

39. Sociodicy: justification of society; formed by analogy with theodicy (trans.).

40. D. A. Goslin, *The Search for Ability: Standardized Testing in Social Perspective*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1966, p. 191.

41. 'That an individual possesses the bachelor's degree may or may not prove that he knows, or once knew, something about Roman history and trigonometry. The important thing about his degree is that it helps him to secure a position which is socially or economically more desirable than some other position which can be obtained without the aid of this degree. Society has misgivings about the function of specific items in the educational process and has to make atonement by inventing such notions as the cultivation of the mind' (E. Sapir, 'Personality', in *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*, ed. D. G. Mandelbaum, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1968, p. 567).

42. This tendency, inherent in every school system, was grasped by Durkheim in the privileged case of the *ancien régime* college: 'To be sure, the *ancien régime* college produced no doctors, no priests, no statesmen, no judges, no lawyers, no professors; but, in order to become a professor, a lawyer, a judge, etc., it was considered essential to have been to college' (Durkheim, *L'évolution pédagogique*, II, p. 182).

43. This evolution, starting at the end of the last century with the setting up of the competitions for recruitment to Government departments which, in invoking the requirements of 'general culture', marked the decline of the specialist and technician trained 'on the job', in a sense culminates in the passing-out competition of the *École Nationale d'Administration*, which has peopled the Civil Service and ministerial cabinets with 'young gentlemen' combining the benefits of a bourgeois upbringing with those of the most general and most typically traditional academic training.

44. A good deal of research on mobility implicitly espouses this ideology and reduces the question of the reproduction of class relations to the question of the intergenerational mobility of individuals. Having done so, it is unable to understand everything that individual practices, particularly those contributing to or resulting from mobility, owe to the objective structure of class relations within which they take place. Thus, for example, the collective interest the dominant classes have in the preservation of the structure of class relations, hence in the evolution of the educational system towards ever closer subordination to the demands of the economy and economic calculation, an interest which entails, *inter alia*, sacrificing a proportion of the students from those classes, is now tending, because of their over-enrolment, to come into conflict with the individual interests of the members of those classes which incline them to expect the educational system to consecrate automatically the social pretensions of all members of the class.

4

DEPENDENCE THROUGH INDEPENDENCE

But first of all there came a hierophant who arranged them in order; then he took from the knees of Lachesis lots and patterns of life, and mounting upon a high pulpit, spoke as follows: 'Hear the words of Lachesis, the daughter of Necessity. Mortal souls, behold a new cycle of mortal life. Your genius will not choose you, but you will choose your genius; and let him who draws the first lot choose a life, which shall be his destiny (. . .) The chooser is answerable — God is justified.'

Plato,
The Republic

Whether one sets out to analyse the communication of the message, the organization of the exercise or the assessment and sanctioning of the effects of the communication and the exercise, i.e. pedagogic work as the prolonged action of inculcation through which the basic function of every educational system is accomplished, or whether one seeks to grasp the mechanisms by which the system overtly or tacitly selects the legitimate addressees of its message by imposing technical requirements which are always, to various degrees, social requirements, we have seen that it is impossible to understand the *dual objective truth* of a system defined by its capacity to employ the *internal logic* of its functioning in the service of its *external function* of social conservation, if one fails to relate all the past and present characteristics of its organization and public to the complete system of relations prevailing, in a determinate social formation, between the educational system and the structure of class relations. To grant the educational system the absolute in-

dependence which it claims or, on the contrary, to see in it only the reflection of a state of the economic system or the direct expression of the value system of 'society as a whole', is to refuse to see that its *relative autonomy* enables it to serve external demands under the guise of independence and neutrality, i.e. to conceal the social functions it performs and so to perform them more effectively.

The effort to catalogue the external functions of the educational system, that is, the objective relations between this system and the other sub-systems, for example the economic system or value system, remains fictitious whenever the relations thereby established are not brought into relationship with the structure of the relations prevailing at a given moment between the social classes. Thus we have had to bring university organization (e.g. the institutional conditions of pedagogic communication or the hierarchy of degrees and disciplines) into relationship with the social characteristics of its public, in order to avoid the empiricist dilemma which obliges common sense and a number of semi-scientific theories to alternate between condemnation of an educational system presumed to be the sole author of all the inequalities it produces, and denunciation of a social system bearing sole responsibility for the inequalities bequeathed to an intrinsically impeccable educational system. Similarly, it is necessary to determine the differential form which the relations between this or that sub-system take for each social class in a society characterized by a certain structure of class relations, in order to avoid the illusion, frequently found among economists, that the School, invested by 'Society' with a single, purely technical function, stands in a single, simple relation to the economy of that society; or the illusion favoured by culturalist anthropologists, that the School, invested by 'Society' with a single, purely cultural function of 'enculturation', does no more than express in its organization and functioning the hierarchy of values of the 'national culture' which it transmits from one generation to another.

Reducing the functions of the educational system to its technical function, that is, reducing the ensemble of relations between the educational system and the economic system to the 'output' of the School as measured against the needs of the labour market, prohibits

rigorous use of the comparative method, condemning one instead to abstract comparison of statistical series divested of the significance which the facts measured derive from their position in a particular structure, serving a particular system of functions. The conditions for a fruitful application of the comparative method are only fulfilled when the variations in the hierarchical structure of the functions of the educational system (i.e. the variations in the functional weight of each function in the complete system of functions) are systematically brought into relation with the concomitant variations in the organization of the educational system. By making a critique of two approaches which concur in ignoring these requirements, one in the name of a sort of declaration of universal comparability, the other in the name of a belief in the irreducibility of 'national cultures', we can at least hope to state the conditions for the construction of a model which would enable each of the cases historically realized to be understood as a particular case of the transformations which the system of relations between the structure of functions and the structure of organization may undergo. The different types of structure of the educational system, i.e. the different historical specifications of the essential function of producing durable, transposable dispositions (*habitus*) incumbent on every educational system, do indeed only assume their full significance when brought into relation with the different types of structure of the system of functions, themselves inseparable from the different states of the balance of power between the groups or classes by whom and for whom these functions are realized.

THE PARTICULAR FUNCTIONS OF 'THE GENERAL INTEREST'

Never before has the question of the 'aims' of education been so completely identified with discussion of the contribution education makes to national growth. Even the preoccupations apparently most

foreign to this logic, such as the ostentatious concern to 'democratize educational and cultural opportunity' increasingly draw on the language of economic rationality, taking the form, for example, of denunciation of the 'wastage' of talent. But are economic 'rationalization' and 'democratization' so automatically linked as well-intentioned technocrats like to think? The sociology and economics of education would not be so easily trapped in such a problematic if they did not dismiss the question that is objectively posed by all artificialist inquiries into the 'aims' of education, namely the theoretical question of the functions of the educational system that are *objectively possible* (i.e. not only logically but also socio-logically) and the correlated methodological question of the comparability of educational systems and their products.

The technocratic thinking which, reviving the philosophy of history of social evolutionism in its simplest form, claims to extract from reality itself a unilinear, one-dimensional model of the phases of historical change, obtains without much effort the yardstick of a universal comparison which enables it to hierarchize the different societies or educational systems univocally, according to their degree of development or 'rationality'. In reality, because the indicators of the 'rationality' of an educational system are less amenable to comparative interpretation the more completely they express the historical and social specificity of educational institutions and practices, this procedure destroys the very object of comparison by divesting the elements compared of all they owe to their membership in systems of relations. Consequently, whether one confines oneself to indicators as abstract as illiteracy rate, enrolment rate and teacher-pupil ratio, or takes into account more specific indicators of the efficiency of the educational system or of the degree to which it makes use of the intellectual resources potentially available, such as the role of technical education, the proportion of student intake successfully graduating, or the differential representation of the sexes or social classes in the different levels of education, it is necessary to reinstate these relations within the systems of relations on which they depend, in order to avoid comparing

the incomparable or, more subtly, failing to compare the really comparable.

More profoundly, all these indicators rest on an implicit definition of the 'productivity' of the educational system which, in referring exclusively to its *formal, external* rationality, reduces the system of its functions to one of them, itself subjected to a reductive abstraction. Technocratic measurement of educational output assumes the impoverished model of a system which, knowing no other goals than those it derives from the economic system, responds optimally, in quantity and quality, and at minimum cost, to the technical demand for training, i.e. the needs of the labour market. For anyone who accepted such a definition of rationality, the (formally) most rational educational system would be one which, totally subordinating itself to the requirements of calculability and predictability, produced at the lowest cost specific skills directly adjusted to specialized tasks and guaranteed the types and levels of skill required for a given dateline by the economic system, using to this end personnel specially trained in handling the most adequate pedagogic techniques, setting aside class and sex divisions so as to draw as widely as possible (without stepping outside the limits of profitability) on the intellectual 'reserves' and banishing all vestiges of traditionalism so as to substitute for an education in culture, designed to form men of taste, an education capable of producing made-to-measure specialists according to schedule.¹

The simplification to which such a definition subjects the system of functions is seen as soon as it is pointed out that the statistical relations most often invoked to demonstrate the existence of an overall correspondence between the degree of formal rationality of the educational system and the degree of development of the economic system take on their specific meaning only when reinserted into the system of relations between the educational system and the structure of class relations. An indicator as univocal in appearance as the number of certificate-holders at each level in each speciality cannot be interpreted within the formal logic of a system of juridical equivalences: the economic and social profitability of a given diploma is a function of its scarcity on the

economic and symbolic markets, i.e. the value which the sanctions of the different markets confer on the different diplomas and different categories of diplomas. Thus, in a country with a high rate of illiteracy, the mere fact of literacy or, a fortiori, possession of an elementary diploma, is sufficient to ensure a decisive advantage in occupational competition.²

Similarly, because traditional societies generally exclude women from schooling, because the use of all intellectual capacities is demanded by the development of the economy, and because the entry of women into male occupations is one of the main social changes accompanying industrialization, one might be tempted to see the rate of feminization of secondary and higher education as an indicator of the degree of 'rationalization' and 'democratization' of the educational system. In reality, the Italian and French examples suggest that one must not be misled by a very high rate of feminization and that the educational careers girls are offered by the richest nations are often simply a more expensive and more luxurious variant of traditional upbringing or, to put it another way, a reinterpretation of the most modern studies for women in terms of the traditional model of the division of labour between the sexes, as is attested by female students' whole attitude towards their studies and, still more visibly, by the choice of discipline or the rate of vocational use of their diplomas, which are both a cause and an effect of their attitude. Conversely, even low rates of feminization may express a clear-cut break with the traditional definition of female upbringing in a Muslim country whose whole tradition tended to exclude women from higher education completely. More precisely, the overall rate of feminization has a different significance depending on the social recruitment of the female students and the distribution of the rates of feminization of the various faculties and disciplines. Thus, in France, the fact that the chances of university entrance are virtually the same for boys and girls does not imply the disappearance of the traditional model of the division of labour and the ideology of the distribution of 'gifts' between the sexes: girls are still consigned more often than boys to certain types of studies (Arts

subjects in the main), the more so the lower their social origin. Even indicators as unequivocal at first sight as the proportion of women graduates making vocational use of their academic qualification are subject to the system effect: to measure adequately the social profitability of the diploma held by a woman, one must at least take into account the fact that the 'value' of an occupation (such as, in France, that of primary or secondary school teacher) steadily diminishes as it is feminized.

Another example: the apparently most unimpeachable indicator of an educational system's efficiency, the 'wastage' rate (defined by the number of students in a given intake who fail to complete the course successfully) remains meaningless until it is seen as the effect of a specific combination of the social selection and technical selection that an educational system always carries out inseparably. The 'waste product' is in this case as much a transformed product as is the finished product; consider the system of dispositions towards the educational institution, his occupation and his whole existence which characterizes the 'failure', as well as the technical and above all social profits accruing — unequally, depending on the society and the class — from the fact of having had some higher education, albeit intermittent or interrupted. What is the value of a comparison between the wastage rates of British (14 percent), American or French universities, if one fails to consider, in addition to the degree of selection before entry which distinguishes Britain from France or the US, the diversity of the procedures the different systems use to carry out selection and to cause its effects to be internalized, ranging from the categorical exclusion operated by French-style examination, especially the State competition, to the painless elimination ('cooling out') made possible in the US by the hierarchy of university establishments?³ If it is true that an educational system always succeeds in obtaining from those it consecrates, and even those it excludes, a certain measure of adherence to the legitimacy of consecration or elimination and thereby of the social hierarchies, it can be seen that a low technical efficiency may be the price paid for the educational system's high efficiency in performing its

function of legitimating the 'social order' — even when class-unconscious technocrats sometimes pat themselves on the back for condemning a wastage which they cannot assess without discounting the corresponding profits, by a sort of error in national accountancy.

In short, the technocratic notion of 'output' has the function of preventing analysis of the educational system's system of functions: if it were carried out, such an analysis would forbid recourse to the implicit or explicit postulate of the 'general interest', by showing that none of the functions of the educational system can be defined independently of a given state of the structure of class relations. If, for example, students from the different social classes are unequally inclined to recognize the verdicts of the School and, in particular, unequally disposed to accept without protest second-order courses and careers (i.e. the jobs in teaching or middle management for which they are destined by faculties or disciplines which offer for some a last refuge while others are relegated there by the mechanisms of streaming), this is because the relations between the school system and the economic system, i.e. the labour market, remain connected, even among apprentice intellectuals, to the situation and position of their social class of origin through the mediation of class ethos, the principle determining the level of occupational aspiration.

Failing to make this connection, one is led to reduce the whole system of relations governing the relationship of a category of individuals to their occupational future to a mechanical effect of the correspondence or non-correspondence between labour supply and demand. Schumpeter makes this sort of reduction when he claims to establish a clear and simple relation between over-production of graduates relative to jobs and the advent of the revolutionary attitude among intellectuals.⁴ Similarly, undertaking to formulate a 'politics of education', M. Vermot-Gauchy starts by reducing this ambition to that of 'determining the nature and number of the career openings likely to become available to the rising generations and those now working';⁵ to calculate these 'skill needs' it is apparently sufficient to proceed from the expected pattern of production to the foreseeable manpower needs

of the various sectors, from prediction of the manpower use in a given sector to its 'skill needs', from these to the 'training needs' and finally from 'training needs' to the level and content of the qualifications educationally required in order to satisfy them.

Such a deduction, formally irreproachable (allowing for the approximations and the constancy hypotheses entailed by any 'projection'), rests on a definition of 'needs' which owes its credibility to nothing more than a superficial analogy: either one recognizes as 'needs' only those judged worthy of being satisfied by reference to a technocratic ideal of the economic worthiness of nations or one recognizes as 'needs' all the demands for education actually expressed.⁶ There is nothing to prevent one opting for the first alternative and relating a determinate state of the School to a pure model of the educational system defined exclusively and univocally by its ability to satisfy the requirements of economic development. But, given that there is no society in which the educational system is reduced to the role of an industrial enterprise subject to exclusively economic goals, that production for the needs of the economy does not everywhere have the same weight in the system of functions and, more profoundly, that the specificity of an educational system and of its 'production' techniques is reproduced in the specificity of its products, it is only by sheer force of ideology that one can present the 'needs of the economy' or of Society as the rational, reasonable basis for a consensus on the hierarchy of the functions incumbent upon the educational system. In condemning as irrational the 'motivations' or 'vocations' which nowadays lead a proportion of students into 'unproductive' studies and careers, without seeing that these orientations are the product of the combined action of the School and class values, themselves objectively oriented by the action of the School, technocratic ideology betrays the fact that it knows no other 'rational' objectives than the goals objectively inscribed in a certain type of economy.⁷ The technocrats are able to profess the sociologically impossible idea of an educational system reduced to its economic function alone, only because, having failed to relate the economic system (to which they subordinate the educational system) to a

determinate structure of class relations, and taking for granted an economic demand conceived as independent of the power relations between the classes, they then, in all innocence under cover of its technical function, reintroduce the social function of the educational system and in particular its function of reproducing and legitimating the structure of class relations.

It is not surprising that this idealism of the 'general interest' fails to grasp the structural properties and operational characteristics that each educational system owes to the ensemble of its relations with the other sub-systems, i.e. to the system of functions which, in a determinate historical situation, derives its specific structure from the structure of class relations. It is still less surprising that this pan-econometric monism ignores the specific properties that the structure and functioning of the educational system owe to the function specifically incumbent upon it as the holder of the delegated power to inculcate a cultural arbitrary. Nor, finally, is it surprising that the ingenuous alliance between a utilitarian evolutionism and reformist voluntarism condemns its exponents to a negative sociology which, by the light of an exemplary rationality, can see only failures and shortcomings ('archaism', 'vestiges', 'backwardness', 'obstacles' or 'resistance') and can only characterize in terms of absence the pedagogic specificity and historical particularity of an educational system.

UNDIFFERENTIATED FUNCTIONS AND INDIFFERENCE TO DIFFERENCES

Those who undertake to capture the originality of a culture in the signifying unity of its elements and who, like the configurationist school, show by the attention they give to the different forms of upbringing that they mean to avoid dissociating the analysis of a culture from the study of cultural transmission, might at first sight appear to escape the abstractions which arise from ignorance of the 'configura-

tions'. But is it possible to take culture as a concrete totality, indivisibly responsible for its own causality and, on this basis, to relate the different aspects of a culture to a sort of generative formula, a 'spirit of the age' or 'national character', without running the risk of ignoring the specificity of the different sub-systems by treating each of them as if it did no more than manifest a single primordial dynamism, present everywhere and without mediation in each of its manifestations? When the requirement of totalization of particular relations is reduced to a philosophy of totality which sees the whole in every part, it leads one as infallibly as technocratic ideology to ignore, together with the specificity of the educational system, the *system effect* which gives its functional significance and weight to a function within the system of functions or to an element (organization, population, etc.) within the structure or the historical transformation of the structure. Whereas the technocrats reduce the relatively autonomous history of the educational system to the abstract schema of a unique, unilinear, universal evolution marked only by the stages of a morphological growth or the landmarks in a process of formal, external rationalization, the configurationists reduce the specificity which the system derives from its relative autonomy to the 'originality' of a 'national culture', with the result that they are equally well able to find a society's ultimate values reflected in its educational system or to point to an effect of education in the most characteristic and the most diverse features of its culture.

Thus, Jesse R. Pitts holds the 'group of school friends', described as a 'delinquent community', to be 'the prototype of the solidarity groups existing in France beyond the family nucleus and the extended family', seeing, for example, 'aggressivity towards parents and teachers' reappearing in 'the conspiracy of silence towards higher authorities'.⁸ But this does not prevent him seeing in the pedagogic relation a pure reflection of 'cultural themes' of *la France éternelle*: 'in his relationship with the teacher, the child comes into contact with one of the most typical incarnations of French doctrinaire-hierarchical values'.⁹ At school as in the family, in bureaucratic organizations as in the scientific community, there reappears, according to Pitts, as a 'constant charac-

teristic of French society' or 'the French cultural system', a prevailing type of relationship to others and to the world, dogmatically characterized in a batch of abstract words, 'authoritarianism', 'dogmatism', 'abstraction', etc. Failing to analyse the specifically pedagogic mechanisms through which the School contributes towards reproducing the structure of relations between the classes by reproducing the unequal class distribution of cultural capital, the 'culturalist' sociologist is always liable to give way to his penchant for unexplained homologies, inexplicable correspondences and would-be self-explanatory parallelisms. The presumption that a leap of pure intuition can take one straight to the very principle of the cultural system is particularly ineffectual in the case of class societies, where it dispenses one from preliminary analysis of the different types or levels of practice and the different classes' differential relations to those practices.¹⁰

An educational system in fact owes its particular structure as much to the transhistorical demands which define its essential function of inculcating a cultural arbitrary as it does to the state of the system of functions which historically specifies the conditions in which this function is realized. Thus, to see a mere vestige of the 'aristocratic cult of prowess' in the charismatic ideology of 'giftedness' and virtuosity so widespread in France, among students and teachers alike, prevents one from seeing that in its academic form this ideology (together with the practices it underpins or calls forth) constitutes one of the possible ways — doubtless the one best suited to a historical form of the demand for reproduction and legitimation of the class relations — of securing recognition of the legitimacy of pedagogic action, in and through pedagogic action itself. Moreover, in default of an analysis of the variations in this ideology according to the positions occupied by the different categories of agents in the structure of the school system (teachers or students, higher education or secondary education staff, Arts students or Science students, etc.) and according to the relationship these agents maintain with their position as a function of their class membership or social origin, one is condemned to explain a 'sociological' abstraction in terms of a

'historical' abstraction — to relate, for example, the professorial cult of verbal prowess to the national cult of artistic or war-like prowess, not without suggesting that ontogenesis can account for phylogenesis and biography for history:

If we go back to the origins, a man achieved a feat of prowess when he performed an outstanding deed of valour, by a spontaneous, unforeseen decision while at the same time obeying clear, long-standing principles. At Roncevaux, Roland, borne up by his faith in the principles of chivalry, was able to seize the opportunity to transform adverse circumstances into a day of triumph for the spirit (...). So prowess can exist at all social levels. The creation of a piece of jewellery by a Parisian craftsman, the peasant's careful distilling of a liqueur, the civilian's stoicism in the face of Gestapo torture, Marcel Proust's affable courtesy in Madame de Guermantes's salon, are all examples of prowess in modern France.¹¹

When one is trapped in the vicious circles of thematic analysis, tourist routes around 'common themes' which can only lead to 'common-places', the only way out, it seems, is to explain the implicit values of history manuals by a history worthy of a manual.

It might be thought that an analysis like Michel Crozier's, in which he endeavours to apply his theory of the 'bureaucratic phenomenon' to the French educational system, would escape the holistic syncretism of the culturalist anthropologists' bird's-eye view. But in fact, under the guise of correcting the abstraction inherent in generic description of bureaucracy by means of 'concrete' borrowings from culturalist descriptions of 'French culture', this analysis compounds the theoretical errors of culturalism with those of technocratic thinking. Ignoring the relative autonomy of the different sub-systems, Crozier inevitably finds in each of them, and particularly in the educational system, the projection of the most general characteristics of French bureaucracy, which are themselves obtained simply by combining the most general tendencies of modern societies with the most general tendencies of the 'national character'. To posit, at the outset, that 'the educational system of a given society reflects that society's social system' is summarily to reduce the academic institution to its generic function of 'social con-

trol', the common residue of all its specific functions, and to make it impossible to perceive all that an educational system owes to its essential function, in particular its specific way of fulfilling its external functions in a given society at a given moment.^{1 2}

Thus, for example, Crozier is only able to grasp characteristic features of the school institution, such as the ritualization of pedagogic action or the distance between master and pupil, insofar as he recognizes in them manifestations of the logic of bureaucracy, i.e. fails to recognize what is specifically scholastic about them, in that it expresses tendencies or requirements proper to all institutionalized educational systems, even when scarcely or not at all bureaucratized: the tendency towards 'routinization' of pedagogic work, which is expressed in, among other things, the production of intellectual and material instruments specifically devised by and for the School, manuals, corpuses, topics, etc., appears, alongside the first signs of institutionalization, in traditional schools like the rhetoric and philosophy schools of Antiquity or the Koran schools, which exhibit none of the features of bureaucratic organization.^{1 3} And if one thinks of the *epideixis* of the Sophists, small-scale educational entrepreneurs still obliged to resort to prophetic techniques for capturing an audience in order to set up a pedagogic relationship, or the disconcertion techniques with which the Zen masters imposed their spiritual authority on an aristocratic clientele, it may be doubted whether teacherly 'prowess' and its distancing effect can be better understood in terms of 'the existence of a gap between the teacher and the pupil which reproduce the stratification of the bureaucratic system' than by reference to a functional requirement which is inherent in all pedagogic action insofar as this action presupposes and must produce recognition of the teacher's pedagogic authority, whether personal or delegated by the institution.

Similarly, when Crozier sees in the institutional guarantees of university 'independence' no more than a form of the guarantees statutorily written into the bureaucratic definition of official posts, he lumps together two facts as irreducible to one another as the systems of relations to which they belong, on the one hand the autonomy which

teachers have claimed and obtained as civil servants subject to the common legislation of a Government department, and on the other hand, the pedagogic autonomy inherited from the medieval 'corporation'.^{1 4} Only the characteristic tendency of every educational system, bureaucratized or not, to reinterpret and retranslate external demands in accordance with its essential function, and not some mechanical inertia or perverse persistence, can account for the resistance which a teaching corps tends to put up against any external definition of its tasks, in the name of an ethic of conviction which refuses to measure the consequences of practice by any criteria other than the corps's own values and in the name of an ideology of 'mastery' and its rights which draws strength from invoking the traditions of autonomy bequeathed by a relatively autonomous history. In short, if it is not acknowledged that a particular system of education is defined by a particular type and degree of autonomy, one tends to describe as simple specifications of generic processes, such as the tendency towards bureaucratization, characteristics of the functioning of the institution and of the agents' practice which stem from the power given to the School to fulfil its external functions in accordance with the principles defining its essential function of inculcation.

To express all the relations between the systems in terms of the metaphorical scheme of 'reflection' or, worse, of reflections reflecting each other, is to dissolve into undifferentiatedness the differential functions the different systems perform in their relations with the different social classes. Thus analyses of the bureaucracy and of its relations with the educational system which refer the practice and values of the administrative bodies of the State to the training given by the different *grandes écoles* ignore the fact that the ex-students of these schools bring into the State apparatus, which the system of *grandes écoles* enables them to monopolize, dispositions and values which they owe at least as much to their membership in certain fractions of the dominant classes (distance from role, flight into abstraction, etc.) as to their educational training. Similarly, one is bound to see no more than a product of bureaucratic organization in the most typical attitudes of

the lower categories of administrative staff, whether it be the tendency to formalism, punctuality fetishism, or rigid adherence to the rules, so long as one fails to note that all these traits, which may also manifest themselves outside the bureaucratic situation, express, in the logic of that situation, the system of dispositions (ethos) — probity, meticulousness, propensity to moral indignation. — which the members of the petty bourgeoisie owe to their class position and which would be sufficient to predispose them to espouse the values of public service and the 'virtues' demanded by the bureaucratic order even if administrative careers were not also their means par excellence of social advancement. By the same token, the disposition which middle-class students or middle-rank teachers, and a fortiori, students whose fathers are middle-rank teachers, manifest towards education — e.g. cultural willingness or esteem for hard work — cannot be understood unless the system of scholastic values is brought into relation with the middle-class ethos, the principle of the value the middle classes set on scholastic values. In short, only on condition that one mediates the structure of relations between the sub-systems through the structure of relations between the classes is it possible to grasp, beyond the too obvious similarities, the true homologies between the bureaucracy and the educational system, by bringing to light the homology of their relations with the social classes. Thus, by suggesting with the amorphous notion of 'social control' that the educational system performs an indivisible, undifferentiated function for 'society as a whole', all-purpose functionalism tends to conceal the fact that a system which helps to reproduce the structure of class relations indeed serves 'Society', in the sense of the social order', and through it the educational interests of the classes which benefit from that order.

But it is impossible to account fully for the success of all the holistic philosophies inspired by a common indifference to differences, without taking into account the specifically intellectual functions of their silences and reticences, denials and slips or, conversely, the displacements and transfers they make towards the themes of 'homogenization', 'massification' or 'globalization'. Thus obedience to the principles

of the dominant ideology manages to impose itself on intellectuals in the form of obedience to the conventions and proprieties of the intellectual world. It is no accident that in present-day France reference to social classes tends to appear, depending on the group or the conjuncture, as an ideological slant which the distinguished guardians of polite-society objectivism adopt with an elegant pout; as the solecism of a provincial incapable of coming up to date, deplored by the licensed representatives of an imported sociology and left far behind by the shock-troops of every avant-garde, who ceaselessly scan the horizon of 'modernity' for fear of missing an ideological or theoretical revolution, ever ready to spot the newest-born of the 'new classes', 'new alienations' or 'new contradictions'; as a philistine sacrilege or Boeotian blunder deserving the commiseration of the proselytes of the new mysteries of art and culture; or as an indisputable platitude, unworthy of serious argument but liable to arouse the unpleasant dissensions so elegantly avoided by 'anthropological' talk of the profundities of the common treasury. If we did not know that the intellectual or even political significance of the ideology proper to a category of intellectuals can never be deduced directly from that category's position in the structure of class relations but always owes something to the position it occupies in the intellectual field, it would be impossible to understand how indifference to class differences, whose conservative function we have shown, can, without contradiction, pervade ideologies which make ostentatious sacrifice to ritual or incantatory invocation of the class struggle.

Some of the most radical 'critiques' of the educational system find in 'contestation' of the generic function of every educational system considered as an instrument of inculcation the means of masking the class functions which this function fulfils: in emphasizing the frustrations inherent in all socialization, not least, of course, sexual frustrations, much more than the specific form of the constraints or privations which, even the most generic ones, bear differentially on the different social classes, these ideologies lead to a concordial denunciation of pedagogic action conceived as an undifferentiated action of repression

and so to an ecumenical revolt against the repressive action of 'society', reduced to an impressionistic superimposition of political, bureaucratic, university and family hierarchies. It is sufficient to see that these ideologies are all based on the search for and denunciation of *generic alienations*, spuriously specified by tragic reference to 'modernity', to perceive that in surrendering to a syncretic representation of the relations of domination which leads them to establish undifferentiated revolt against the mandarin-professor as the principle of a generalized subversion of hierarchies, they fail, like technocratic or culturalist thinking, to grasp the relative autonomy and dependence of the educational system with respect to the social classes.¹⁵

THE IDEOLOGICAL FUNCTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Having discovered that it is possible to relate to the same principle all the inadequacies to be found in analyses of the educational system that are based on social philosophies as opposed, in appearance, as evolutionist economism and cultural relativism, one is obliged to seek the principle of a theoretical construction capable of rectifying and accounting for these inadequacies. But it is not sufficient to perceive the shortcomings common to both approaches in order to arrive at the objective truth of the relationship between the relative autonomy of the educational system and its dependence on the structure of class relations: how is one to take account of the relative autonomy the School owes to its essential function, without letting slip the class functions it necessarily fulfils in a society divided into classes? In neglecting to analyse the specific, systematic characteristics the educational system owes to its essential function of inculcation, is one not, paradoxically, prevented from posing the question of the external functions the educational system fulfils in fulfilling its essential function and, more subtly, the question of its ideological function of concealing the relationship between its essential function and the external functions of its essential function?

One of the reasons why it is not easy to observe simultaneously the educational system's relative autonomy and its dependence on class relations, is that a conceptual grasp of the class functions of the educational system has been associated, in the theoretical tradition, with an instrumentalist representation of the relations between the School and the dominant classes, while analysis of the structural and operating characteristics that the educational system owes to its essential function has almost always gone hand in hand with blindness to the relations between the School and the social classes, as if ascertaining the fact of autonomy presupposed the illusion of the educational system's neutrality. To believe that the meaning of any element in an educational system is exhausted merely by relating it directly to a reduced definition of the interests of the dominant classes, without inquiring into the contribution this system makes, qua system, towards reproducing the structure of class relations, is an easy way of obtaining, by a sort of pessimistic finalism, the facile answers of an explanation at once ad hoc and all purpose. Just as refusal to recognize the relative autonomy of the State apparatus leads one to ignore some of the best-hidden services this apparatus renders to the dominant classes in accrediting, thanks to its autonomy, the representation of the State as an umpire, so schematic denunciations of the 'class University' which posit, before any analysis, the identity 'in the last analysis' of school culture and the culture of the dominant classes, of cultural inculcation and ideological indoctrination, or pedagogic authority and political power, prohibit analysis of the mechanisms through which equivalences that structural lags, functional duplicities and ideological displacements make possible are indirectly and mediately brought about.

Durkheim, in conceiving the relative autonomy of the educational system as the power to reinterpret external demands and take advantage of historical opportunities so as to fulfil its internal logic, at least obtained the means of understanding the tendency to self-reproduction which characterizes academic institutions, and the historical recurrence of the practices linked to the demands inherent in the institution or of the tendencies inherent in a body of professional

teachers.¹⁶ In his preface to Durkheim's *L'évolution pédagogique en France*, Halbwachs saw the work's chief merit in the fact that Durkheim related the longevity of university traditions to the educational system's 'own life':

The organs of education are, in every age, connected with the other institutions of the social body, with customs and beliefs, with the great currents of thought. But they also have a life of their own, an evolution which is relatively autonomous in the course of which they conserve many features of their former structure. Sometimes they defend themselves against the influences exerted on them from outside, leaning on their past for support. It is impossible to understand, for example, the division of the universities into faculties, the systems of examinations and degrees, boarding-school life, school discipline, without going back a long way into the past, to the period of the construction of the institution whose forms, once created, tend to persist through time, either by a sort of inertia or because they manage to adapt to new conditions. Considered from this standpoint, the pedagogical organization appears to us as more hostile to change, more conservative and traditional perhaps than the Church itself, because it has the function of transmitting to new generations a culture whose roots lie in a remote past.

Because pedagogic work (whether performed by the School, a Church or a Party) has the effect of producing individuals durably and systematically modified by a prolonged and systematic transformative action tending to endow them with the same durable, transposable training (*habitus*), i.e. with common schemes of thought, perception, appreciation and action; because the serial production of identically programmed individuals demands and historically gives rise to the production of programming agents themselves identically programmed and of standardized conserving and transmitting instruments; because the length of time necessary for the advent of a systematic transformation of the transformative action is at least equal to the time required for serial production of transformed reproducers, i.e. agents capable of exerting a transformative action reproductive of the training they themselves have received; because, above all, the educational institution is the only one in full possession, by virtue of its essential function, of the power to select and train, by an action exerted throughout the

period of apprenticeship, those to whom it entrusts the task of perpetuating it and is therefore in the best position, by definition, to impose the norms of its self-perpetuation, if only by using its power to reinterpret external demands; and finally because teachers constitute the most finished products of the system of production which it is, *inter alia*, their task to reproduce — it is understandable that, as Durkheim noted, educational institutions have a relatively autonomous history and that the tempo of the transformation of academic institutions and culture is particularly slow. The fact remains that if one fails to relate the relative autonomy of the educational system and its history to the social conditions of the performance of its essential function, one is condemned, as Halbwach's text and Durkheim's very undertaking show, to put forward a circular explanation of the relative autonomy of the system in terms of the relative autonomy of its history and vice versa.

The generic characteristics every educational system owes to its essential function of inculcation and to its relative autonomy cannot be fully explained without taking into account the objective conditions which, at a given moment, enable an educational system to achieve a determinate degree and particular type of autonomy. It is therefore necessary to construct the system of relations between the educational system and the other sub-systems, specifying those relations by reference to the structure of class relations, in order to perceive that the relative autonomy of the educational system is always the counterpart of a dependence hidden to a greater or lesser extent by the practices and ideology authorized by that autonomy. To put it another way, to a given degree and type of autonomy, i.e. to a determinate form of correspondence between the essential function and the external functions, there always correspond a determinate type and degree of dependence on the other systems, i.e. in the last analysis, on the structure of class relations.¹⁷

If the academic institution observed by Durkheim could appear to him as even more conservative than the Church, this is because it was enabled to push its transhistorical tendency to autonomization so far

only by the fact that pedagogic conservatism then fulfilled its function of social conservation with an efficacy that much greater because it remained better concealed. Thus, failing to analyse the social conditions which made possible the perfect match, characteristic of traditional education, between the mode of inculcation and the content inculcated, Durkheim was led to include in the essential function of every educational system, defined as 'the conservation of a culture inherited from the past', what is no more than a particular, although historically very frequent, combination of the essential function and the external functions.¹⁸ When the culture that the School objectively has the function of conserving, inculcating and consecrating tends to be reduced to the relation to culture that is invested with a social function of distinction by the mere fact that the conditions for acquiring it are monopolized by the dominant classes, *pedagogic conservatism*, which in its extreme form, gives the educational system no other goal than that of conserving itself in self-identity, is the best ally of *social and political conservatism*, since, under the guise of defending the interests of a particular corps and autonomizing the aims of a particular institution, it contributes by its direct and indirect effects to the maintenance of 'the social order'. The educational system has never been able to present more completely the illusion of absolute autonomy with respect to all external demands, and in particular with respect to the interests of the dominant classes, than when the consonance between its essential function of inculcation, its function of conserving culture and its function of conserving 'the social order' was so perfect that its dependence on the objective interests of the dominant classes could remain unnoticed in the happy unconsciousness of elective affinities. So long as nothing intervenes to disturb that harmony, the system can in a sense escape history by enclosing itself in the production of its reproducers as in a cycle of eternal recurrence, since it is, paradoxically, by ignoring all demands other than that of its own reproduction that it most effectively contributes to the reproduction of the social order.¹⁹ Only the functional relationship between the pedagogic conservatism of a system dominated by its obsession with its self-perpetuation and

social conservatism can explain the constant support which the conservers of university order, for example the champions of Latin, the agrégation or the literary thesis, the traditional pillars of the literate relation to culture and of the pedagogy by default inherent in humanist teaching of the 'humanities', have always received and still receive in France from the most conservative fractions of the dominant classes.²⁰

Given that the historical and social conditions defining the limits of the relative autonomy an educational system owes to its essential function define at the same time the external functions of its essential function, every educational system is characterized by a *functional duplicity* which is actualized in full in the case of traditional systems, where the tendency towards conservation of the system and of the culture it conserves, encounters an external demand for social conservation. It is precisely its relative autonomy that enables the traditional educational system to make a specific contribution towards reproducing the structure of class relations, since it need only obey its own rules in order to obey, additionally, the external imperatives defining its function of legitimating the established order, that is, to fulfil simultaneously its social function of reproducing the class relations, by ensuring the hereditary transmission of cultural capital, and its ideological function of concealing that social function by accrediting the illusion of its absolute autonomy. Thus, the full definition of the relative autonomy of the educational system with respect to the interests of the dominant classes must always take into account the specific services this relative autonomy performs for the perpetuation of the class relations: it is precisely its peculiar ability to autonomize its functioning and secure recognition of its legitimacy by accrediting the representation of its neutrality that gives the educational system its peculiar ability to mask the contribution it makes towards reproducing the class distribution of cultural capital, the concealment of this service being not the least of the services its relative autonomy enables it to perform for the conservation of the established order.²¹ The educational system succeeds so perfectly in fulfilling its ideological function of legitimating the established order only because this masterpiece of

social mechanics succeeds in hiding, as if by the interlocking of false-bottomed boxes, the relations which, in a class society, unite the function of inculcation, i.e. the work of intellectual and moral integration, with the function of conserving the structure of class relations characteristic of that society.²²

So it is, for example, that, even more than the corps of State officials, the corps of teachers sets the moral authority of its pedagogic ministry — an authority all the greater for seeming to owe nothing to an academic institution which itself seems to owe nothing to the State or society — to work in the service of the ideology of academic freedom and scholastic equity. If teachers' pedagogic practices or professional ideologies are never directly or totally reducible or irreducible to those agents' class origin and class membership, the reason is that, as French educational history shows, they express in their polysemy and functional polyvalence the structural coincidence between the ethos the agents owe to their original and present social class and the conditions of actualization of that ethos which are objectively inscribed in the functioning of that institution and in the structure of its relations with the dominant classes.²³

Thus, primary-school teachers have no difficulty in reformulating in the universalistic ideology of *l'Ecole libératrice* a Jacobin disposition towards an ethical demand for formal equality of opportunity which they derive from their class origin and class membership and which, in the social history of France, has become inseparable from its retranslation into the school ideology of social salvation through scholastic merit. Similarly, the representation of scholastic virtues and excellence which still guides pedagogic practices in French secondary education, even in the sciences, reproduces, not without bearing the mark of petty-bourgeois or academic reinterpretation, a social definition of intellectual and human excellence in which the generic inclination of the privileged classes towards the cult of manners is specified in accordance with the norms of an aristocratic tradition of fashionable elegance and literary good taste perpetuated by a system of education impregnated with Jesuit values. Like the scale of dominant values, the

scholastic hierarchy of abilities is organized in accordance with the oppositions between the 'brilliant' and the 'serious', the 'elegant' and the 'laboured', the 'distinguished' and the 'vulgar', 'general culture' and 'pedantry', in short, between polytechnical ease and technical mastery²⁴ — dichotomies generated by a classificatory principle so powerful that, capable of specification for every field and moment, it can organize all the hierarchies and interlockings of hierarchies of the university world and consecrate social distinctions by constituting them as academic distinctions. The opposition between the student 'good at composition' and the student 'good at French' is just one actualization of the same principle of division which opposes the general specialists from the grandes écoles (ENS, Polytechnique, ENA) to the specialists produced by the second-rank schools, that is, the upper bourgeoisie to the petty bourgeoisie and the 'front door' to the 'back door'.²⁵

As for higher education teachers, sons of petty bourgeois who owe their exceptional social advancement to their ability to turn a first-rate pupil's docile doggedness into academic ease by dint of doggedness and docility, or sons of middle or upper bourgeois who have had to exhibit at least the appearance of renouncing the temporal profits promised by their birth in order to impose the image of their university seriousness, their every practice reveals the tension between the aristocratic values imposed on the French educational system both by its own tradition and by its relations with the privileged classes, and the petty-bourgeois values that are encouraged, even in those teachers not drawing them directly from their social origin, by a system which, by virtue of its function and its position in relation to power, condemns its agents to occupy a subordinate rank in the hierarchy of the fractions of the dominant classes.²⁶ An institution which authorizes and encourages interchangeable transmitting agents to divert the authority of the institution so as to give the illusion of inimitable creation provides a particularly favourable terrain for the play of the compounded cross-censorships permitted by successive and sometimes simultaneous reference to the scholastic cult of brio and the academic cult of the golden mean. Higher education teachers thus find in the very ambiguities of an

ideology in which are expressed both the social duality of recruitment to the teaching body and the ambivalence of the objective definition of the professional post, the instrument best adapted to repress, without self-contradiction, all deviations from two systems of norms which are contradictory in more than one respect. One sees how lordly contempt for the laboured virtues of the intellectual worker, the university retranslation of the aristocratism of talent – which itself retranslates the aristocratic ideology of birth in conformity with the requirements of bourgeois heredity – can be allied with moral reproof of success immediately perceived as worldly compromise, and with punctilious defence of status rights, even against the rights of competence – so many attitudes which express in a specifically university form the petty-bourgeois propensity to derive comfort from an apotropaic affirmation of universal mediocrity. Thus, all university norms, those which preside over the selection of students or the co-option of colleagues as well as those which govern the production of lectures, theses and even purportedly scientific works, always tend to favour the success, at least within the institution, of a modal type of man and work, defined by a double negation, i.e. brilliance without originality and heaviness without scientific weight, or, if you will, the pedantry of lightness and the coquetry of erudition.

Although it is almost always dominated by the bourgeois ideology of grace and giftedness, the petty-bourgeois ideology of laborious asceticism succeeds in profoundly marking scholastic practices and the judgements passed on them, because it encounters and reactivates a tendency towards ethical justification by merit which, even when relegated or repressed, is inherent in the dominant ideology. But the syncretism of university ethics remains inexplicable unless it is seen that the relationship of subordination and complementarity which is set up between petty-bourgeois and big-bourgeois ideology re-produces (in both senses), in the relatively autonomous logic of the academic institution, a relationship of antagonistic alliance, observed in other fields and particularly in politics, between the petty bourgeoisie and the dominant fractions of the bourgeoisie. Predisposed, by its two-fold opposition to

the working classes and to the dominant classes, to serve the maintenance of the moral, cultural and political order, and through it those whom that order serves, the petty bourgeoisie is condemned by the division of labour to serve zealously in the subordinate and middle-rank posts of the bureaucracies responsible for maintaining order, whether by inculcating order or by calling to order those who have not internalized it.²⁷

It is therefore necessary to bring the structural and operating properties an educational system owes to its essential function and to the external functions of its essential function into relation with the socially conditioned dispositions the agents (transmitters or receivers) owe to their class origin and class membership and to the position they occupy in the institution, in order to understand adequately the nature of the relationship between the educational system and the structure of class relations, and to bring to light – without falling into any metaphysics of the harmony of the spheres or providentialism of the best or the worst – correspondences, homologies or coincidences reducible in the last analysis to convergences of interest, ideological alliances and affinities between habitus.²⁸ Even if it is not feasible to construct the interminable discourse which would undertake in each case to run through the complete network of the relations which give each relation its complete meaning, it is sufficient to grasp, with respect to a particular relation, the system of circular relations which unite *structures* and *practices*, through the mediation of habitus, qua products of the structures, producers of practices and reproducers of the structures, in order to define the limits of validity (i.e. the validity within those limits) of an abstract expression such as 'the system of relations between the educational system and the structure of class relations'; by the same token one posits the principle of the empirical work which leads the way out of the fashionable, fictitious dilemma of mechanical pan-structuralism and affirmation of the inalienable rights of the creative subject or the historical agent.²⁹ Insofar as it defines the primordial conditions of production of the differences between habitus, the structure of class relations, regarded as a field of forces which

expresses itself both in directly economic and political antagonisms and in a system of symbolic positions and oppositions, supplies the explanatory principle of the systematic characteristics which the practice of the agents of a determinate class takes on in the different areas of activity, even if that practice owes its specific form in each case to the laws proper to each of the sub-systems considered.³⁰ Thus, if it is not seen that the relationship between the various sub-systems is established only through the mediation of class membership, i.e. through the actions of agents disposed to actualize the same basic types of habitus in the most diverse practices (fertility, marriage, economic, political or educational conduct), one is in danger of reifying abstract structures by reducing the relationship between these sub-systems to the logical formula enabling any one of them to be derived from any other; or, worse, one is in danger of reconstituting the appearances of the real functioning of the 'social system', as Parsons does, only by giving the sub-systems the anthropomorphic shape of agents linked to one another by exchanges of services and so contributing to the smooth functioning of the system which is nothing other than the product of their abstract compounding.³¹

If, in the particular case of the relationship between the School and the social classes, the harmony appears to be perfect, this is because the objective structures produce class habitus and in particular the dispositions and predispositions which, in generating practices adapted to these structures, enable the structures to function and be perpetuated: for example, the disposition to make use of the School and the predispositions to succeed in it depend, as we have seen, on the objective chances of using it and succeeding in it that are attached to the different social classes, these dispositions and predispositions in turn constituting one of the most important factors in the perpetuation of the structure of educational chances as an objectively graspable manifestation of the relationship between the educational system and the structure of class relations. Even the negative dispositions and predispositions leading to self-elimination, such as, for example, self-depreciation, devalorization of the School and its sanctions or resigned

expectation of failure or exclusion may be understood as unconscious anticipation of the sanctions the School objectively has in store for the dominated classes. More profoundly, only an adequate theory of the habitus, as the site of the internalization of externality and the externalization of internality, can fully bring to light the social conditions of performance of the function of legitimating the social order, doubtless the best concealed of all the functions of the School. Because the traditional system of education manages to present the illusion that its action of inculcation is entirely responsible for producing the cultivated habitus, or, by an apparent contradiction, that it owes its differential efficacy exclusively to the innate abilities of those who undergo it, and that it is therefore independent of class determinations — whereas it tends towards the limit of merely confirming and strengthening a class habitus which, constituted outside the School, is the basis of all scholastic acquirements — it contributes irreplaceably towards perpetuating the structure of class relations and, simultaneously, legitimating it, by concealing the fact that the scholastic hierarchies it produces reproduce social hierarchies.³² To be persuaded that everything predisposes a traditional educational system to serve a function of social conservation, one only has to recall, among other things, the affinity between the culture it inculcates, its manner of inculcating it and the manner of possessing it which this mode of acquisition presupposes and produces, and between this set of features and the social characteristics of the public in whom it inculcates this culture, these characteristics themselves being interdependent with the pedagogic and cultural dispositions the inculcating agents derive from their social origin, training, position in the institution, and class membership. Given the complexity of the network of relations through which the function of legitimating the social order is accomplished, it would clearly be vain to claim to localize its performance in one mechanism or one sector of the educational system. However, in a class society in which the School shares the task of reproducing that product of history which constitutes at a given moment the legitimate model of the cultivated disposition with families unequally endowed with cultural capital and the disposi-

tion to make use of it, nothing better serves the pedagogic interests of the dominant classes than the pedagogic 'laissez-faire' characteristic of traditional teaching, since this action by default, immediately efficacious and, by definition, ungraspable, seems predestined to serve the function of legitimating the social order.

It is clear how naive it would be to reduce all the functions of the educational system to the function of political or religious indoctrination which can itself be carried on with varying degrees of latency, depending on the mode of inculcation. This confusion, inherent in most analyses of the political function of the School, is all the more pernicious in that the ostentatious refusal of the function of indoctrination or, at least, of the most overt forms of political propaganda and 'civic instruction' can in turn fulfil an ideological function in concealing the function of legitimation of the social order when, as the French tradition of the lay, liberal or libertarian University demonstrates particularly well, declared neutrality towards ethical and political creeds or even flaunted hostility towards the State authorities enhances the invisibility of the contribution the educational system is alone in a position to render the established order.

Thus, to understand that the social effects of the common or learned illusions which are sociologically implied in the system of relations between the educational system and the structure of class relations are not illusory, it is necessary to go back to the principle which governs this system of relations. Legitimation of the established order by the School presupposes social recognition of the legitimacy of the School, a recognition resting in turn on misrecognition of the delegation of authority which establishes that legitimacy or, more precisely, on misrecognition of the social conditions of a harmony between structures and habitus sufficiently perfect to engender misrecognition of the habitus as a product reproducing what produces it and correlative recognition of the structure of the order thus reproduced. Thus, the educational system objectively tends, by concealing the objective truth of its functioning, to produce the ideological justification of the order it reproduces by its functioning.

It is no accident that so many sociologists, victims of the ideological effect of the School, are inclined to isolate dispositions and predispositions towards education — 'hopes', 'aspirations', 'motivations', 'will-power' — from their social conditions of production: forgetting that objective conditions determine both aspirations and the degree to which they can be satisfied, they think themselves entitled to proclaim the best of all possible worlds when, after a longitudinal study of school careers, they find that, as if by a pre-established harmony, individuals hoped for nothing they have not obtained and obtained nothing they did not hope for. Reproving the academics who always feel 'a sense of guilt on reading the statistics of university students' social origins', M. Vermot-Gauchy retorts that 'it has not occurred to them that genuine democratization perhaps consists in favouring the development of those forms of education best suited to the characteristics and wishes of children from modest or uncultured backgrounds', and adds: 'It is of little consequence to them that by social tradition, aptitude acquired by virtue of belonging to a certain background, etc., the intellectually brilliant son of a labourer would rather aim for the old practical schools or old national vocational schools and (if he has sufficient ability) get a technician's or engineer's diploma from the *Arts et Métiers*, for example, while a doctor's son prefers a classical education with a view to entering the faculties.'³³ Blessed, then, are 'modest' folk who, when all is said and done, aspire in their modesty to nothing but what they have; and praise be to 'the social order' which refuses to hurt them by calling them to over-ambitious destinies, as little suited to their abilities as to their aspirations.

Is Dr Pangloss less terrifying as a planner than as a metaphysician? Convinced that calculation suffices to produce the best of all possible educational worlds in the best of all possible societies, the new optimistic philosophers of the social order return to the language of all sociodicies, which are designed to convince people that the established order is what it ought to be since the apparent victims of that order require no call to order (i.e. to what they ought to be) before they agree to be what they ought to be. Our optimists can only pass over in

silence, because they tacitly assume it, the function of legitimating and conserving the established order which the School performs when it persuades the classes it excludes of the legitimacy of their exclusion, by preventing them from seeing and contesting the principles in whose name it excludes them. The verdicts of the academic tribunal are so decisive only because they impose simultaneously conviction and ignorance of the social grounds of conviction. For social destiny to be changed into free vocation or personal merit, as in the Platonic myth in which the souls which have chosen their 'lot' must drink the water of the river of oblivion before returning to earth to live out the destiny which has befallen them, it is necessary and sufficient that the School, 'the hierophant of Necessity', should succeed in convincing individuals that they have themselves chosen or won the destinies which social destiny has assigned to them in advance. Better than the political religions whose most constant function was, as Weber says, to provide the privileged classes with a theodicy of their privilege, better than the soteriologies of the hereafter which helped to perpetuate the social order by promising a posthumous subversion of that order, better than a doctrine like that of *karma*, which Weber saw as the masterpiece of the social theodicies, since it justified the social quality of each individual within the caste system by his degree of religious qualification in the transmigration cycle, the School today succeeds, with the ideology of natural 'gifts' and innate 'tastes', in legitimating the circular reproduction of social hierarchies and educational hierarchies.

Thus, the most hidden and most specific function of the educational system consists in hiding its objective function, that is, masking the objective truth of its relationship to the structure of class relations.³⁴ To be convinced that this is so, one only has to listen to a consistent planner, discussing the most reliable way of selecting in advance students likely to succeed academically and so of increasing the technical efficiency of the educational system:

Before looking at the constituent elements of selection policy, it is appropriate to consider which characteristics of a candidate for university admission may

legitimately be taken into consideration in the selection process. (...) In a democracy, institutions supported out of public funds ought not directly and openly to select on the basis of some of them. Amongst the characteristics it would not normally be legitimate to pay attention to in the selection process are sex, sibling order, age above the minimum (or length of time spent at school), physical appearance, accent or intonation, socio-economic status of parent, and prestige of last school attended. Reasons for the inclusion of some of these characteristics in such a list are self-evident. Even if, for example, it could be shown that those with parents who were low in the social hierarchy tended to be 'bad risks' in terms of academic performance at universities, a direct and open bias of selection policy against such candidates would be unacceptable.³⁵

In short, the time (hence money) wasted is also the price that has to be paid for the continued masking of the relationship between social origin and academic performance, since an attempt to do more cheaply and more rapidly what the system will do in any case, would bring to light and, by the same token, annul a function which can be carried on only if it remains hidden. It is always at the cost of expenditure or wasted time that the educational system legitimates the transmission of power from one generation to another by concealing the relationship between the social starting point and social point of arrival of the educational trajectory, thanks to what is, ultimately, merely a certification effect made possible by the ostentatious and sometimes hyperbolic length of apprenticeship. More generally, if the lost time is not to be written off as pure loss, this is because it is the site of a transformation of dispositions towards the system and its sanctions which is indispensable to the operation of the system and the performance of its functions. The difference between deferred self-elimination and immediate elimination on the basis of a forecast of the objective chances of elimination, is the time required for the excluded to persuade themselves of the legitimacy of their exclusion. If educational systems are nowadays increasingly resorting to the 'soft approach' to eliminate the classes most distant from school culture, despite its greater cost in time and material, the reason is that, as an institution of symbolic government condemned to disappoint in some the aspirations it en-

courages in all, the educational system must give itself the means of obtaining recognition of the legitimacy of its sanctions and their social effects, so that machinery and techniques for organized, explicit manipulation cannot fail to make their appearance when exclusion no longer suffices per se to impose internalization of the legitimacy of exclusion.³⁶

Thus, the educational system, with the ideologies and effects which its relative autonomy engenders, is for bourgeois society in its present phase what other forms of legitimation of the social order and of hereditary transmission of privileges were for social formations differing both in the specific form of the relations and antagonisms between the classes and in the nature of the privilege transmitted: does it not contribute towards persuading each social subject to stay in the place which falls to him *by nature*, to know his place and hold to it, *ta heatou prattein*, as Plato put it? Unable to invoke the right of blood — which his class historically denied the aristocracy — nor the rights of Nature — a weapon once used against the distinctions of nobility but liable to backfire against bourgeois 'distinction' — nor the ascetic virtues which enabled the first-generation entrepreneurs to justify their success by their merit, the inheritor of bourgeois privileges must today appeal to the academic certification which attests at once his gifts and his merits. The unnatural idea of culture by birth presupposes and produces blindness to the functions of the educational institution which ensures the profitability of cultural capital and legitimates its transmission by dissimulating the fact that it performs this function. Thus, in a society in which the obtaining of social privileges depends more and more closely on possession of academic credentials, the School does not only have the function of ensuring discreet succession to a bourgeois estate which can no longer be transmitted directly and openly. This privileged instrument of the bourgeois sociodicy which confers on the privileged the supreme privilege of not seeing themselves as privileged manages the more easily to convince the disinherited that they owe their scholastic and social destiny to their lack of gifts or merits, because in matters of culture absolute dispossession excludes awareness of being dispossessed.

NOTES

1. This definition of formal educational rationality might be challenged on the grounds that the demands of the economic system are no longer formulated in terms of narrow specialization but that the emphasis is, on the contrary, on the aptitude for vocational re-adaptation. But this is in fact a new type of vocational speciality, required by a new state of the demand of the economic system. Despite this broadening of the definition, the capacity to produce occupationally usable skills remains the measure of the rationality of the educational system.

2. The formal equivalence between their university systems and diplomas makes comparison between France and Algeria particularly significant in this respect: 'In a society where 57% of the people have no certificate of general education and 98% no certificate of technical education, possession of a C.A.P. (trade proficiency certificate) or C.E.P. (primary school certificate) gives an immense advantage in economic competition; an infinitesimal difference of level, such as that between someone who can read and someone who can both read and write, produces a disproportionate difference in chances of social success' (P. Bourdieu, *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie*, Paris, Mouton, 1962, pp. 272-73). Similarly, for a girl, possession of a diploma has a very different value depending on the rate of schooling of the female population: for example, in Algeria in 1960, 70 percent of the girls with a CEP or a higher certificate were in non-manual jobs; the percentage of them not in employment was insignificant (*Ibid.*, p. 208).

3. What is true of statistical indicators is equally true of the seemingly most specific indices of the organization and operation of the school system: an analysis of the content of curricula and school manuals which ignored the real conditions of their implementation, or a study of State control of universities, university decentralization or the recruitment of administrators and teachers based solely on the juridical texts, would be as misleading as a study of religious behaviour which presumed to infer the believers' real practice from the canonical texts even when it is defined by formally identical texts.

'Academic freedom' is in reality a function of the relationships between the university system and political or religious power. In France, the appointment of a faculty lecturer is nominally a Ministry decision but, since it is a foregone conclusion that the candidate proposed by the Faculty Board will be appointed, recruitment is in fact based on co-option, with full-scale canvassing of colleagues. Conversely, in other countries, many academic elections are merely formal procedures ratifying choices already made. In Italy, recruitment officially takes place by competition, but this device barely conceals the play of cliques and influences inside and outside the university.

4. J. A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, London, Unwin, 4th edn, 1954, pp. 152-55.

5. M. Vermot-Gauchy, *L'éducation nationale dans la France de demain*, Futuribles, Monaco, Ed. du Rocher, 1965, p. 75.

6. The demand for education manifests itself in two phases, first at the point of entry to the school system as a demand for schooling, with the demands for the labour market, which sanctions superfluous graduates with unemployment or under-employment, manifesting themselves only at a later stage. The demand for schooling, which is reflected in a broadening of the social base of admissions and longer attendance, obeys regularities partially independent of the imperatives of number and skill which educational planning seeks to satisfy. It is this demand (closely tied to higher living standards and changing attitudes to education among the different social classes), which the Robbins Report, less confident than M. Vermot-Gauchy of the predictability of the technical demand of the labour market (dependent on the ups and downs of growth and on technological innovations unpredictable beyond the very short term), takes as a basis for forecasting student numbers (Great Britain Committee on Higher Education, op. cit., note 30, chapter 3).

7. Hence knowledge of the operation of the school system and of the different social classes' attitudes towards education provides the only basis for forecasting when one wants to know, not what the desirable distribution of the school population among the various types and levels of education might be, but what it is likely to be at a given date.

8. J. R. Pitts, 'Continuité et changement au sein de la France bourgeoise', *A la recherche de la France*, Paris, Ed. du Seuil, 1963.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 288.

10. Thus the Japanese specialists who criticized Ruth Benedict's work, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, mainly attacked the simplifications and approximations authorized by such use of the 'holistic' approach. Who, they ask, is the Japanese designated at some points as 'the proverbial man in the street' and elsewhere as 'everyone' or 'anybody'? Minima finds that 'most of her patterns apply to the military and the fascist cliques during the last war' and Watsuji considers that her patterns are not assignable to any concrete group in the national society' Most of the commentators are unsure how her cultural generalizations 'are related to the very evident heterogeneity of Japanese society' (J. W. Bennett and M. Nagai, 'The Japanese Critique of the Methodology of Benedict's *Chrysanthemum and the Sword*', *American Anthropologist*, 55, 1953, pp. 404-11, esp. 406-7).

11. Pitts, 'Continuité et changement', pp. 273 and 274.

12. M. Crozier, *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*, London, Tavistock, 1964, p. 238. He continues: If our French model of organizational control is applicable,

we should find, in the French educational system, the main characteristic patterns of the bureaucratic system of organization which we have analyzed, since they all revolve around the problem of social control and could not remain in existence without being handed down and reinforced by education.'

13. The Sophists, the first professional teachers (Plato, *Protagoras*, 317 b: 'I acknowledge that I am a professional teacher - *sophistes* - an educator of men'), gave their pupils selected extracts from the great poets (*Protagoras*, 325 e) and started to distribute copies of their own writings as 'models' (*paradeigmata*) (see R. Pfeifer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1968, p. 31).

14. 'French teachers received good tenure very early - they were probably the first in the world to do so. They have been able gradually to secure for themselves the most perfect independence, as long, of course, as they keep within the limits set by the rules' (Crozier, p. 240-41).

15. Sharing with their favourite enemy, technocracy, an indifference to differences, 'critical' ideologies differ from it only in the application they make of this disposition when, consigning sociology to the pursuit of generic alienations, they build up an ideological system in which the elements most frequently attested are a predilection for sociological categorizations capable of inducing the illusion of homogeneity ('readership', 'age group', 'youth', if not 'the users of hospitals, housing estates or public transport') or a fascinated interest in the homogenizing and alienating effects of television or the 'mass media', automation or technical objects and, more generally, 'technological civilization' or 'consumer society'.

16. For example, one finds some American sociologists reproaching their own academic institution with traditions or vices in its operation which many French authors, generally in the name of an idyllic vision of the American system, complain of in the French university, imputing what they regard as its unique features to the uniqueness of a national history. While they do not have to reckon with the vestiges of a medieval past or the survivals of State centralization, the American universities also succeed in expressing, perhaps less completely, some of the most characteristic tendencies of the university system, in features such as 'boning', the institutionalized obstacle-race to which the student's career is reduced; obsession with examinations, which steadily increases with the growing importance of their role in social success; furious competition for the titles and honours that will accompany an individual, especially if he becomes an academic, throughout his life; the 'intellectual servitude' to which instructors and assistants are subjected; the 'unbelievably picayunish' features of doctoral dissertations, which will gather dust on a library shelf; the unproductiveness of the professors who, once tenured, 'ease up' and ensconce themselves; the university ideology of contempt for management and teaching methods (see L. Wilson, *The Academic Man, A Study in the Sociology of a Profession*, New York, OUP, 1942).

17. Every school system, to varying degrees and in forms determined in each case by the structure of class relations, fulfils the totality of the functions corresponding to the totality of the possible relationships with the other systems, so that its structure and functioning are always organized in relation to a determinate structure of possible functions. Constructing the system of possible configurations of the system of functions would be a purely academic exercise if it did not enable each historical case to be treated as a particular case of the ideal totality of the possible combinations of functions, thereby bringing to light all the relations between the school system and the other sub-systems, not least, of course, the blank or negative relations which are by definition the best-hidden ones.

18. In including in the definition of the essential, hence transhistorical, function of the school system characteristics deriving from a historically determined state of the relations between the educational system and the class structure, Durkheim tends implicitly to present as a transhistorical law a relationship whose epistemological status is only ever that of 'accidental generalizations', historical regularities to which there has hitherto been no exception but whose opposite is sociologically possible. We are not endorsing the pedagogic Utopias based on the automatic compatibility of the essential function with any external function whatever, when we refuse to take products of history, however recurrent, for expressions of a historical nature ('no society is known in which . . .') or even a human nature ('men will always be men'). Knowing the tendency to justify the established order by reference to 'the nature of things' which characterizes conservative thought, one sees the use which pessimistic philosophies of history, always ready to transmute a historical regularity into a necessary and universal law, could make of the eternizing of the relation between schooling and conservatism.

19. Perhaps in no other system are pedagogic choices in syllabus, exercises and examinations so totally determined as in the French system by the requirements of the training of teachers who will correspond to the traditional norms. It is indeed the logic of a mode of teaching which tends to be organized exclusively with a view to preparing others to teach, that French teachers express when, in their pedagogic judgements and practices, they at least unconsciously measure all their students against the accomplished model of the student who is none other than the 'good pupil' they were and who 'promises' to become the teacher they are.

20. The relation of dependence through independence which links an educational system to the material and symbolic interests of the dominant classes or, more exactly, the dominant fractions of those classes, can be grasped in a survey in the form of the convergence or divergence of the opinions expressed on pedagogic problems by the different categories of teachers and the different classes or class fractions. For example, when one analyses the responses to a

questionnaire on, *inter alia*, the teaching of Latin, the agrégation, vocational training and the respective functions of school and family in children's upbringing, beyond the manifestations of the old alliance between the dominant fractions of the bourgeoisie and those teachers most attached (in both senses) to the traditional mode of recruitment and training, and by the same token, to the traditional conception of culture (the 'humanities'), one glimpses the first signs of a new alliance between those fractions of the dominant classes most directly tied to production and the management of the State apparatus and those categories of teachers capable of expressing their categorial interests of university conservation in the technocratic language of rationality and productivity (CSE nationwide survey through the press on the situation of the educational system).

21. If the relative autonomy of the school system can be treated as the necessary and specific condition for the performance of its class functions, this is because the successful inculcation of a legitimate culture and of its legitimacy presupposes recognition of the specifically pedagogic authority of the institution and its agents, i.e. misrecognition of the structure of social relations underpinning that authority. In other words, pedagogic legitimacy presupposes the delegation of an already existing legitimacy, but, in producing recognition of school authority i.e., misrecognition of the social authority underlying it, the institution produces legitimation of the perpetuation of class relations in a sort of circle of reciprocal priorities.

22. Thus, by a paradox which is the essence of its heuristic fertility but which most users of the notion of relative autonomy fail to grasp, it is necessary to draw out all the consequences of autonomy so as to lose none of the dependence which is realized through it.

23. For example, the proportion of teachers from the petty bourgeoisie declines steadily at higher levels of the hierarchy of the stages of education, i.e. as the contradiction inscribed in the professorial office is accentuated and as the primacy of the relation to culture characteristic of the privileged classes asserts itself more fully. Thirty-six percent of primary school teachers aged under 45 in 1964 were from the working classes, 42 percent from the petty bourgeoisie and 11 percent from the middle or upper bourgeoisie, whereas, among secondary and higher education teachers (taken together), 16 percent were from the working classes, 35 percent from the petty bourgeoisie and 34 percent from the middle and upper bourgeoisie. In the absence of statistics, one can get an idea of the social origin of higher education teachers by considering the social origin of the students of the *École Normale Supérieure*: 6 percent working class, 27 percent middle class, 67 percent upper class. While there is no doubt that the various categories of teachers owe a number of their characteristics to the position they occupy in the educational system, i.e. to the relations of competition or alliance, declared or tacit, which they maintain with the other categories, and to the

academic trajectory, with the corresponding type of training, which has brought them to that position, nonetheless these characteristics are closely linked to differences in social origin, so that categories of teachers who scarcely differ as regards their conditions of existence and professional situation may be separated, in their professional and extra-professional attitudes, by differences which are irreducible to oppositions between categorial interests and which relate back, beyond their present class, to their class of origin (see also 1971, 9; 1974, 3).

24. No doubt this system of specifically academic oppositions would not have the same degree of classificatory output and symbolic efficacy if it did not indirectly evoke the opposition between theory and practice in which the fundamental division between manual and non-manual labour finds expression (see 1977, 1). In systematically privileging one of the poles of a series of systematic oppositions (with the pre-eminence accorded to the theoretic disciplines, the literary cult of form and the taste for mathematical formalism or the absolute depreciation of technical education), the educational system privileges those on whom a family relatively freed from the pragmatism imposed by the urgencies of economic necessity has bestowed the privilege of the aptitude for symbolic, i.e. initially verbal, mastery of practical operations, and the detached, distant and 'disinterested' relation to the world and to others, hence to language and culture, which are demanded by the school, especially when it is a matter of acquiring dispositions as highly valued as the specifically aesthetic disposition or the scientific attitude (see 1971, 3).

25. In Flaubert's *Dictionary of Received Ideas* one reads: 'Composition: At school, skill at composition shows application, whereas skill at translation shows intelligence. But out in the world, scoff at those who were good at composition'. It could easily be demonstrated that for the *grande bourgeoisie* of business and power, the *normalien*, who, in the teachers' ideology represents the ideal cultivated man, stands in much the same relation to the ENA graduate, the incarnation of an up-dated 'society' culture, as the 'student good at composition' (*le fort en thème*) does to the man cultivated according to the canons of the traditional School.

26. The structural discrepancy between an eminent position within the institution and the position outside the institution which results from the institution's inferior (or marginal) position within the power structure may well be one of the most potent principles explaining the practices and opinions of higher education teachers (similar in this respect, to high-ranking army officers).

27. The functions performed by the division of the work of domination between the petty and upper bourgeoisie, particularly the role of scapegoat and foil assumed by subaltern agents appointed to exert vicarious physical or symbolic coercion, may be indicated by enumerating some of the most significant realizations of this functional opposition: the colonel, 'father of his regiment', and the sergeant-major, 'scourge of the barrack-room'; the judge and the 'cop'; the 'boss'

and the foreman; the senior official and the clerk facing the public; the doctor and the nurse, or the psychiatrist and the warder; and, within the French school system, the *proviseur* (headmaster) and the *surveillant general* (in charge of discipline) or the teacher and the '*pion*' (cf. in England the role of the prefect and the proctor - trans.). One sees the double game authorized in the school system by the duality of functions and staffs; open or tacit disparagement of the bureaucracy of educational administrators and disciplinary officials constitutes one of the surest and most economical springs of institutional charisma.

28. To appreciate the distance separating the analysis of concrete mediations from the theoretical formulation which at best summarizes it and, at worst, dispenses with it, the reader only has to look back at some of the analyses in this book, which, reduced to an abstract shorthand, would present themselves as, for example, 'the system of communicative relations between transmission levels and reception levels systematically defined by the relations between the educational system as a communication system and the structure of class relations' (Chapters 1 and 2); or as 'the system of relations between the system of school values defined in its relationship to the values of the dominant classes and the value system deriving from the original and present class membership of the corps of agents' (Chapter 4).

29. On the role of the concept of the habitus in breaking out of this prescientific dilemma which, even in its avant-garde forms, recalls in more respects than one the old debate on social determinisms and human freedom, see *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977, 1).

30. There is, for example, every reason to think that the same ascetic ethos of social upgrading underlies the conduct of a part of the middle classes as regards both fertility and attitudes towards education. Whereas in the most fertile social categories, such as farm workers, farmers and manual workers, the chances of entering *sixième* decrease steadily with each additional child, in the least fertile categories - craftsmen, traders, clerical workers and middle management - they fall dramatically in families with four or more children, i.e. those which are distinguished from the group as a whole by their high fertility. Instead of seeing in the number of children the causal explanation for the fall in rate of enrolment, it has to be supposed that the will to limit the number of births and the will to give the children a secondary education express one and the same ascetic disposition in those categories which combine them. For an analysis of the relationship between class ethos and fertility, see P. Bourdieu and A. Darbel, 'La fin d'un malthusianisme', in Darras, *Le partage des bénéfices*, Paris, Minuit, 1966, pp. 134-54.

31. Although they assert the immanence of the structure of class relations at all levels of social practice, the structuralist readers of Marx, carried away by their objectivist reaction against all idealist forms of the philosophy of action, will acknowledge agents only as 'supports' of the structure and are obliged to ignore

the question of the mediations between the structure and practice, because they fail to confer on structures any other content than the power – a very mysterious one in the last analysis – of determining or over-determining other structures.

32. To give a concrete sense of the concordance of the effects of school action and selection with the effects of the pre-school or para-school education that is given anonymously by the conditions of existence, even if it is specified and invested with its specifically pedagogic meaning by the pedagogic authority of a family group, it is sufficient to point out that, from sixième to Polytechnique, the hierarchy of schools in terms of the academic prestige and social profitability of the qualifications they lead to, corresponds strictly with the social composition of their intake.

33. M. Vermot-Gauchy, *L'éducation nationale*, pp. 62-63.

34. Few institutions are so well protected as the educational system against sociological inquiry. If it is true that the School has the function of hiding the external functions of its essential function and that to perform this ideological function it has to hide the fact that it performs it, then scientific sociology must, in this case, in order to find its object, take as its object that which stands in the way of the construction of the object. To refuse such a project is to consign oneself to blind or complicitous adherence to the given as it gives itself, whether this theoretical surrender be masked under the flaunted rigour of empirical procedures or legitimated by invocation of the ideal of "ethical neutrality", a mere non-aggression pact with the established order. If there is no science but of the hidden, then the science of society is, per se, critical, without the scientist who chooses science ever having to choose to make a critique: the hidden is, in this case, a secret, and a well-kept one, even when no one is commissioned to keep it, because it contributes to the reproduction of a 'social order' based on concealment of the most efficacious mechanisms of its reproduction and thereby serves the interests of those who have a vested interest in the conservation of that order.

35. R. K. Kelsall, 'University Student Selection in Relation to Subsequent Academic Performance – A Critical Appraisal of the British Evidence', in *Sociological Studies in British University Education*, The Sociological Review: Monograph No. 7, ed. P. Hamos, Keele, Oct. 1963, p. 102.

36. The French educational system which in its traditional form demanded and obtained recognition of unchallengeable verdicts expressing an always univocal hierarchy (even when concealed under a set of interlocking hierarchies) contrasts in this respect with systems like the American university, which provides for the institutional resolution of the tensions resulting from the disparity between the aspirations it helps to instil and the social means of realizing them. If one considers the limiting case, one imagines universities which, accepting quasi-explicitly their role as institutions of symbolic government, would equip them-

selves with all the institutionalized instruments (tests, plus a system of branch lines and sidings making up a university subtly hierarchized under the guise of diversity) and specialized personnel (psychologists, psychiatrists, guidance counsellors, psychoanalysts) required for the discreet, friendly manipulation of those whom the institution condemns, excludes or relegates. This Utopia enables it to be seen that 'rationalization' of the technical and institutional tools for exclusion, channelling, and inculcation of acquiescence in channelling and exclusion, would enable the school system to fulfil more efficiently, because more irreproachably, the functions it performs today when it selects and, by concealing the principles of its selection, wins acquiescence in that selection and in the principles underlying it.