

# 11 Men and machines

*Pierre Bourdieu*

*[The last chapter of this book is interesting because of what it suggests and entails without spelling out details. I take this to be a conception of (macro) structures as a set of positions held in place by the interplay of various forces that work for or against it, like the stability of a physical body which may be explained by motions rather than by its internal endurance or external persistence.*

*Bourdieu, too, emphasizes the notion of power as of key importance to our question. But he does not see this power as a force which stems from or accrues to a prime mover (a macro-actor), but rather as springing from the actions and reactions of agents who have no choice but to struggle to maintain their position of specific capital in a social field. In doing so, each actor helps to subject all the others to often intolerable constraints which in turn force the maintenance of certain structural conditions, and which hold in place the major societal divisions.*

*Bourdieu's contribution has been placed last in this volume because it is also the one which locates our problem most exclusively on a macro-level. The paper rejects distinctions such as that between action and structure altogether, and argues instead for a conception of the present in terms of two histories: the frozen, objectified past manifest in positions and the embodied history manifest in the habitus (the dispositions) of an individual. Both positions and dispositions are social in nature since dispositions are the history of a group or class acquired in socialization. The individual is either predisposed to enact an objectified history or engaged in investments which make him or her inclined to take interest in the functioning of institutions.]*

## 1 Macro-structures as fields of struggle

There is a common fallacy which social scientists almost invariably

commit whenever they fail to make allowance, in the course of their scientific practice itself, for the specificity of a scientist's relationship to the object of his science. It is the fallacy of projecting into the object of study the academic relationship to the object or the constructs which this academic relationship has made possible; in short, the fallacy of taking 'the things of logic for the logic of things', as Marx said of Hegel.<sup>1</sup> Having discovered the regularities or structure in accordance with which the phenomena are organized, and having stated them in the form of more or less formalized models or theories, the social scientist tends to place these models, which belong to the order of logic, in the individual or collective consciousness of the individual agents or groups. The same fundamental error lies behind action theories and philosophies of history that are apparently (and also in reality, though only in secondary ways) as different as the rational actor theory, with its calculating strategists consciously pursuing maximum profit, or functionalism, whether in its 'optimist' form – of which Parsons's writings are still the paradigm – or its 'pessimist', structural-Marxist form. The latter version culminates in the notion of the 'apparatus', a mechanical generator of teleology which enables mechanism to be – verbally – reconciled with final causes.

Historians and sociologists have tended to allow themselves to be trapped in sterile oppositions, such as that between 'events' and 'longue durée', or, at another level, between 'great men' and collective forces, between individual wills and structural determination. These alternatives are all based on the distinction between the *individual* and the *social*, the latter being identified with the collective. To find a way out of these dilemmas, it is sufficient to observe that every historical action brings together two states of history: objectified history, i.e. the history which has accumulated over the passage of time in things, machines, buildings, monuments, books, theories, customs, law, etc.; and embodied history, in the form of *habitus*. A man who raises his hat in greeting is unwittingly reactivating a conventional sign inherited from the Middle Ages, when, as Panofsky reminds us, armed men used to take off their helmets to make clear their peaceful intentions.<sup>2</sup> This re-enactment of history is the work of the habitus, the product of a historical acquisition which makes it possible to appropriate the legacy of history. History in the sense of *res gestae* is a part of objectified history that is carried, enacted, and

carries its bearer (through the dialectic of carrying and being-carried which Nicolai Hartmann so well describes).<sup>3</sup> Just as a text is raised from the state of a dead letter only through the act of reading which presupposes an acquired disposition and aptitude for reading and deciphering the meaning inscribed in it, so objectified, instituted history – the institution – becomes historical action, i.e. enacted, active history, only if it is taken in charge by agents whose own history predisposes them to do so, who, by virtue of their previous investments, are inclined to take an interest in its functioning, and endowed with the appropriate attributes to make it function. The relationship to the social world is not the mechanical causality that is often assumed between a 'milieu' and a consciousness, but rather a sort of ontological complicity. When the same history inhabits both habitus and habitat, both dispositions and position, the king and his court, the employer and his firm, the bishop and his see, history in a sense communicates with itself, is reflected in its own image. History as 'subject' discovers itself in history as 'object'; it recognizes itself in 'antepredicative', 'passive syntheses', structures that are structured before any structuring operation or any linguistic expression. The doxic relation to the native world, a quasi-ontological commitment flowing from practical experience, is a relationship of belonging and owning in which a body, appropriated by history, absolutely and immediately appropriates things inhabited by the same history.<sup>4</sup>

This native relationship to a familiar world is a *possessing* which implies the possession of the owner by his belongings. As Marx puts it, when the estate has appropriated the heir, the heir can appropriate the estate. And the taking over of the inheritor by his heritage, which is the precondition for the appropriation of the heritage (and is by no means mechanical or inevitable), takes place under the combined effect of the conditionings entailed by his position as inheritor and the educative action of his predecessors, the previously appropriated owners. The inherited inheritor, appropriated to his estate, has no need to will, i.e. to deliberate, choose and consciously decide, in order to do what is appropriate for the interests of the estate, its conservation and enlargement. He may, strictly speaking, know neither what he is doing nor what he is saying and yet say and do nothing that is not consistent with the demands of the heritage. Louis XIV was so totally identified with the position he occupied in the gravitational field of which he was the Sun, that it would be futile to try to determine which

of all the actions occurring in the field is or is not the product of his volition, just as it would be futile to distinguish in an orchestral performance between what is done by the conductor and what is done by the players. His will to dominate was itself a product of the field he dominated, a field which turned everything to his advantage:

The holders of privileges, imprisoned by the nets they cast over one another, kept one another in their positions even if they only reluctantly accepted the system. The pressure which their inferiors or the less privileged exerted on them forced them to defend their privileges. And *vice versa*: pressure from above compelled the less privileged to escape from it by imitating those who had risen to a more favourable position; in other words, they entered the vicious circle of status competition. The one who had the right to figure in the first *entrée* and hand the King his shirt despised the one who only had the third *entrée*, and had no intention of giving way to him; the Prince felt superior to the Duke, and the Duke superior to the Marquis; and all of them, as members of the 'nobility', would not and could not give way to commoners who paid taxes. One attitude engendered another; through pressure and counter-pressure, the social mechanism settled into a sort of unstable equilibrium.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, a 'state' which has become the symbol of absolutism and which, in the eyes of the absolute monarch himself ('l'état, c'est moi'), who has most *interest* in this representation, offers the appearance of an apparatus, in fact conceals a field of struggles in which the holder of 'absolute power' must himself participate, at least sufficiently to maintain the divisions and tensions, i.e. the field itself, and to mobilize the energy generated by the balance of tensions. The perpetual motion which runs through the field does not stem from some motionless prime mover – here, the Sun King, but from the struggle itself, which is produced by the structures of the field and in turn reproduces its structures, i.e. its hierarchies. It springs from the actions and reactions of the agents, who, short of opting out of the game and falling into oblivion, have no choice but to struggle to keep up or improve their position in the field, i.e. to conserve or increase the specific capital which is only created within the field. In so doing, each one helps to subject all the others to the often intolerable constraints arising from the competition.<sup>6</sup> In short, no one can take



advantage of the game, not even those who dominate it, without being taken up and taken in by it. Thus there would be no game without belief in the game and without the wills, intentions and aspirations which actuate the agents; these impulses, produced by the game, depend on the agents' positions in the game, and, more precisely, on their power over the objectified degrees of the specific capital – which the king controls and manipulates within the room for manoeuvre the game allows him.<sup>7</sup>

A certain type of pessimist functionalism, which imputes the effects of domination to a single, central will, makes it impossible to see the contribution the agents (including the dominated ones) make, willingly and knowingly or not, to the process of domination, through the relationship between their dispositions – linked to the social conditions in which they were produced – and the expectations and interests entailed by their positions within the fields of struggle for which words like state, church or party are shorthand terms.<sup>8</sup> Submission to transcendent goals, meanings or interests, i.e. interests superior and external to individual interests, is practically never the result of forcible imposition and conscious submission. This is because so-called objective goals, which only reveal themselves as such, at best, after the event and from outside, are practically never perceived and posited as such at the time, in practice itself, by any of the agents concerned, not even by the most interested parties, i.e. those who would have most interest in making them their conscious goals, namely the dominant agents. The subordination of the whole set of practices to a single objective intention, a sort of conductorless orchestration, can only take place through the harmony which is established, as it were, outside the agents and over their heads, between what they are and what they do, between their subjective 'vocations' (what they feel 'made' for) and their objective 'missions' (what is expected of them), between what history has made them and what history asks them to do. This harmony may be expressed in their sense of being 'at home' in what they are doing, of doing what they have to do and doing it happily (in the subjective and objective senses), or with a resigned conviction that they cannot do anything else, which is another way, though a less happy one, of feeling 'made' for one's job.

## 2 Institutions enacted: positions and dispositions

Objectified, institutionalized history only becomes enacted and active if the job, or the tool, or the book, or even the socially designated and recognized 'role' – 'signing a petition', 'going on a demonstration', etc. – or the historically attested 'character' – pioneering intellectual or 'devoted wife and mother', loyal civil servant or 'man of honour' – like a garment or a house, finds someone who finds an interest in it, feels sufficiently at home in it to take it on. This is why so many actions, and not only those of the functionary who merges with his function,<sup>9</sup> present themselves as ceremonies in which the agents – who do not thereby become *actors* performing *roles* – enter into the spirit of the social character which is expected of them and which they expect of themselves (such is a vocation), by virtue of the immediate and total coincidence of habitus and habit which makes the true monk. The café waiter does not play at being a café waiter, as Sartre supposes. When he puts on his white jacket, which evokes a democratized, bureaucratized form of the dutiful dignity of the servant in a great household, and when he performs the ceremonial of eagerness and concern, which may be strategy to cover up a delay or an oversight, or to fob off a second-rate product, he does not make himself a thing (or an 'in-itself'). His body, which contains a history, espouses his function, i.e. a history, a tradition which he has only ever seen incarnated in bodies, or rather, in those habits 'inhabited' by a certain habitus which are called café waiters. This does not mean that he has learnt to be a café waiter by imitating café waiters whom he took as models. He identifies with the job of café waiter, just as a child identifies with his (social) father and, without even having to 'pretend', takes on a way of walking or talking which appears to be part of the social being of the accomplished adult.<sup>10</sup> He cannot even be said to take himself for a café waiter; he is too much taken up in the job which was naturally (i.e. socio-logically) assigned to him (e.g. as the son of a small shopkeeper who needs to earn enough to set up his own business) even to have the idea of such role-distance. By contrast, one only has to put a student in his position (such as can now be seen running some 'avant-garde' restaurants) to see him manifesting in countless ways the aloofness he intends to maintain, precisely by affecting to perform it as a *role, vis-à-vis* a job which he does not feel 'made' for and in which, as the Sartrian customer

observes, he 'refuses to be imprisoned'. And for proof of the fact that the intellectual's relationship to his own position as an intellectual is no different, and that the intellectual distances himself no more than the waiter from his own position and from what specifically defines it, i.e. the illusion of distance from all positions, one only has to read as an anthropological document the passage in which Sartre analyses and 'universalizes' his famous description of the café waiter:<sup>11</sup>

In vain do I fulfill the functions of a café waiter. I can be he only in the neutralized mode, as the actor is Hamlet, by mechanically making the *typical gestures* of my state and by aiming at myself as an imaginary café waiter through those gestures taken as an 'analogue'. What I attempt to realize is a being-in-itself of the café waiter, as if it were not just in my power to confer their value and their urgency upon my duties and the rights of my position, as if it were not my free choice to get up each morning at five o'clock or to remain in bed, even though it meant getting fired. As if from the very fact that I sustain this role in existence I did not transcend it on every side, as if I did not constitute myself as one *beyond* my condition. Yet there is no doubt that I *am* in a sense a café waiter – otherwise could I not just as well call myself a diplomat or a reporter.<sup>12</sup>

Every word merits attention in this almost miraculous product of the social unconscious, which, by an exemplary manipulation of the phenomenological *ego*, projects an intellectual's consciousness into a café waiter's practice, or into the imaginary analogue of that practice, producing a sort of social chimera, a monster with a waiter's body and a philosopher's head. One surely has to have the freedom to stay in bed *without* being fired in order to find that someone who gets up at five to sweep the café and start the percolator before the customers arrive is (freely?) freeing himself from the freedom to stay in bed even if it means being fired. This logic of narcissistic identification is the same logic which nowadays enables others to produce a worker entirely committed to 'struggles' or, alternatively, desperately resigned to being only what he is, a 'being-in-itself' devoid of the freedom which others derive from being able to count among their possible positions those of diplomat or journalist.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, when there is a fairly close correspondence between 'vocation' and 'mission', between the 'demand' that is, for the most part, implicitly, tacitly, even secretly inscribed in agents' positions and the 'supply' contained in their dispositions, it would be futile to seek to distinguish those aspects of their practice which derive from their positions and those which derive from the dispositions they bring into those positions. These dispositions tend to govern their perception and appreciation of their position, their behaviour within it, and consequently the 'reality' of the position. This dialectic is, paradoxically, most clearly seen in the case of positions situated in 'grey' areas of social space and in occupations that have not yet been greatly 'professionalized', i.e. which remain ill-defined as regards entry to and performance of the job. These positions, which are there to be made and are what the agents make of them, are made for those who feel made to make their jobs, and who opt (in terms of the classic opposition) for the 'open' rather than the 'closed'.<sup>14</sup> The definition of these ill-defined, unguaranteed positions lies, paradoxically, in the freedom they allow to their holders to define and delimit them by freely bringing into them their own limits and their own definition, all the embodied necessity which constitutes the habitus. These jobs become what their occupants are, or, at least, those occupants who, in the struggles within the 'profession' and in confrontations with neighbouring and rival professions, succeed in imposing the definition of the profession that is most favourable to what they are. This does not depend solely on themselves and their competitors, i.e. on the power relations within that particular field, but also on the state of the power relations between the classes, which, quite apart from any conscious 'recuperating' strategy, will determine the social success conferred on the different goods or services produced in and for the struggle with immediate rivals, and the institutional consecration bestowed on their producers. The institutionalization of 'spontaneous' divisions which occurs little by little, under the pressure of events, through the positive or negative sanctions the social order exerts on organizations (subsidies, commissions, appointments, granting of tenure, etc.), leads to what can eventually be seen as a new division of the work of domination, but one which surpasses the schemes of the most ambitious technocrats. Thus the social world comes to be peopled with institutions which no one designed or wanted; those who are ostensibly 'in charge' cannot say, even with the advantage of

hindsight, how 'the formula was found', and are themselves astonished that such institutions can exist as they do, so well adapted to ends which their founders never explicitly formulated.

### 3 The functioning of institutions

But the dialectic between the propensities contained in habitus and the demands entailed in job descriptions has equally strong, though less visible, effects in the most regulated and rigid sectors of the social structure, such as the oldest, most codified branches of the civil service. Some of the most characteristic features of the conduct of junior officials – a tendency towards formalism, fetishism about punctuality, strict adherence to regulations, etc. – are far from being a mechanical product of bureaucratic organization. They are in fact the manifestation, within the logic of a situation particularly favourable to its implementation, of a set of dispositions that also manifests itself outside the bureaucratic situation and which would be sufficient to predispose the members of the petty bourgeoisie to practise the virtues demanded by the bureaucratic order and exalted by the ideology of 'public service': probity, meticulousness, rigour and a propensity for moral indignation.<sup>15</sup> This hypothesis has received a sort of experimental confirmation from the changes that have occurred in recent years in various public organizations, especially the French post office, linked to the recruitment of young, low-ranking civil servants who are victims of structural deskilling and whose dispositions correspond less well to the expectations of the institution.<sup>16</sup> So it is not possible to understand the functioning of bureaucratic institutions unless one moves beyond the fictitious opposition between, on the one hand, a 'structuralist' view which tends to see structural and morphological characteristics as the basis of the 'iron laws' of bureaucracies, which it regards as mechanisms capable of defining their own teleology and imposing it on their agents; and, on the other hand, an 'interactionist' or psycho-sociological view which tends to see bureaucratic practices as the product of the agents' interactions and strategies, ignoring both the social conditions of production of the agents (both inside and outside the institution) and the institutional conditions in which they perform their functions (e.g. forms of control over recruitment, promotion and remuneration).

It is true that the specificity of bureaucratic fields, relatively autonomous spaces structured by institutionalized positions, lies in the capacity, which is constitutive of these positions (since they are defined by their rank and scope), to induce their holders to produce all the practices implied in their job description. They do this through the effect of regulations, directives, circulars, etc. (a direct, visible effect which is commonly associated with the idea of bureaucracy), and especially through the whole set of vocation-co-optation mechanisms which tends to adjust agents to their jobs, or, more precisely, their dispositions to their positions. These fields then have the further capacity to confer on these practices, and only these, the recognition of a certain status authority. But even in this case it is a mistake to try to understand the practices in terms of the immanent logic of the structure of positions (defined at a given moment, i.e. after a certain history, as regards number, legal status, etc.), just as it is a mistake to try to account for them solely in terms of the agents' 'psychosociological' dispositions, especially if these are separated from their conditions of production. In reality, we find here, once again, a particular case of a more or less 'successful' encounter between positions and dispositions, i.e. between objectified history and internalized history.

The tendency of the bureaucratic field to 'degenerate' into a totalitarian institution which demands complete, mechanical identification (*perinde ac cadaver*) of the functionary with his function, the *apparatchik* with the apparatus, is not linked mechanically to the morphological effects which scale and number may have on its structures (e.g. through the constraints on communication) and its functions. It only occurs to the extent that it encounters the conscious collaboration of certain agents or the unconscious complicity of their dispositions (and this leaves room for the liberating effect of raised consciousness). The further one moves from the ordinary functioning of fields as fields of struggle towards limiting-states, which are perhaps never reached, in which all struggle and all resistance to domination have disappeared, so that the field hardens and contracts into a 'totalitarian institution', in Goffman's sense, or – in a rigorous sense, an *apparatus* – which is able to demand everything, without conditions or concessions and which, in its extreme forms – barracks, prisons, concentration camps – has the physical and symbolic means of restructuring earlier habitus, the more the institution tends to consecrate agents who give everything to the institution (e.g. 'the

party' or 'the church'). Such agents perform their oblation all the more easily because they have less capital outside the institution and therefore less freedom *vis-à-vis* the institution and the specific capital and profits that it provides. The *apparatchik*, who owes everything to the apparatus, is the apparatus incarnate and he can be trusted with the highest responsibilities because he can do nothing to advance his own interests that does not *ipso facto* help to defend the interests of the apparatus. He is predisposed to defend the institution, with total conviction, against the heretical deviations of those whose externally acquired capital allows and inclines them to take liberties with internal beliefs and hierarchies. In short, in those cases most favourable to a mechanistic description of practices, analysis reveals a sort of unconscious adjustment of positions and dispositions, the true principle of the functioning of the institution, precisely in the aspect which gives it the appearance of an infernal machine.

Thus, the most alienating and irksome working conditions of those closest to forced labour, are still taken up by a worker who perceives, assesses, accommodates and puts up with them in terms of his own history and indeed the history of his whole lineage. The reason why descriptions of the most alienating work conditions and the most alienated workers are so often unconvincing – not least because they do not help to explain why things are as they are and remain as they are – is that, following the logic of the Sartrean chimera, they fail to account for the tacit agreement between the most inhuman working conditions and men who have been prepared to accept them by inhuman living conditions. The dispositions inculcated by a childhood experience of the social world which, in certain historical conditions, can predispose young workers to accept and even wish for entry into a world of manual labour which they identify with the adult world, are reinforced by work experience itself and by all the consequent changes in their dispositions (which can be understood by analogy with the changes Goffman describes as constituting the 'asylum-making' process). A whole process of investment leads workers to contribute to their own exploitation through their effort to appropriate their work and their working conditions, which leads them to bind themselves to their 'trade' by means of the very freedoms (often minimal and almost always 'functional') that are left to them, and as a result of the competition arising from the differences (*vis-à-vis* unskilled workers, immigrants, women, etc.) that structure their

occupation as a field. Indeed, setting aside the extreme situations that are closest to forced labour, it can be seen that the objective reality of wage labour, i.e. exploitation, is made possible partly by the fact that the subjective reality of the labour does not coincide with its objective reality. The worker who no longer expects his work (and his workplace) to give him anything more than a wage experiences his situation as unnatural and untenable, and the indignation it arouses confirms this.<sup>17</sup>

Differences in dispositions, like differences in position (to which they are often linked), engender real differences in perception and appreciation. Thus the recent changes in factory work, towards the limit predicted by Marx, with the disappearance of 'job satisfaction', 'responsibility' and 'skill' (and all the corresponding hierarchies), are appreciated and accepted very differently by different groups of workers. Those whose roots are in the industrial working class, who possess skills and relative 'privileges', are inclined to defend past gains, i.e. job satisfaction, skills and hierarchies and therefore a form of established order; those who have nothing to lose because they have no skills, who are in a sense a working-class embodiment of the populist chimera, such as young people who have stayed at school longer than their elders, are more inclined to radicalize their struggles and challenge the whole system; other, equally disadvantaged workers, such as first-generation industrial workers, women, and especially immigrants, have a tolerance of exploitation which seems to belong to another age. In short, in the most oppressive working conditions, those which would seem to be most favourable to the mechanistic interpretation which reduces the worker to his 'position in the relations of production', and even directly *derives* him from that position, his activity is in fact the interaction of two histories and his present is the meeting of two pasts.<sup>18</sup>

## Notes

- 1 On the forms and scientific effects of this fallacy in anthropology, linguistics and sociology, and on the social conditions which make it possible, see P. Bourdieu, *Le Sens pratique* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1979). For an English translation of an earlier version, see *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge University Press, 1977).
- 2 E. Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology* (Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 4.

- 3 N. Hartmann, *Das Problem des geistigen Seins* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1933), p. 172.
- 4 This, it seems to me, is what Heidegger, in his later works, and Merleau-Ponty (especially in *Le Visible et l'invisible*), endeavoured to express in the language of ontology, i.e. a 'savage' or 'barbarous' – I would say simply 'practical' – relationship to objects, falling short of intentionality.
- 5 N. Elias, *Die höfische Gesellschaft* (Neuwied, Luchterhand, 1969), pp. 134–5.
- 6 The only absolute freedom the game leaves is freedom to withdraw from the game, by a heroic renunciation which – unless one manages to set up another game – secures tranquillity only at the cost of social death, from the point of view of the game and the *illusio*.
- 7 'The King does not simply preserve the hierarchical order handed on by his predecessors. Etiquette leaves him a certain scope for manoeuvre, even in unimportant matters. He takes advantage of the psychological dispositions which reflect the hierarchical and aristocratic structures of the society; he takes advantage of the rivalry among the courtiers, who are always looking for prestige and favours, to modify the rank and consideration of the members of court society in accordance with the requirements of his own power, by means of a careful distribution of his marks of favour, so as to create internal tensions and to shift the balance as it suits him' (N. Elias, *Die höfische Gesellschaft*, pp. 136–7).
- 8 The 'apparatus' theory no doubt owes part of its success to the fact that it can lead to an abstract denunciation of the state or the education system which acquits the agents of personal responsibility, so that their occupational practice and their political choices can be treated as separate issues.
- 9 The official who points out that 'rules are rules' demands (in accordance with the rules) that the 'person' is to be identified with the rules, in opposition to those who appeal to the 'person', his feelings, his 'understanding', his 'indulgence', etc.
- 10 As Carl Schorske shows apropos of Freud (*Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: A. Knopf, and London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980), pp. 181–213), the 'psychological' obstacles to identification and the social obstacles are inextricably linked and need to be considered together in any analysis which endeavours to account for deviations from the path implied by an individual's social heritage ('failures' who can clearly be successes from a different point of view, such as a banker's artist son).
- 11 It is somewhat unfair to analyse in this way a text which has the merit of making completely explicit (hence its interest) the most hidden and even secret aspects of a lived experience of the social world of which partial or impoverished manifestations can be observed every day.
- 12 J.-P. Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. H. E. Barnes (London: Methuen, 1969), p. 60.
- 13 As I have tried to show elsewhere, this tendency to present the intellectual's relation to working-class conditions as if it were the working-class relation to those conditions does not necessarily disappear when, as observer or actor, the intellectual briefly occupies the worker's position in the relations of production. (The exception, which makes it a remarkable document on, for example, the mythifying and demythifying of the working class, is for me Nicolas Dubost's book, *Flins sans fin* (Paris: Maspero, 1979).)
- 14 One always has a spontaneous philosophy of history, and also a philosophy of one's own history, i.e. of one's position and trajectory in social space. This 'central intuition', which makes it possible to take up a position on the great 'theoretical' or 'political' alternatives of the day (determinism/freedom, 'structuralism'/spontaneism, Communist Party/ultra-leftism, etc.) and which very directly expresses one's relation to the social world, is the basis not only of one's view of the social world and political positions but also of the seemingly most elementary and innocent choices in scientific practice. (The scientificity of social science can be measured by its capacity to constitute these alternatives as a scientific object and to grasp the social determinants of the choices made in relation to them. One of the difficulties of writing is due, in the case of the social sciences, to the fact that it must endeavour to disappoint and refute in advance those readings that will perceive the analysis in terms of the grids it is endeavouring to objectify.)
- 15 Cf. P. Bourdieu and J.-C. Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London and Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977), pp. 191–2.
- 16 Cf. P. Bourdieu and L. Boltanski, 'Formal Qualifications and Occupational Hierarchies', in *Reorganizing Education*, Sage Annual Review, Social and Educational Change, Vol. 1. (London and Beverly Hills, Sage Publications, 1977).
- 17 P. Bourdieu *et al.*, *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* (Paris–The Hague; Mouton, 1963); and P. Bourdieu, *Algeria 1960* (Cambridge University Press and Paris, Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1979).
- 18 The relationship between workers and union or political organizations could be described in terms of the same logic. Here, too, the present is the encounter of two pasts which are themselves partly the product of their past interaction. (For example, when one measures empirically the awareness workers in a given society have of the class structure, their image of work or their awareness of their rights – regarding industrial accidents, dismissal, etc. – one is recording the effect of the past action of the unions and parties, and it may be supposed that a different history would have produced different images and – in an area in which images play a large part in shaping reality – different realities.) In other words, their image of their position depends on the relationship between the traditions offered by the organizations (with the divisions between them, for example) and their dispositions.