative autonomy enjoyed by the academic market on account of the fact that the structure of distribution of cultural capital is not exactly the same as the structure of economic capital and of power gives the appearance of a justification for meritocratic ideology, according to which academic justice provides a kind of resort or revenge for those who have no other resources than their 'intelligence' or their 'merit', only if one chooses to ignore, first, that 'intelligence' or academic goodwill represents but one particular form of capital which comes to be added, in most cases, to the possession of economic capital and the correlative capital of power and social relationships, and, second, that the holders of economic power have more chances than those who are deprived of it also to possess cultural capital and, in any case, to be able to do without it since academic qualifications are a weak currency and possess all their value only within the limits of the academic market.

## APPENDIX

TABLE I

*Possession of FM radio and reception of France-Musique  
according to occupational categories*

|  |  | <i>Possessors<br/>of a<br/>record-player</i> |                                    |                                       |              |   |   |
|--|--|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|---|---|
|  |  | Farmers                                      | 12.6                               | Workers                               | 32.4         |   |   |
|  |  | White-collar<br>workers                      | 48.5                               | Craftsmen &<br>tradespeople           | 41.7         |   |   |
|  |  | Intermediate<br>office staff                 | 60.9                               | Professionals, higher<br>office staff | 81.2         |   |   |
|  |  | <i>Listen to France-Musique</i>              |                                    |                                       |              | <i>Listen to France-Musique on<br/>a given day</i>            |   |
|  |  | <i>Every<br/>day</i>                         | <i>2 or 3<br/>times<br/>a week</i> | <i>Less<br/>than<br/>twice</i>        | <i>Never</i> | <i>per 100 of<br/>category<br/>non posses-<br/>sors of FM</i> | <i>per 100 of<br/>category<br/>possessors<br/>of FM</i> |
| Agricultural<br>workers                                    |  | 0.2  | 0.7                                | 1.4                                   | 97.7         |   |   |
| Farmers  |  | 0.9  | 1.5                                | 1.8                                   | 95.8         | 0.3   | 1.4   |
| Workers  |  | 0.6  | 1.6                                | 2.8                                   | 95.0         | 0.2   | 4.2   |
| Craftsmen &<br>tradespeople                                |  | 0.8  | 2.8                                | 2.7                                   | 93.7         | 0.6   | 7.2   |
| White-collar<br>workers,<br>intermediate<br>office staff   |  | 2.2  | 2.2                                | 4.5                                   | 91.1         | 1.0   | 10.9  |
| Higher office<br>staff, heads<br>of industry &<br>commerce |  | 5.7  | 6.1                                | 5.4                                   | 82.8         | 2.2   | 12.1  |

Sources: INSEE (1966) and CESP (1964).

TABLE II  
*Conspectus of the structures of the different academic publics in terms of father's profession*

|                           | Active<br>pop. | 4e<br>Prat. | 4e<br>Mod. | 4e<br>Class. | Fac.<br>Sc. | Fac.<br>Lett. | Fac.<br>Dr. | Fac.<br>Méd. | Taupa | Cagne | EN A              | Psy-<br>tech. | Ulm<br>Lett. | Ulm<br>Sc. |
|---------------------------|----------------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| Agricultural workers      | 2.9            | 5.3         | 3.3        | 1.2          | 2.9         | 2.7           | 1.7         | 0.9          | 0.5   | 3.0   | 1.0               | 0.4           | 0.6          | 1.6        |
| Farmers                   | 12             | 6.8         | 9.7        | 5.6          | 6.4         | 5.4           | 5.1         | 2.9          | 0.5   | 1.7   | 1.9               | 1.9           | —            | 1.6        |
| Workers                   | 43.4           | 57.3        | 40.7       | 21.7         | 15.2        | 14.6          | 10.3        | 5.8          | 4.3   | 4.3   | —                 | 3.7           | 5.4          | 2.5        |
| Craftsmen                 | 3              |             |            |              | 5.4         | 5.1           | 4.4         | 3.9          | 1.6   | 1.3   | 2.9               | 1.4           | 1.4          | 3.1        |
| Tradespeople              | 5.1            | 6.1         | 9.9        | 8.3          |             |               |             |              |       |       |                   |               |              |            |
| White-collar workers      | 16.5           | 10.5        | 15.9       | 15.1         | 8.2         | 9.0           | 10.6        | 10.2         | 4.9   | 2.6   | 2.9               | 3.7           | 2.3          | 3.2        |
| Intermediate office staff |                |             |            |              | 9.5         | 10.1          | 11.0        | 8.8          | 6.5   | 4.3   | 3.9               | 5.1           | 7.6          | 5.8        |
| Primary-school teacher    | 7.1            | 4.7         | 10.4       | 15.3         | 14.0        | 14.8          | 14.0        | 12.1         | 23.2  | 13.6  | 12.6              | 11.5          | 11.8         | 11.1       |
| Heads of industry         | 2.8            | 0.1         | 1.2        | 3.5          | 5.3         | 5.3           | 2.6         | 4.0          | 2.7   | 6.1   | 1.9               | 6.2           | 5.0          | 3.4        |
| Engineers                 | 1.4            | 0.5         | 1.8        | 3.3          | 2.4         | 2.6           | 4.0         | 3.7          | 5.8   | 2.4   | — <sup>a</sup>    | 6.0           | 2.4          | 2.8        |
| Engineers                 | 0.9            | 2.6         | 1.7        | 6.3          | 8.1         | 5.7           | 5.2         | 8.5          | 15.1  | 5.2   | 6.9               | 19.9          | 5.9          | 14.5       |
| Higher office staff       |                |             |            |              |             |               |             |              | 19.1  | 23.7  | 22.2 <sup>a</sup> | 17.9          | 24.8         | 12.9       |
| Top civil servants        | 2.2            | 0.5         | 2.4        | 7.9          | 9.5         | 10.6          | 14.0        | 11.7         | 2.2   | 6.5   | 10.9              | 2.7           | 3.3          | 5.4        |
| Professionals             | 1.6            | 5.4         | 2.1        | 7.5          | 8.5         | 8.8           | 13.8        | 22.9         | 8.1   | 10.4  | 23.8              | 9.7           | 10.1         | 14.3       |
| Teachers                  | 1              | 0.1         | 0.9        | 4.3          | 4.5         | 5.2           | 3.2         | 4.5          | 5.4   | 14.8  | 9.0               | 9.9           | 19.4         | 17.7       |

<sup>a</sup>EN A: Higher office staff + heads of industry = 22.2

4e Pratique : Third year of secondary school,  
practical studies  
4e Moderne : Third year of secondary school,  
modern studies (without Latin)  
4e Classique : Third year of secondary school,  
classical studies  
Fac. Sc. : Science Faculty  
Fac. Let. : Arts Faculty  
Fac. Dr. : Law Faculty  
Fac. Méd. : Medicine Faculty  
Taupa : Preparatory class for Polytechnique  
Cagne : Preparatory class for Ecole Normale  
Supérieure d'Ulm (Arts)  
EN A : Ecole Nationale d'Administration  
Polytech. : Polytechnique  
Ulm Let. : Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Ulm (Arts)  
Ulm Sc. : Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Ulm (Science)

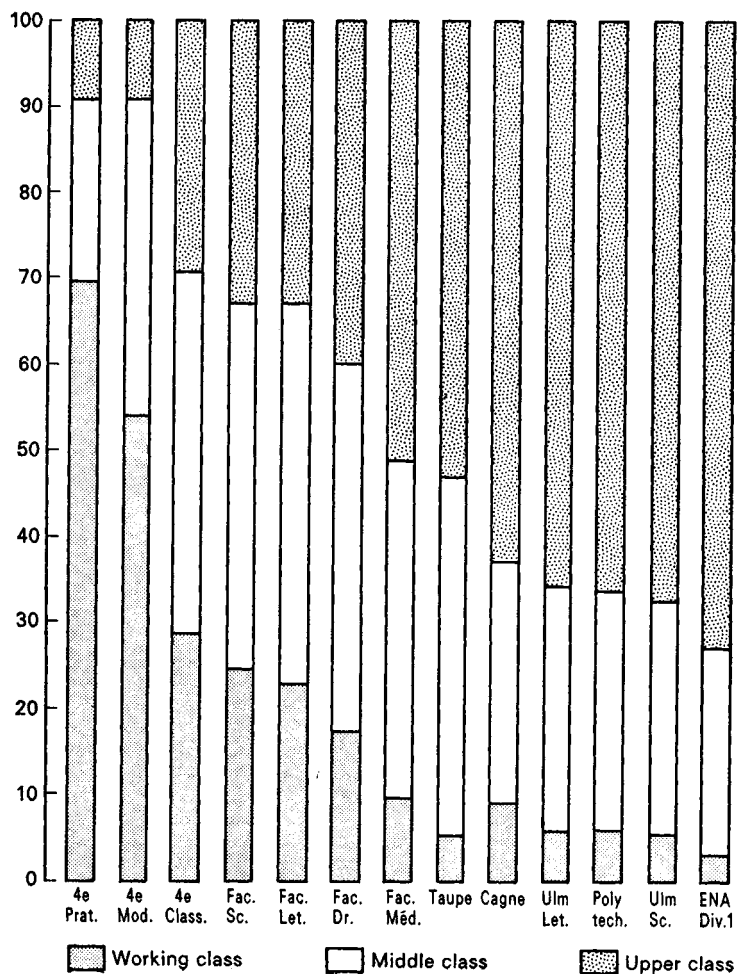
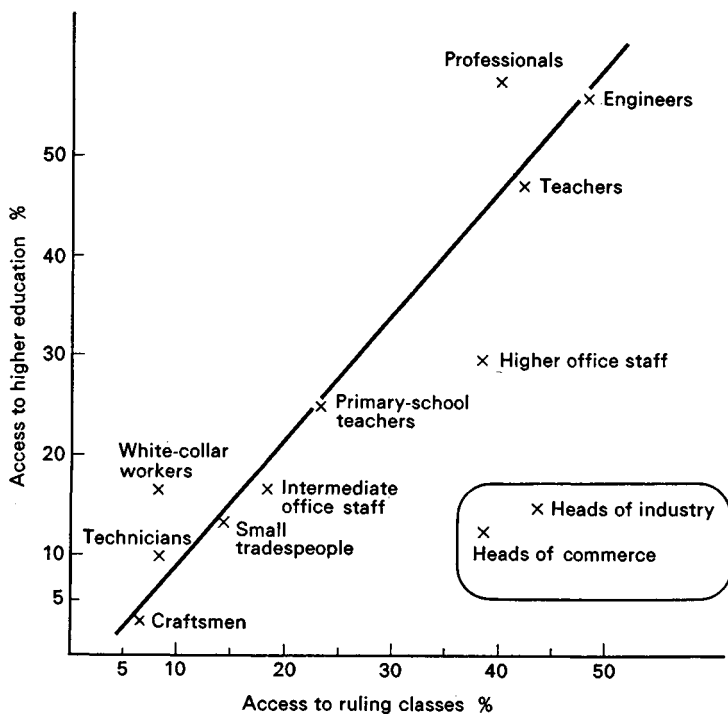
FIGURE 1 *Social structure of different publics in the academic world*



FIGURE II *Correlation between chances of access to ruling classes and chances of access to higher education according to social origin*



Source: *Survey of training, qualifications, and employment*, (INSEE 1964); secondary analysis carried out at the Centre de Sociologie Européenne.

TABLE III

*Distribution in terms of social origin and standard of diploma of the managing directors (PDG) of 200 leading French companies*

| Social<br>origin—<br>father's CSP                           | Diploma                 |                            |                                    |                                     |                   |                     | Total |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------|
|   | Poly-<br>tech-<br>nique | Other<br>'grande<br>école' | Law<br>doctor-<br>ate or<br>degree | 'Science<br>Po'<br>HEC <sup>b</sup> | 'Petite<br>école' | 'Bac'<br>or<br>less |       |
| Company<br>administrators,<br>heads of<br>industry, bankers | 7.4                     | 8.1                        | 8.9                                | 5.7                                 | 7.4               | 5.7                 | 43.2  |
| Top civil servants  | 5.7                     | 0.8                        | 0.8                                | 0.8                                 | 0.8               | 1.6                 | 10.5  |
| Professionals   | 3.2                     |                            | 2.5                                | 2.5                                 |                   |                     | 8.2   |
| Engineers   | 4.0                     | 2.5                        | 0.8                                | 1.6                                 |                   |                     | 8.9   |
| Secondary-school<br>teachers                                | 0.8                     |                            | 1.6                                |                                     | 0.8               |                     | 3.2   |
| Primary-school<br>teachers                                  | 1.6                     |                            |                                    |                                     |                   |                     | 1.6   |
| Manufacturers,<br>traders,<br>merchants &<br>craftsmen      | 4.0                     | 2.5                        | 4.0                                | 1.6                                 | 0.8               | 0.8                 | 13.7  |
| Clerks  | 2.5                     | 2.5                        |                                    |                                     |                   | 0.8                 | 5.8   |
| Land-owners<br>& farmers                                    | 2.5                     | 1.6                        |                                    | 0.8                                 |                   |                     | 4.9   |
| Total   | 31.7                    | 18.0                       | 18.6                               | 13.0                                | 9.8               | 8.9                 | 100   |

Source: CSE study based on *Who's Who*.

<sup>a</sup> Classification of companies drawn up by the review *Entreprise* (November 1969).

<sup>b</sup> With or without law degree.

## Notes

- 1 We have translated approximately as follows: *salaré agricole*, agricultural worker; *agriculteur*, farmer; *ouvrier*, worker; *employé*, white-collar worker; *artisan-commerçant*, craftsman and tradesman; *cadre moyen*, intermediate office staff; *cadre supérieur*, higher office staff; *profession libérale*, professional; *patrons de l'industrie et du commerce*, heads of industry and commerce.
- 2 Household consumption, INSEE – CREDOC survey carried out in 1956 of 20 000 households – tables of household consumption by socio-professional categories.

- 3 Syndicat national des éditeurs (National Union of Publishers), 'La clientèle du livre', July 1967, survey carried out by the IFOP.
- 4 Syndicat national des éditeurs, 'La lecture et le livre en France', January-April 1960, survey carried out by the IFOP.
- 5 Survey of theatre attendance in the Parisian region carried out by the IFOP, 1964.
- 6 Survey of theatre attendance, SOFRES, June 1964. The rates established by the SOFRES survey are distinctly lower, especially as far as the middle classes are concerned, than those that emerge from the IFOP surveys. The probable reason for this is partly to be found in the fact that the SOFRES survey was based on a national sample whereas the IFOP survey covered only the Parisian region, and the structure of class relations is decidedly different in Paris and in the provinces, particularly in the field of culture, since the gap between the upper classes and the middle classes is much less pronounced in Paris. The reason is also to be found in the fact that the SOFRES based its inquiries not on 'normal' attendance rhythms but on real theatre attendance during the past year (theatre used in the restrictive sense, i.e. as opposed to opera, musical comedy, and music hall, concerning which questions were also asked). In spite of this the SOERES report quite rightly observes that the attendance rates were probably overestimated, first, because the question made no distinction between professional theatre and amateur theatre (and yet in 1963 there were, in the provinces, 19 000 amateur performances as opposed to 13 000 professional performances) and, second, because it may be assumed that refusals to reply were more numerous among those whose attendance rates were low and that those who replied to the questions exaggerated the extent to which they practised such a prestigious activity.
- 7 Cf. P. Bourdieu & A. Darbel (1969: 40).
- 8 In order to realize that specific rarity in the field of culture is not connected to the goods but to the instruments of appropriation of those goods, it is sufficient to consider those statistics wherein it may be seen that the possession of the material instruments of appropriation of music (which, as is known, increases in proportion to income and level of education) is not enough to ensure symbolic appropriation; the extent to which the reception of France-Musique (which broadcasts classical music almost exclusively, that is to say 96.6 hours a week) varies is still very large among possessors of FM radio (cf. Appendix to this paper, *Table I*).
- 9 Concerning this concept, see Bourdieu & Darbel (1969: 104-10).
- 10 The extremely close relationship that may be observed between museum attendance and level of education, on the one hand, and early attendance at museums, on the other hand, follows the same logic.

- 11 SOFRES (1964), *Le Marché des cadres supérieurs français*, Paris.
- 12 The heads of industry questioned more often live in small towns than do the heads of commerce – 40 per cent against 33 per cent, of whom 27 per cent against 15 per cent live in rural communities; members of public or private administration and engineers reside more often than teachers and professionals (a large proportion of whom – 28 per cent – live in small towns) in towns with more than 100 000 inhabitants, that is to say, 66 per cent for the first two categories, 65 per cent for the third, and 60 per cent for the last two, which doubtless explains the inversions as far as the theatre is concerned. Apart from place of residence, the effect of income, which is easily higher in the liberal professions than in the public services, doubtless explains the other inversions observed, particularly as far as the possession of FM radio sets or exhibition attendance are concerned.
- 13 Here are some indicators of the opposition between the two systems of dispositions, an element of which is the refusal of television:

|                              | <i>Listen to<br/>classical<br/>music</i> | <i>Play a<br/>musical<br/>instru-<br/>ment</i> | <i>Visit<br/>museums<br/>or exhib-<br/>itions</i> | <i>Visit<br/>art gal-<br/>leries</i> | <i>Play<br/>bridge</i> | <i>Go to<br/>the<br/>theatre</i> |
|------------------------------|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Possess<br>television        | 82                                       | 12   | 60  | 45                                   | 19                     | 55                               |
| Do not possess<br>television | 91                                       | 15   | 70  | 53                                   | 28                     | 70                               |

- 14 A number of indicators suggest that the different sections of the dominant classes can also be distinguished according to the amount of free time at their disposal. Thus, for example, the proportion of individuals who go on holiday varies from 95 per cent for teachers, to 92 per cent for engineers, 91 per cent for civil servants, 89 per cent for professionals, 87 per cent for managers, and 81 and 80 per cent for heads of industry and of commerce. The effect of this principle of differentiation is to be seen in a number of activities possessed of a cultural dimension, such as the use of radio or television.
- 15 The figures in parentheses represent the positions of each section. The readership of economic and scientific works has been given separately inasmuch as interest in these kinds of literature depends on secondary factors, namely the kind of professional activity for some (hence the positions of managers, heads of industry and of commerce) and the kind of intellectual training for others (hence the positions of the engineers).
- 16 Based on SEMA, *Le Théâtre et son public*, Vol. 2, Table 215a.

- 17 None of the indices of consumption (automobile, boat, hotel) is perfectly univocal (to the extent that the first also depends on the type of professional activity and the other two on the capital in free time, which is very unevenly spread between the sections); possession of a residence depends, further, on there being a stable residence (and this is less likely as far as civil servants, engineers, and teachers are concerned). Lastly, the incomes of the different categories have been very unevenly minimized (the rate of non-declaration may be seen as an indicator of the tendency to under-declare). A strict evaluation of the incomes of the different sections would presuppose the inventory of the secondary profits connected with the different professions. It is known, for instance, that managers and some engineers often have a car (and sometimes a chauffeur) at their disposal, provided by the firm which sometimes puts the general maid or the cleaning woman on a salaried basis. The survey quoted makes it possible to form an idea of the secondary profits, which are easily concealed, obtained by the different professions, such as business meals (26 per cent for heads of industry and for managers, 22 per cent for engineers, 17 per cent for heads of commerce, 14 per cent for civil servants, against only 10 per cent for professionals and 4 per cent for teachers) or business trips (41 per cent for heads of industry, 36 per cent for managers, 35 per cent for engineers, 31 per cent for heads of commerce, against 19 per cent for civil servants, 16 per cent for professionals, and 4 per cent for teachers).
- 18 Among the personalities mentioned in *Who's Who*, the following proportions in the following occupational categories reside in the districts which contain the highest proportion of families of executives in relation to the total number of households (7th, 8th, and 16th *arrondissements*): 39.7 per cent of the heads of industry and commerce, 40 per cent of those in senior administration, 31 per cent of those in the liberal professions, and 22 per cent of the teachers.
- 19 The opposition that is set up, within the middle class, between intermediate office staff (and in particular primary-school teachers) and medium-sized industrial and business management is the homologue of the opposition, within the upper class, between secondary-school teachers and the heads of industry and commerce. It is not by chance that the ideology of the academic meritocracy is particularly deep-rooted in those sections of the middle class which are richest in cultural capital and that ascent through two generations (from peasant to primary-school teacher to secondary-school teacher) is so often invoked by champions of 'the liberating effect of the school'. Indeed, primary-school teachers (along with subordinate categories in secondary education) and, more generally, members of the public administrative sector of intermediate rank occupy a very strange

position, on the hinge of the middle classes and the dominant classes. Owing to the privileged position that they occupy in terms of the educational system, they can triumphantly hold their own in academic competition with the other sections, which are richer in economic capital, and even with those sections of the dominant classes which are least prosperous in cultural capital. Since the logic that governs the relationship between secondary-school teachers and the other members of the dominant classes is *a fortiori* applicable to primary-school teachers, their children must pay for their being allowed into the dominant classes (where they form about 25 per cent) by being relegated to the positions of teaching, or industrial or administrative technicians.

- 20 Managers have a much more 'modernistic' style of life than do the traditional 'bourgeoisie' – the heads of industry and commerce: they attain positions of power at a younger age; they more often possess university qualifications; they more often belong to larger and more modern businesses; they are the largest group to read the financial newspaper *Les Échos* (penetration index of 126 as opposed to 91 for heads of industry) and weeklies dealing with economics and finance (penetration index of 224 as against 190 for heads of industry); they seem less inclined to invest their capital in real estate; they indulge more often in 'modern' leisure activities such as ski-ing, yachting, etc. Above all, they more completely identify themselves with the role of the modern executive who looks towards foreign countries (along with members of the civil servants and engineers, they make the highest rate of journeys abroad) and who is open to modern ideas (as is shown by their very active participation in professional symposia or seminars, with 30 per cent of them taking part in such activities at least three or four times a year, as against 26 per cent for civil servants and heads of commerce, 25 per cent for engineers, and 17 per cent for heads of industry). A final, apparently minor, but in fact very significant, sign of this opposition can be seen in the varying proportions of members of the different sections who state that they have a permanent supply of whisky or champagne in their homes: for whisky, the figures are 81 per cent for managers, 80 per cent for engineers, 74 per cent for professionals, 69 per cent for civil servants, 62 per cent for heads of commerce, and 58 per cent for teachers; and for champagne, 80 per cent for heads of industry, 75 per cent for heads of commerce and professionals, 73 per cent for managers, 72 per cent for top civil servants and engineers, and 49 per cent for teachers.
- 21 Only a survey such as the one that is being carried out at the present time at the Centre de Sociologie Européenne, whose object is to grasp the systems of the reproduction strategies of the different sections and to determine, in particular, the place of educational

investment within each one of these systems, could make it possible to validate these hypotheses and render them more subtle. We shall content ourselves, therefore, with provisionally reporting some indices which seem to confirm the propositions put forward above, particularly in relation to the liberal professions. According to the SOFRES survey already quoted, the hierarchy of the sections in terms of an index of status (based on possession of goods such as a drier, a freezer, a dish-washer, a record-player, high-fidelity equipment, FM radio, tape-recorder, camera and slide-projection equipment, cine-camera, caravan, boat, high-category car, second residence) is found to be: professionals (5.1), engineers (4.8), managers (4.7), heads of industry (4.6), heads of commerce (4.4), top civil servants (4.4), teachers (4.2). In the most highly selected population of *Who's Who*, membership of clubs and inscription in *le Bottin Mondain* are distributed as follows: heads of industry and commerce (49.5 and 32.6), law (38.1 and 36.5), medicine (30.1 and 28.9), top civil servants (25.7 and 24.4), university (24.3 and 22). Readership of the newspaper *Les Échos*, which is an index of participation in the economy and of information concerning finance, is distributed as follows (SOFRES): managers (126), heads of industry (91), top civil servants (68), engineers (66), professionals and heads of commerce (15), teachers (0). In the same way, the penetration index of the economic and financial weeklies is only 124 for the liberal professions as against 190 for heads of industry, 224 for managers, and 250 for engineers. The final revealing index of the particular position of the professionals and, more specifically, of the doctors, is the fact that 30 per cent of the doctors registered in *Who's Who* belong to the local political circle.

- 22 The analyses proposed below are based upon a systematic group of surveys, carried out over the last few years by the Centre de Sociologie Européenne, of the faculties of arts, sciences, law, and medicine, and of all the literary and scientific *grandes écoles* and of the preparatory classes for these colleges. The guiding idea behind this research was that of treating the institutions of higher education as a *system*, and of building the structure of the relationships which unite them. In short, the intention was to break with the (consciously or unconsciously) monographic approach of most research work dealing with higher education – research which is bent on ignoring the most specific properties of the different institutions, namely, those they owe to their position in the system of institutions and to the effects of structural distinction which that position allows. Thus studies centred on the arts or science faculties which omit to situate these institutions in relation to the preparatory classes for the *grandes écoles* and to the *grandes écoles* themselves do not make it possible to understand or explain what is owed by the social and academic recruitment of the

public of these institutions, by the pedagogy which they put into practice, or by the careers to which they give access, to the fact that these are second-class establishments to which are relegated children from the middle and working classes who manage to get into higher education or else a form of refuge for the children from the dominant classes whose academic results have not allowed them into the most prestigious institutions. Likewise, most studies devoted to any of the *grandes écoles* are not different in any clear-cut way from studies carried out for practical or justificatory ends by old boys' and teachers' associations in that they reveal, more often than not, the survival of a relationship of enchantment to the school which may be concealed just as well by the false distance of objectivity as in the resounding break or disenchanting reversal of a first relationship of enchantment. The supposition underlying such a methodological project was that, at the risk of showing a loss in the specific information relating to each institution, the technical operations – starting with the construction of questionnaires or of analysis grids – should be subordinated to the imperatives of comparability: that which, at the beginning, might appear as a rather crippling abstraction appeared as the condition of the emergence of the most specific characteristics whereas certain concessions which were made with an eye to taking into account particularities (and especially the most apparent features by means of which each *grande école* is endowed with a set of idiosyncrasy) prevented, in the last analysis, the making of comparisons capable of resulting in the principle of really pertinent differences.

- 23 The discordance between the two hierarchies and the predominance, within the institution, of the specifically academic hierarchy is at the basis of the meritocratic illusion whose most typical form is the ideology of the 'liberating effects of the school' along with the indignation aroused among teaching staff, who are the first victims of this kind of academic ethnocentrism, at the discordance between the social hierarchies and the academic hierarchies.
- 24 If the role of the system of institutions of higher education in the reproduction of the relations between the sections of the dominant classes often goes unnoticed, it is because surveys of mobility accord more attention to mobility between classes than to mobility within the different classes and, in particular, within the dominant classes. Another reason is that the analytic and atomistic mode of thought which governs research into mobility does not allow the classical surveys of 'elites' to go beyond the apprehension of phenomena such as simple professional heredity. In fact, the structure of relations between the sections may remain unaltered while the population that forms them undergoes a profound change: thus, to take but one example, the structure of relations between the intellectual and



artistic sections and the other sections of the dominant classes has remained more or less unchanged in France since the middle of the nineteenth century, whereas the social recruitment of artists and intellectuals has varied considerably according to the period.

- 25 For an analysis of the dialectic of approval and recognition at the final stage of which the school recognizes its members, or, in other words, those who recognize the school, see P. Bourdieu & M. de Saint-Martin (1970).
- 26 Adherence to values conveyed by catholic tradition doubtless contributes to a certain extent to the turning away of children of the dominant sections of the dominant classes from academic careers in university or intellectual posts, and it does this both directly, by provoking a certain suspicion towards learning and its values, and indirectly, by promoting (with an eye to ensuring for the children that they 'mix with the right people', that is, by ensuring the social homogeneity of the peer group and the guarantee of 'morality') the choice of private educational establishments whose educational yield is known to be lower, all other things being equal. Among the individuals mentioned in *Who's Who*, the rates of former students of private colleges are 55.3 per cent, 36.2 per cent, 18.5 per cent, and 16 per cent, respectively, for business, law, top-level administration and medicine, and the university.
- 27 The proportion of students who play bridge or practise the 'smart' sports increases the nearer one approaches the pole of economic power.
- 28 Any analysis which tends to consider cultural consumption as simple 'conspicuous consumption', neglecting the directly palpable gratifications which always supplement symbolic gratifications, may well cause this fact to be forgotten. The simple ostentation of material prosperity, although it may not have such an obvious legitimating function as cultural ostentation, has at least the effect, in certain sections of the dominant classes, of vouching for success and of attracting confidence, esteem, and respect which, in certain professions, particularly the liberal ones, may serve as an important factor of success.
- 29 Secondary analysis of the survey carried out by the INSEE on professional mobility also allows it to be established that the positions occupied in firms by engineers, higher office staff, and technicians are closely linked to social origin, with the sons of primary and secondary teachers and of professionals, for instance, being the most represented sections in management positions whereas the qualified sons of labourers, foremen, and technicians are the most represented sections in production, manufacture, and maintenance.
- 30 The fact that entrance into the liberal professions presupposes the possession of high academic qualifications should not conceal the fact

that access to the highest positions in these professions doubtless depends scarcely any less than it does in the industrial and commercial sector on the possession of economic and social capital, as is shown by the presence of a very high rate of professional heredity, particularly in the elite of the medical profession where can be found veritable dynasties of chief doctors.

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