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From one galaxy to another: the trajectories of French intellectuals

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Translated by Nicholas Garnham

The masked philosopher

On 6 April 1980, the newspaper *Le Monde* published an interview with a *masked philosopher*. An internationally celebrated intellectual chose to express himself in the press while preserving his anonymity. Each question had been prepared with the interviewer and the interviewer was careful to rewrite each reply after the event. Any signs that might have allowed him to be identified were erased. It was only after his death that we knew it was Michel Foucault.

This incident bears witness *a contrario* to a major transformation in the relations between intellectuals and the media. At the beginning of the 1980s, the media representation of the discourse and works of intellectuals was, more than ever before, replaced by the extreme personalization of the new stars of thought: 'With us personalities shape the law of perception. Eyes prefer to focus on figures who come and go, surge up and disappear' (Foucault, 1994: 104).

Within the logic of the media spectacle, 'intellectuals' are always those who are shown: they do not exist outside the limelight, outside what can be said about them. By its form as much as its content, Foucault's intervention was aimed at the denunciation of the displacement of the places, games and objects of legitimation and consecration of intellectual work. By dreaming of a totally anonymous intellectual production, 'without a name', which could take the place of those discussions and judgements that constitute the economy of an increasingly mediatized strategy of author positions, the masked philosopher revealed what can today serve us as an analytical framework.

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Thus during the last 30 years we have witnessed in France a transfer of the location of the legitimation and consecration of intellectual work from the micro-milieu of peers to the media and the market. To the extent that the relations between intellectuals and the media are tied to the degree of their reciprocal autonomy, these structural changes take the form of a double movement: a proportion of intellectual production becomes more and more mediatic and at the same time certain journalistic activities tend to intellectualize themselves. At the point where these two developments cross, a hybrid figure emerges: it is embodied in the *journalist intellectual* and the *intellectual journalist*. In what follows we will describe in broad outline the genesis, in the French context, of this new mediatico-intellectual social configuration.

Genesis of a new intelligentsia

To retrace the history of relations between French intellectuals and journalists it would be necessary, to be exhaustive, to go back to the political confrontations of which the press have been the relay since the 19th century; to recall Balzac's fierce pamphlets against the venality of a nascent information industry which nonetheless contributed hugely to the success of writers with the general public by publishing their novels in daily serials; to pause a moment at that symbolic date of 13 January 1898, the day on which the newspaper *l'Aurore* published an open letter to the President of the French Republic entitled 'J'accuse', in which Emile Zola took up the defence of an officer in the French army, accused of betraying his country to Germany, an accusation which was subsequently revealed to be a plot. The Dreyfus affair marked the entry into the French language of the word 'intellectual' and in a way its media birth, since it was what the anti-Semitic extreme Right, through the press, called Zola and his 'Dreyfusards'.

We cannot, however, in the space of this article, go back that far: the few reminders we have just given are there to underline how old some of the ambiguities in the relations between French intellectuals and the media are. For a long time they have served simply as the site for their occasional political battles and for their internal struggles. For a long time also they have been the object of their disdain before becoming — another cause of division — the site for some of their consecration as intellectuals.

If there is a more important reminder to make, it is the fact that the question of these relations with the information system occupies a central place in the relations between intellectuals themselves. A 'Rational Dreyfusard', as he described himself, Julien Benda denounced in 1927 *La trahison des clercs*: this work, republished in 1993, accused French intellectuals of betraying their mission of defending the universal and

'abstract justice' by being seduced by the rewards offered by temporal powers. From this type of already ancient quarrel between regulars and seculars there would emerge another repetitive theme of the discourse of one section of the intelligentsia — the regulars — on intellectuals in general: the announcement of their forthcoming disappearance.

This incessantly advertised death is the sign of a structural identity crisis specific to the intellectual milieu. It stems from the very monopoly held by intellectuals over the definition of the categories that organize representations of the social, categories among the most important of which is the intellectuals' self-definition of the intellectual. By mutually excluding each other, by prophesying their own end, intellectuals exercise on themselves the normative power that constitutes their social identity. But they also do more than that: the normativity of these judgements and sanctions rests upon the description of the evolutions of social realities which they help to produce, thus fulfilling another of their social functions.

Thus the paradox inherent in every sociological analysis of intellectuals is that it must inevitably borrow some of its materials and arguments from those it is studying. That is what we will do, conscious of the danger of assuming the right to decide what, in the analysis of others, is descriptive and what normative. Rather than expanding upon this point with long and ritual digressions it will be sufficient here to refer to the reflexions developed by Pierre Bourdieu in the margins of the analyses he has devoted to his own milieu, notably in the introduction to his *Homo academicus* (Bourdieu, 1984).

By borrowing in this way we will follow several routes which lead to the process of hybridization outlined in our introduction:

- the increasing domination of the economy by the tertiary sector with as a consequence the growth of a new salaried intelligentsia;
- a growth and transformation of the market for cultural products stemming from the previous factor;
- an evolution of the structures of the university which has brought with it a very rapid growth in recruitment and a challenge to its traditional hierarchical system;
- the growing role of the media in the market for symbolic goods, growth which must be measured not only in economic terms but also in relation to the propositions above, a relationship of which the clearest sign is the rise in the level of educational qualification of journalists and their claim to their own identity in the intellectual field.

The coming of the technicians of practical knowledge

So if the theme of the decline of the intellectuals has ancient roots it was rediscovered in the 1960s with the realization of tertiary sector growth and

with it of the category that Sartre called the 'technicians of practical knowledge'.

In his *A Plea for Intellectuals*, a text based on a lecture given in Tokyo in 1965, Sartre counterposed the 'non-mandated' intellectual 'who meddles in things that are not his business' to a new salaried intelligentsia, the product of an extension of the division of labour in modern societies. While this text will be rarely cited subsequently by all those who entered the debate on the end of the intellectuals, the portrait that Sartre draws of the new cadres needed by the tertiary sector anticipates the main arguments. According to Sartre, the technicians of practical knowledge are a group strictly defined in its composition and functions by the needs of the economy:

mass production, for example, implies a considerable growth in advertising and thus an ever growing number of psychological technicians, statisticians, creators and realizers of advertising campaigns etc, or the adoption of *human engineering* implies the direct involvement of psycho-technicians and sociologists. . . . Today it is clear: industry wishes to take over the university in order to force it to abandon obsolete old humanism and replace it by specialist disciplines which will provide companies with analysts, middle management, *public relations* etc. (Sartre, 1972: 388; emphases in original)

This text of Sartre, however brief our résumé, puts in place one of the main features of the problematic we wish to develop. It draws attention first to the structural evolution of the French population, to the strong growth of the group of intellectual producers, coming out of universities, a growth which will be often invoked subsequently in analysing the development of the market for cultural goods. It underlines both the differences and similarities between these technicians of practical knowledge and the intellectuals, since the latter, according to Sartre, can only come from this new section of the salariat even if they stop putting their knowledge at the service of private interests. Finally, Sartre underlines already perceptible developments in the university system, developments which will subsequently be invoked to explain that to which we will return at greater length: the present tendency to the hybridization of two milieux, journalists and intellectuals, of two institutions, the information and cultural industries and the university, which had for a long time had distant, even hostile, relations.

In spite of the occasional use of the press to circulate manifestos (against the Algerian War, for the right to abortion, etc.) this distance remained wide in fact until the 1960s, but it took the form of arguments which, on the lines of Sartre, already advertised its possible abolition and at the same time the possible absorption of the intellectuals into the category of salaried technicians.

Symptomatic from this point of view are the views expressed at the same

period in the journals by non-party intellectuals, often ex-members of the Communist Party; for example this judgement in 1960 by Edgar Morin — a future media star of sociology — in an issue of the journal *Arguments* devoted to intellectuals:

Scientific and technical specialization, by quantitatively increasing the intelligentsia, has led to a decline in the number of intellectuals in the true sense. As a result of the same development both specialist and non-specialist intellectuals have lost access to a common culture; the former because they are locked inside their specialism, the latter because they have been handed over to journalism, to literature, to scholastic philosophy, to pseudo-politics. The general problems of culture and knowledge have been replaced by frivolity, pretention, fashion, slogans. (Morin, 1983: 38–9)

And Morin takes up a theme which will be the focus of reflection throughout this decade, that of the rising technocracy:

engineers, planners, administrators, researchers are mass produced. Each of these technicians possesses his specialized knowledge but he no longer has access to the *Aufklärung*. . . . And it is this that is the great divorce, the great rupture at the heart of the intelligentsia: 'intellectuals' no longer have access to knowledge scattered in multiple specialisms and technicians no longer have access to a common consciousness. The technical intelligentsia grows continuously: it is the class of the future; social progress tends in effect to suck every social category towards the technocracy. It is the future *universal* class. . . . (Morin, 1983: 40)¹

The same warning bell, with minor variations, in the other contributions to this number of *Arguments*, where there appear the names of other figures soon to be notable in the French intellectual milieu: sociologists, political scientists, semiologists, like Roland Barthes, Jean Duvignaud, Pierre Fougeyrollas, etc. According to the last of these, speculative intellectual practice had been transformed into a 'salaried, even mercenary, practice' (Fougeyrollas, 1983: 47). Intelligence has been absorbed by the market economy, it has become a means of production of cultural goods. Barthes, for his part, thought certainly, without naming them, of the growing influence of journalists when he opposed two modes of writing: that of the *ecrivain* who 'profoundly absorbs the *why* of the world in a *how to write*', writing becoming a tautological practice; that of the *ecrivant* who proposes an end (witness, explication, teaching) to which words are only a means.

So there we have language reduced to an instrument of communication, a vehicle for 'thought'². . . . Because what characterizes the *ecrivant* is that his project of communication is *naive*: he does not admit that his message turns back and closes in on itself, and that one can read there, in a diacritical fashion, something other than what he wanted to say: would such an *ecrivant* allow us to psychoanalyse his writing? He thinks that his words put an end to the ambiguity

of the world, create an unquestionable explanation (even if he admits it is provisional), or incontrovertible information. . . . (Barthes, 1983:41–2)

You can find the same analysis, apparently almost word for word, at the beginning of the 1980s. In the first number of the journal *Le Debat*, the historian Pierre Nora, who because of his position at the publisher Gallimard exercises great influence on French human sciences, asks the question: ‘What can intellectuals do?’ Nothing any longer, according to him, because of both changes in the university which have confused the border-lines between them and experts and the bureaucratization and mass-mediation of knowledge production (Nora, 1980).

Three years later Max Gallo, a best-selling author who had become a spokesman for the recently elected left-wing government, appealed to the intellectuals in an article in the daily *Le Monde*, reproaching them for their silence, their lack of support for the new socialist leadership. Jean Baudrillard and the philosopher Jean-François Lyotard replied in the same newspaper, the latter under a title which was to become that of a book, *Tomb of the Intellectuals and Other Papers*.

Coming from the extreme, non-communist left (he participated in the journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie* which, at the same period as *Arguments*, was an organ of denunciation of both Stalinism and capitalism), known more recently as a theoretician of postmodernity, Jean-François Lyotard replied to Max Gallo that he was talking to the wrong people in appealing to intellectuals to support the left:

His appeal calls rather for strategists, experts, decision-makers, intelligences undoubtedly, but ones who take on or will have to take on administrative, economic, social, cultural responsibilities. . . . The ‘intellectuals’ are rather, it seems to me, minds who, placing themselves in the place of mankind, of humanity, of the nation, of the people, of the proletariat, of creation or of some entity of that sort, that is to say identifying themselves with a subject endowed with universal value, describe, analyse from this point of view, a situation or condition and prescribe what must be done if this subject is to realise itself or at least its realization is to progress. (Lyotard, 1984: 11–12)

According to Lyotard, the appeal to intellectuals neglected the real splits between the professions linked to the ‘tasks of intelligence’. Lyotard denies the title of intellectual to all those who, educated in the natural sciences, technology or the human sciences, exercise the responsibilities of civil, economic and social administration.

The aim of the professional exercise of their intelligence is not to represent so far as is possible the idea of the universal subject in the field of their competence, but to ensure the best possible performance. This is defined as the optimum input–output ratio. . . . A mind engaged with such responsibilities can and probably must create new ideas. In this sense he undoubtedly asks what

performs best in his field. But he does not question its limits nor the nature of the criteria of performance as does by definition a subject with a vocation to universality. He accepts the given structure of reality and standards of evaluation. (Lyotard, 1984: 13–14)

One cannot finally pass over in silence the contribution to this debate of one of the most emblematic of French intellectuals, Régis Debray, whose commitments have led him from the guerillas of South America to the corridors of the Elysée. Of all the authors we have so far cited, he is in fact the one who, first and most clearly, linked the decline of the intellectuals, the growth of the new intelligentsia and the shift of the university towards the media and towards a market as the sites for the legitimation of intellectual production. In his book *Teachers, Writers, Celebrities*, Debray writes:

In pushing back the boundaries of what can be heard, the mass media have . . . multiplied the sources of intellectual legitimacy by encircling the narrow sphere of the professional intelligentsia, the classic source of legitimation, in concentric circles which are wider, less strict and thus easier to enter. (Debray, 1979: 96)

But Debray adds that the intellectuals themselves are responsible for this shift of the source of legitimation towards the media, citing as illustration an article by the extremely non-media philosopher Gilles Deleuze:

Journalism, by means of radio and the tv, has become more and more conscious of its power to create events. . . . Journalism discovers within itself autonomous and self-sufficient thought. . . . Intellectuals and writers, even artists, are thus required to become journalists if they wish to fit in. It is a new type of thought, the interview-thought, the chat-thought, the thought-in-a-minute. . . . Everything begins with the tv and the dressage performance to which the interviewers make consenting intellectuals submit. (Deleuze, cited by Debray, 1979: 112)

We could — but it would rapidly become redundant — multiply still further citations of the same type. Better now try to draw out from behind the permanent features of yesterday's prophecies and today's assessments, the developments which reveal those taxonomies, those oppositions with which intellectuals try to maintain what seems, to read them, the last of their privileges: that of deciding the criteria by which one is or is not an intellectual.

A new cultural market

There is no point in accumulating here statistical proof of a phenomenon that all the industrialized countries of Europe and North America have experienced over the last 30 years: their shift from an economy dominated

by the industrial sector to an economy where the tertiary sector now represents more than half their gross national product. This transformation is very evidently translated into a profound evolution of the socioprofessional structure of their populations and by a general rise in their level of education. To cite only one statistic, in only one generation, that which first benefited from university expansion in the 1960s and 1970s,³ the numbers working in the liberal professions and upper and middle management have grown 250 percent in France.

What is worth attention, in the constitution of this category of Sartrian technicians of practical knowledge, which, let us recall, some have wished to see as a new class in the true sense, are the transformations which have been produced at the same time in the structure of the production and distribution of cultural goods.

The expansion of what French sociology has called by turns 'the new intellectual petit bourgeoisie' or 'the new middle class' is in fact tied to a new segmentation of the market for cultural products previously organized in a dichotomous fashion: a mass cultural industry on one side, on the other a narrow market for 'culture cultivée', to use Edgar Morin's coinage. Between the two there rapidly developed what Pierre Bourdieu has called 'culture moyenne', an expression that first appeared in 1965 in his study of the use of photography (Bourdieu et al., 1965) and was systematized in an article which appeared in *L'année sociologique* entitled *The Market in Symbolic Goods*. By culture moyenne Bourdieu meant a whole range of products — television programmes, periodicals etc. — whose point of reference is legitimate culture (scientific, literary, artistic), and which try to pass for what they are not, with the sole aim of capturing a public for whom culture constitutes, as he puts it, a source of anxiety at the same time as being an object of false recognition: literary adaptations, orchestral arrangements of musical classics, serial digests etc., in short products with the appearance of legitimacy and at the same time economically accessible and made culturally accessible.

In contrast to high cultural goods these products require no previous competence, no introductory apprenticeship. They are therefore products which one could call equivocal, since they are made to provoke this effect of false recognition, of allodoxia, while at the same time multiplying the signs of orthodoxy and the signs of scarcity, characteristic of high cultural goods.

Thus in general moyenne cultural goods can be defined, in terms of both production and consumption, by their position in the total market for cultural goods, their connection to a system of production which is that of the cultural industry — what Bourdieu calls the field of mass production — and their pretension to belong to the field of small scale production. As an example, we could cite television programmes such as current affairs and literary and cultural programmes, which statistics show are largely liked by

the upper middle class and, on the contrary, rejected at the two extremes of the social and educational hierarchy, for clearly opposite reasons: judged too educationally didactic by the one, they are thought of as too difficult by the others, who see television above all as an entertainment medium. Their audience is thus constructed by a double selection process: selection at the bottom by means of the marker 'cultural', selection at the top by avoidance of anything which risks excluding the reader or spectator, that is to say in particular allusion and self-reference etc.

While it is not normal to compare Bourdieu's analysis with that of one of the principle defenders in France of methodological individualism, one notices that one also finds in the work of Raymond Boudon similar assessments as to the development in the structure of production and in the market for cultural goods. In his article devoted to 'The Intellectual and His Publics: The Peculiarities of the French Case' (Boudon, 1982), Boudon distinguishes three strata in the market which intellectuals address:

— a traditional market, limited to peers and the products of which are rarely known outside — an important discovery in physics for example — journalists who mention it confine themselves to informing the public relying on the judgement of the community of the scientists concerned alone;

— a market comprising at the same time peers and a wider public, for example that of teachers, when it is a question of an innovative work in the sociology of education. In this case peer judgement can be influenced by that of the media;

— a market on which public success is the only source of legitimation. It is traditionally the market for writers of fiction, but it is also more and more often that for philosophers, sociologists, moralists, even specialists in the natural sciences.

We will return to this segmentation, to the ways in which it reflects developments in the intellectual field and its institutions, especially the university, to the consequences it has for the relations between intellectuals and between intellectuals and journalists. For now let us borrow also from Boudon an idea that allows us to conceptualize an important feature of these relations from the perspective of the market and of social demand: the trend to intellectualization of private life. Boudon in fact draws attention to a new mode of intervention by intellectuals in the contemporary public sphere. Following many others he notes that a range of behaviour previously largely regulated by tradition (sexual, educational, dietary etc.) have today become the object of a process of 'rationalization', in the Weberian sense of the word. All the evidence points to this process particularly involving the new middle class, the first beneficiaries of the widening of access to higher education in the 1960s. It is at the root of the

public success of periodicals of general information and vulgarization, which review developments in the human sciences as well as the works of a Lacan or a Baudrillard, as in general of all experts on such themes as individualism and postmodernity.

Pierre Bourdieu is without doubt the person who has best described this development in his *Homo academicus*:

the growth in the student population and in that of the lower level lecturers has been at the heart of the growth in demand for cultural products and of a qualitative transformation in that demand: it is certain, in particular, that all the intellectual 'novelties' find their chosen public among students in the new disciplines in the arts faculties, aspiring intellectuals with weakly formed categories of perception and appreciation, ready to adopt the exterior signs of the intellectual profession and often inclined to satisfy themselves with pseudo versions of fashionable sciences. . . . And that at a time when a new type of producer finds, in the possibilities offered by this new public (and by publishers seeking to conquer it) the opportunity to impose a redefinition of the limits of the publishable, to abolish the boundaries between research and essays or journalism and to pass off products of culture moyenne for real avant-garde conquest. (Bourdieu, 1984: 156–7)

The crisis of the institution of the university

This meeting between a new public and new intellectual products can also not be understood without taking equal account of the development of the university itself, the undermining of its internal modes of evaluation of intellectual production.

In a recent work, the historian Christophe Charle has described how, until the Second World War, French universities, and above all its most prestigious institutions, such as the Sorbonne, were able to preserve, thanks in particular to their form of recruitment, a strict control over their own operations and more widely over intellectual life and its hierarchies: internal appointment boards, doctoral thesis juries, editorial boards of journals were just some of the ways of maintaining the power of peers over scientific production and over the distribution of material and symbolic rewards within a milieu which still had few members (Charle, 1994).

The very rapid growth in the university population from the 1960s on has profoundly affected this way of working, all the more because its effects have been combined with external factors: the growth of a 'quasi-intellectual' public (Ross, 1991), as we have seen, the market demands of publishers and the media, as we shall see, finally the very strong growth in publicly funded contractual research, particularly for the social sciences, which were given in large amounts after the 'events' of May 1968 in order to respond to what has become a new section in the press: 'social problems'.

We cannot explore again here every aspect of what has been called the crisis of the French university system, which has been the object of contradictory and often dubious analysis written for the most part by members of the institution itself. In a text we have already cited, Boudon blames almost solely what he identifies as the reinforcement of 'trade union power in the bodies responsible for managing the careers of teaching and research personnel' (Boudon, 1982: 471) for the weakening of internal organs of evaluation, epistemological sloppiness, which then legitimates 'production resting more on aesthetic than cognitive criteria' (Boudon, 1982: 474)⁴ which gains for its authors, on the publishing and media markets, the material and symbolic rewards that the university can no longer offer, once that upon which it is founded, scientific merit alone as recognized by the institution itself, is challenged.

If this last point is now so obvious, to the point where fame achieved in ways (press, television, even a political career) which previously would have decisively disqualified an intellectual with her or his peers can today be converted into an institutional position within the university, it is hardly convincing to see this as the result, even mediated, of trade unionization alone.

More to the point — and at the same time consistent with it — seems to us to be the argument developed by Pierre Bourdieu in the two works he has devoted to the French universities and *Grandes Écoles* (Bourdieu, 1984, 1989). He notes, in fact, that the rapid growth in the number of university teachers has been accompanied by a sharp decline in their earnings, notably in comparison with other categories of public sector workers,⁵ and it has also and above all meant a symbolic devaluation of the status of the functionaries of higher education, which used to be based mainly on the scarcity of posts. This devaluation is experienced even more at levels below professor as access to the summit of the hierarchy becomes more difficult the more the number of posts expands. These factors largely explain, according to Bourdieu, what he calls 'the penetration of the American model into French intellectual life',⁶ that is to say in particular the search for extra material remuneration and a restoration of their symbolic status by means of additional teaching work, especially abroad, and involvement in the world of publishing and journalism:

we see . . . how economic changes come to effect the specific structures of the intellectual field and how the alteration of the economic and social foundations of university autonomy can, in conjunction with a transformation in ethical dispositions associated with a shift in the nature of employment, contribute to a transformation in the intellectual life style. (Bourdieu, 1989: 298)

The social sciences in general and sociology in particular provide one of the clearest examples of these transformations. Breaking with a tradition of

production which was essentially theoretical, formerly the condition for access to the highest levels of the university career which have since become accessible to only a tiny minority among them, many young researchers in the human sciences have turned, since the 1970s, towards objects of research which offer a double advantage, in both finance and legitimation: those that have been designated by both public administrations and the media as 'social problems'. The interest shown since that time by sociology in 'mass communication' could be used to illustrate Bourdieu's observation concerning the strategies of those who, choosing objects previously judged 'futile', 'often seek from another field, even that which they are studying, the gratification which the scientific field refuses them in advance . . .' (Bourdieu, 1975: 5).

The autonomy of the journalistic field

For the developments we have tried to describe (new intellectual producers, new products, a new public) to have their full effect, they required the support of new forms of mediation, external to the milieu of university peers, the traditional guardians of the legitimacy of intellectual work. We will situate this mediation in the recent development of the journalistic field, in the paradox of a written and audio-visual press apparently increasingly subject to economic logic alone, especially with creation of competition between private and public television in the last decade, and at the heart of which at the same time has developed an elite which wishes to affirm its own identity and autonomy vis-a-vis the milieux of both politics and intellectuals.

The archives of the press, radio and television offer a striking illustration of these developments, particularly in the case of the relations between journalists and intellectuals. Apart from the collective manifestos we have already cited, up until the 1960s, intellectuals generally only intervened in the media in the form of the set-piece lecture, either recorded or filmed in advance. When there was dialogue with an interviewer, it was in the form of the relation between master and respectful pupil of which we can find a parallel in the same period in the relation between politicians and journalists.

Many internal mutations of the media system, accompanying the historical developments traced above, were to considerably modify the nature of these relations. We must first, of course, point to the central role that television came to acquire in the media hierarchy. The creation in France of a second public service channel in 1964 and a third eight years later, the end of the state monopoly in the following decade followed by the creation of commercial channels: all factors which lead on the one hand to a diversification of programmes which split between those called

'quality', pursuing the traditional educational ambitions of television, and 'entertainment' programmes for a mass audience. Thus two types of competition were established: within the channels between these two types of programme and thus between two categories of professional; between the channels for a share of advertising revenue. On the other hand, this rapid growth, which made television the dominant medium, gave to those who worked there, particularly journalists, a legitimacy which many of them had previously doubted, vis-a-vis their colleagues in the written press. As proof we would offer this reflection by Anne Sinclair, a star journalist of the private channel TF1, where she presents a political programme, *7 sur 7*, to which we will return: 'The period of the inferiority complex towards newspaper journalists, who had a tendency to take themselves for thinkers as opposed to the speakers on radio and television, is well and truly over' (cited by Le Grignou and Neveu, 1991: 88).⁷

In their book *Voir la vérité: le journalisme de télévision*, Hervé Brusini and Francis James have shown how this development took the form in television of a move from a 'journalism of inquiry' to a 'journalism of inquisition'. In the 1960s, the authors explain, television news and current affairs were dominated by the event. Journalism consisted of being on the spot and showing: it was 'empirical'. But from the end of the 1960s television news and current affairs changed their perspective, a change manifested, for example, by the multiplication of studio programmes. Reporting broke free of the event and replaced it with debates, analysis and reports on 'social facts'. At the beginning it was scientists who were invited to participate in this development, sign of a scientific cast of mind, according to François Chatelet in the postscript to Brusini and James. But soon, as Gilles Deleuze had foreseen, it was the journalists themselves who took on this role. 'Many journalists', wrote Hans Lecheitner in 1984, 'think of themselves today as representatives of the social class that forms and directs opinion. They act like public officials and corporate entrepreneurs . . .' (Lecheitner, 1984: 14). Ten years later Olivier Mongin went even further in writing:

Paradoxically it is media people who most often think they embody the challenge to the status quo, avant-gardism having taken refuge among the 'mediators' who, whether of the right and or of the left, are 'naturally' progressive because they daily hold history at the end of their pen. (Mongin, 1994: 16)

The hegemony of the journalistic field

In order to understand how the developments we have described have turned out, a brief illustrative detour is necessary before returning to the question of the relations between the intellectual and journalistic fields.

Their restructuring, in fact, closely resembles that of the relations between the media and the field of politics. A strong similarity can be seen between the transformations that these two sets of relations have undergone in the last 30 years.

The journalistic field and the political field

We have noted that both politicians and intellectuals thought of the media in the 1960s as a platform or podium and journalists as simple intermediaries, a foil for their thoughts and beliefs. And there is no doubt that journalists accepted that role, convinced as they were, as Brusini and James might have put it, that their job was to hide behind the event which this authorized speech represented, whether that of a consecrated intellectual or of a political leader.

Since that time this situation has changed radically. The evidence, for example on television, is the transformation of yesterday's respectful interviewer into an inquisitor questioning his invited guests in the name of 'public opinion' and his own beliefs. We can observe this change clearly in the organization of studio programmes: the framing, the cross-cutting camera movements, tend to give journalists a position equal to that of their interviewees, or even central, by a kind of exchange of social position that Debray has dubbed the 'long casting' in talking about the shift in roles between intellectuals and information professionals.

When they interview a politician, journalists today take the place, concretely and symbolically, previously reserved for the opposition in major electoral campaign debates, debates of which they are now, to say the least, active arbitrators. But more than that, it is now usual to see them occupying a seat at the centre of a circular agora from where they hector in turn the intellectuals, experts and politicians seated in rows around them. A few years ago it would have been inconceivable for a journalist to invite a minister or political leader on to a current affairs show and allow him or her to speak for only a few seconds in response to purely factual questions as is now common.

It is clear that the development of television production and interviewing techniques has not yet received the attention it deserves from media sociologists. So far as interviews with intellectuals and politicians are concerned, comparisons over time show that we have passed from a regime of exchange, in which journalists confine themselves to clarifying for a wider audience what the interviewee is trying to say, to a regime in which the organization of the themes and questions is set in advance by the interviewer, who has a set of notes which constitute a sort of script for the programme to which interviewees are subject, unless they protest publicly against the 'agenda' being imposed on them, this at the risk, rarely taken,

of incurring the sanctions reserved for those who 'do not play the game' (public criticism, media boycott etc.). The implicit new rules of the interview game are only regularly denied, and this almost ritualistically, by people who are identified or identify themselves as 'marginals' or 'extremists', both in their own professional field as well as in the media. In those cases, anticipating the reaction of both the audience as well as their colleagues, journalists even provoke their interviewees to break out of the normally permitted frame, in order to create 'media events' which are in themselves another illustration of the media taking over the field of politics. Recently, a journalist on French public television offered boxing gloves to his two invited politicians before asking them to debate: they were Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the extreme right and Bernard Tapie, who has made a career on the French left of not belonging to the traditional bourgeois political establishment.

What these immediately observable manoeuvres reveal is of central sociological importance: they show to what extent the media — and above all television — has affected the internal operation of the fields which provide them with material for information and commentary, the games that are played there, the products, political or intellectual, which they produce.⁸

To claim that television has changed the rules of the political game might of course look like a pure and simple truism: the evidence goes back at least as far as the famous Kennedy–Nixon debate in 1960. There is, however, an important difference between these televised confrontations organized according to the timetable of political institutions, and the new visibility that television now gives to the world of politics which is subject to the forms and demands of its own programming schedules and no longer to events and a timetable outside its own control.

A good example is provided by the weekly programme we have already briefly mentioned, *7 sur 7*. Scheduled at peak time, Sunday from 7pm to 8pm, this programme recently managed to get a 55 percent audience share for what, until recently, would have been considered a non-event: the announcement by Jacques Delors that he would not be a candidate in the next presidential election. The non-candidate had to point out to the journalist Anne Sinclair, who expressed amazement at his decision, since all the opinion polls showed him winning, that he himself had never said he would stand nor commissioned the polls quoted: the daily publication of these polls, financed by the media, the repeated advertising in the press of the forthcoming programme, the production style of the programme itself (40 minutes of orchestrated suspense before coming to the journalist's question on whether he would stand) are all signs of the takeover of politics by journalism. This example illustrates in particular the extent to which the election of representatives is becoming more and more like a plebiscite dependent upon representations largely created by the media.

The domestication of the intellectual and political fields by the media is thus a structural fact which is expressed in the very staging of such a programme, in the discussions it provoked in the press before and after transmission. It is interesting to note that *7 sur 7* is organized around a review of the 'main events of the week' and broken at regular intervals by the presentation of polling data on issues, as they are described, 'of the moment', and on the popularity of one or other politician or political faction. All these media production techniques reinforce the strategy by which journalists take away from invited politicians, as well as other actors in the public sphere, the power to define the issue agenda.

If political journalism has thus largely succeeded in imposing its own production rhythm on the world of politics, it also in fact increasingly constructs its agenda around themes that come less from politics than from that other hybrid mediator, the political scientist, undoubtedly the most mediatic of that new generation of 'Americanized' academics of whom we spoke above.

Frequently graduates of the prestigious Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris ('Science Po'), where there is a good chance they still teach, technical consultant to a polling bureau, when not a director, frequently appearing as a newspaper and broadcasting commentator, stars of tv election night programmes, the political scientist-journalist is today the indispensable partner of the journalist-political scientist, in this interplay of role-changing between the field of politics and the field of journalism. As Patrick Champagne (1990) has clearly shown, journalists have borrowed a weapon from politicians, the opinion poll, which they use to intervene 'scientifically' in the political game in the name of *vox populi*. In the same way, we can understand how the 'modernist' image of professional political practice, a mixture of marketing strategies and referenda, which the new political scientists have tried to impose, is integrated into the very logic of the media system.

The result is, as in all sectors colonized by the media, that it is only to the extent that it is made 'watchable', that is to say subject to a showbusiness logic (star duels, private lives on show, etc.) that the media's conquest of the field of politics has been possible. To put it another way, the logic of ratings for the journalist and of polls for the politician result in the fact that it is only through a process of depoliticization that politics can be produced without risking a loss of audience. This complicity in practice goes beyond the logic of the star system:

Modern means of communication have not — or not only — brought with them a 'personalization' of power. In changing the very content of the practice socially defined as 'politics', they have transformed the social attributes required for success in this field: a politician's 'notoriety' and the 'good opinion' that people can have of him have been redefined by the instruments which claim to measure them, while owing a great deal to the fabrication, by advertising agents, of

'public images' which are elaborated by marketing experts on the basis of impact studies.

There is here a perfectly circular logic, of which its participants are unaware, because the circle, created in particular by political communication specialists, rests on the belief today widely shared by almost everyone in politics, that 'to play politics' is, mainly thanks to 'good communication', to get the highest possible poll rating. (Champagne, 1990: 153–4)

In order to justify further our attempt to find parallels between transformations in both the political and intellectual fields under the influence of the journalistic field, we note with Bourdieu that, more generally, one of the essential structural effects of this complicity between journalist-political scientists and political scientist-journalists has been to substitute for all the traditional mediations which used to structure the field mediation by the media alone. In the same way as, as we have seen, the media, the market, the law of popularity, tends to take the place of peer judgement, scientific journals and other traditional forms for evaluating intellectual production, political parties and trade unions and the various associations that link electorate, militants and leaders are all now short-circuited by the single direct relation that these leaders now maintain with the 'base' through the information system.

Except when it exploits the freedom and critical power that assure its autonomy, journalism, above all on television (especially commercial), acts in the same way as opinion polls, with which it must now be ranked: although they can serve as instruments of rational demagogary tending to reinforce the self-enclosure of the political field, polls set up a direct link with the electorate, *unmediated*, which cuts out all the individual and collective agents (such as parties and trade unions) socially mandated to develop and propose worked-out opinions; it takes away from all mandated representatives and spokespeople their claim (shared by all great editors in the past) to a monopoly of legitimate expression of 'public opinion' and, at the same time, their capacity to work on the critical (and sometimes collective as in elected assemblies) development of the real or supposed opinions of those they represent. (Bourdieu, 1994: 7)

Finally, let us underline that the dominant position taken by the televisual translation of political facts, to which Bourdieu points above, is an indication of the change in the status of television journalism, which was for a long time thought of, as we have said, as the distant and inglorious cousin of newspaper journalism.⁹ These two sectors of the communication industry have almost changed places. Take, for instance, the marked decline in the circulation of the French national press of so-called 'record' in the face of the growing success of star presenters and the multiplication of 'news magazines' which place television in a dominant position within the journalistic field.¹⁰ The new style adopted by television journalists is a sharp break with the old model of interchangeable *announcers* of yesteryear and creates the illusion of independence and freedom of action

which grants them abilities and a new legitimacy similar to the traditional image of the 'independent' intellectual:

Journalists have introduced into their trade a visible concern to be seen as more than the readers of reports whose restraint guarantees their competence. They have acquired the right to a more relaxed appearance, to be more contemporary and irreverent. The liturgies of television allow them to be seen as analysts of the real, inheritors of an intellectual vocation to challenge power and defend values. (Le Grignou and Neveu, 1991: 71)

The journalistic field and the intellectual field

To return to the intellectual field and to its present articulation with the journalistic field, we need to return, for a moment, to the major entry of

cultural and television weeklies into French intellectual life after 1960 and above all 1970 [which] undermined the clerks' fortress, created a breach in the structure of intellectual life the boundaries of which, already vague, have been remodelled as a result of the strategies of other mediating agents who now themselves set about setting the price of intellectual values. (Rieffel, 1993: 20)

In the same way as political journalists have tended to acquire the monopoly of the agenda and of the formulation of 'political questions', newspaper and, above all, television journalists exercise a growing power in the legitimation and consecration of cultural products. This field of conquest is undoubtedly even wider, since it involves consumer goods available on the market:

The foundations of the grandiloquent celebration of legitimate culture and its claims to enlighten the masses collapsed. Now culture is transmitted largely through programmes that apply cultivated taste to recently legitimate products (film, rock, scientific and technical knowledge) or praise recent work more than the canon. (Le Grignou and Neveu, 1991: 71)

This relatively recent and increasingly prominent link between cultural production and media promotion bears witness more generally to the reorganization of the ability and power of journalists to pass judgement on specialized domains which, before the media occupied them, had an internal monopoly over the legitimation and consecration of their products. This structural development leads to a hybridization of the respective status and roles of journalists and intellectuals, who now find themselves in new positions determined by their education (journalists are today, in the majority, graduates), by the crisis in the modes of recognition in their respective corporations, by the appearance of new types of intellectual work and cultural products:

The take-over of the field of cultural production by the journalistic field (in particular in philosophy and social science) is carried out mainly through the intervention of cultural producers situated uncertainly between the journalistic field and specialized fields (literary, philosophical etc.). These 'journalist-intellectuals', who take advantage of their dual membership to avoid the specific demands of the two universes and to bring into each one of them powers more or less well acquired in the other, are in a position to have two major effects: on the one hand to introduce new forms of cultural production situated in an ill-defined no man's land between academic esotericism and journalistic exoticism; on the other hand to impose, in particular by means of their critical judgements, principles for the evaluation of cultural products which, in giving an appearance of intellectual authority to market judgements and in reinforcing the spontaneous inclination of certain categories of consumer to *allodoxia*, tends to reinforce the ratings or *best-seller* effect on the reception of cultural products and also, indirectly and in the long term, on production, by directing choices (those of publishers for example) towards the least difficult and most saleable products. (Bourdieu, 1994: 6)

This situation is the product of different developments. The most obvious is that of the training and social origin of journalists. The old saw: 'journalism leads to anything as long as you escape from it' takes us back to what used to be the devalued image of the profession and to a period largely passed, that when information professionals were generally trained 'on the job' in provincial newspapers and when only a few chosen ones could get on to the most famous Parisian papers. For a start we note that they are now in a majority holders of university degrees, a shift further confirmed by the relative lack of success of specialized training schools which are now in decline.

In spite of these figures, it is important to stress that the journalistic field is far from being homogeneous: from the provincial freelance to the television star the leap is so big that one might well ask whether an all-embracing definition of the profession of journalism has any sociological meaning. The relative homogenization of the educational qualifications acquired by journalists has not resulted in the reduction of these differences. As the average level of qualifications rose and the profession gained greater social recognition, the links between the social and professional hierarchy moved upwards, the top of the pyramid, as Reiffel (1984) has

TABLE 1
Journalists' educational background¹¹

Year	Degree or equivalent	Specialist journalism studies
1964	38%	6%
1973	46%	20%
1990	66%	13%

shown, being occupied by an upper-middle-class elite (the liberal professions, top civil servants, the upper reaches of industry and finance, etc.):

The variety of educational backgrounds, the range of practices, the ambiguity of their self-representation, the fluidity of their professional standards, the weak control exercised by their peer group, are all factors pointing to the fluid identity of the journalistic milieu. Its most highly respected representatives seem, at present, to be those with the highest media visibility, that is to say television journalists and in particular the few small screen stars who eclipse the general run of news 'drudges'. (Rieffel, 1992: 15)

At the front of the media stage it is this elite that embodies most the hybridity to which we have been pointing. An ambiguous relationship is thus being set up between journalists and intellectuals that is only made possible by a reduction in the differences of status and prestige. The result of both complicity and competition, product of the intertwined hierarchies of intellectuals and journalists, this relationship takes the public form of an exchange of symbolic capital: journalists gain media prestige from the celebrities they question, who in their turn accumulate notoriety capital that they can cash in other fields: the academic field, but above all the publishing market.

To the relation between journalist and intellectual we must add a third figure: the public. It is interesting to note that we are here dealing not just with published works whose circulation depends on media publicity, but also the books written in ever greater numbers by journalists themselves. 'A careful study of television professionals would clarify', as Le Grignon and Neveu suggest,

. . . the probable mechanisms of identity or homology between the character traits of the new small-screen stars and the ethos of the new petit bourgeoisie. We can find rich evidence on this subject by just reading the abundant memoirs written by television journalists. The anti-institutional instincts, the denial of passionate or aggressive debate, the valuing of culture, the desire to affirm a personality, are all ever present ingredients of this new literary genre. (1991: 73)

It is difficult not to recognize in these traits the figure of the media intellectual as much as the intellectual journalist. On the level of reception we might hypothesize that it is as if these two figures are more and more indistinguishable in the eyes of that audience which receives the products of both without distinguishing between them: 'It would seem . . . that television journalists now appear, culturally, as the functional equivalent of intellectuals, as indeed do their colleagues in newspapers' (Rieffel, 1993: 397).

It is therefore not surprising to note that journalists with intellectual

pretensions and intellectuals with media ambitions share very similar modes of legitimation: in both cases self-representation plays a large part in the search for recognition by others. To put it another way, to exist in the intellectual field and the journalistic field, today closely interwoven, means developing a self-image appropriate to the media scenes where one is made visible. The most typical example, often mentioned in debates among the French themselves, is one of the leaders of the group that have been called the 'nouveaux philosophes'. The portrait painted by Pinto, a sociologist close to Bourdieu, is from this point of view particularly revealing:

The media (*Le Monde* and especially *Le Nouvel Observateur*) encouraged, in particular on the troubled terrain of politico-philosophical debate, the appearance of the 'nouveaux philosophes': the pathetic form of the prophetic denunciation (ethical) allowed a generalist without either a definite object or project to best create a figure of the 'philosopher' almost entirely constructed out of the journalistic retranslation of certain stereotypes of the scholar (white shirt, open neck, romantic Byronic haircut, declamatory tone . . .). An exemplary illustration of the short-cut effect, Bernard-Henry Levy, collaborator and friend of *Nouvel Observateur*, became a 'star' before he was thirty (after various attempts such as the creation of a journal which didn't last), even before his first book so long announced and 'awaited' (*Philosophie dans tous ses états*, rather than *La Barbarie à visage humain*, the title eventually chosen). In no time at all he succeeded in establishing positions in publishing (Grasset), in journalism, as an essayist, as a reporter, in literature (novel, play), in the media (the Arte channel), in the film industry (Pinto, 1994: 32–3)

The recognition given by all of the press and broadcasting to these new 'thinkers of the present' is related of course to the subjects of their reflection (the fall of the Berlin Wall, Somalia, Bosnia, etc.). But if all the media contributed to this phenomenon it undoubtedly owes most to television. The literary and more general cultural programmes have become the favoured places for the promotion at once symbolic and commercial of those intellectual products best suited to media promotion: you can frequently see in a bookshop, the day after a literary programme on which its author appeared, a book carrying on a band the title of the programme, as used to be done for a Nobel prize for literature or a Goncourt prize. Here we need to separate the real commercial effects from the effects of a symbolic impression on the public of which we talked earlier. Let us give an indirect illustration: a literary programme such as *Apostrophe*, which at the time was publicized by all the press as a weekly event, seemed, according to the polls, to be one of the most popular programmes on television. Asked what was their 'favourite programme', 37 percent of French people put it in second place equal with *Dallas*. In reality, its audience was on average less than 10 percent (see Beaud, 1984: 304).

The restructuring of the intellectual field

Media visibility only concerns, of course, a small fraction of the whole of intellectual production: most of the time it is the same writers who are feted on screen and in the columns of newspapers. However, it represents in economic terms a significant proportion of the market for so-called high culture. Submission to the rules of the market therefore leads to a general recategorization of intellectuals. Their homogeneity is increasingly a fiction, the very fiction it is necessary to maintain in order to stick the attributes of high culture on to cultural products accessible to a middle-brow audience.

Granting themselves the authority, if only thanks to the notoriety of the organ of the press that employs them, to give clear-cut verdicts on movements of thought, journalists little by little turn certain philosophers or historians into stars whose charisma strangely resembles those of the cinema and show business whom Edgar Morin baptised in his time [1962] 'new olympians'. (Reiffel, 1993: 531)

The media promotion of a part of intellectual production thus contributes to a doubling of the sources of legitimation and consecration and in so doing creates a split between intellectuals themselves. On one side there is the traditional 'academic pole' where we find researchers and university teachers working in very specific fields, only publishing their work in specialized journals; on the other there are the more 'worldly' philosophers who do not teach or, when they do, often occupy university posts with little prestige,¹² who work in generalist fields and publish in non-specialist journals whose themes are often focused on what the media produces under the heading 'contemporary issues' or 'society's problems'. Today, Sartre would have therefore to note that the most proletarian of proletariats, the most deprived, the universal subject to whose defence the 'classic' intellectual was committed has become a seasonal item: so that, united in indignation, media intellectuals and journalists rediscover every winter that it is cold and that people are homeless.

The colonization of the public sphere

In the media game, peer judgement is taken over by judgement by the *greatest number*, an abstract entity based on ratings and sales statistics, but always under cover of a judgement that presents itself as impartial. The best example is without doubt those classifications made by the media such as the *hit-parades* of intellectuals, of books or ideas based on sales statistics, polls or on a college of 'representative' judges coopted for the occasion:

. . . the breadth of consultation . . . gives the judgement a collective base, thus the appearance of consensual validation; after that, more subtly, . . . the collective subject of this judgement seems coextensive with the object judged, thus producing the appearance of perfect autonomy. (Bourdieu, 1984: 275–6)

Under cover of impartiality this type of classification allows the mixing of people and genres. The measurement of media importance taking itself for an objective evaluation of people and works, the hit-parade of intellectuals often places side-by-side academics, novelists, natural scientists, journalists, in fact a highly heterogeneous group.¹³ Produced by the media, this type of classification allows journalists to impose a definition of intellectuals which is nearest to their own identity:

. . . it is only by passing a favourable judgement on the most journalistic of intellectuals that journalists can affirm that they belong legitimately to the widened intellectual field and that they have a right to judge the least journalistic of intellectuals, the most visible of whom they cannot avoid mentioning, if they are not to be excluded from the intellectual game. (Bourdieu, 1984: 283)

The *hit-parade* of intellectuals and writers is only the most caricatural form of media classification. The same logic operates daily in the identities given to those subject to criticism:

. . . the very act of classification alone, for example by describing in an apparently anodyne introduction an author or text as ‘philosophical’, is already an intervention in the philosophical field. And this intervention, far from being confined to the margins of philosophical production, has an effect on the whole field in so far as it sets up what it is harder and harder not to see, a new definition of ‘philosopher’ or — which is often the same — of the ‘intellectual’, of his work and role. (Pinto, 1994: 25)

Finally let us note here that the contemporary media are even more generally characterized by a considerable broadening of the fields of competence they claim and their sanctions apply today to fields which have traditionally enjoyed a strong autonomy. It is interesting from this point of view to note that some of the work of natural scientists now receives extensive coverage in mass circulation media, sometimes even before their ‘discoveries’ have been published in specialized journals. This intervention by the media in the scientific field takes on even more spectacular characteristics when these very discoveries, as for example cold fusion, seem to throw into crisis in the most radical manner the current paradigms, the institutions of science and their system for validating facts.

We have thus seen the French press acting to amplify a controversy set off by the publication in *Nature* of an article in which a researcher from the National Institute for health and medical research (INSERM), Jacques Benveniste, shared some of the results of experiments which seemed to prove that because of still observable chemical reactions water ‘remem-

bered' molecules that had been dissolved in it, this after a series of dilutions which in theory should have meant that all molecules had disappeared. In this case, faced with the scepticism and often even the clear hostility of scientific circles, including John Maddox, editor-in-chief of *Nature*, it was the researcher himself who appealed to the media. This provoked a reaction from his bosses which showed that, more or less consciously, they feared that what had happened in other fields would happen in theirs: the transfer from peers to 'public opinion' of the privilege of evaluating scientific work. Significantly, Benviste received a letter from the director of INSERM authorizing him to continue with his work, in the name of the freedom of research, but asking him to stop expressing himself 'outside high level scientific journals' (cited by Kaufmann, 1993: 78).

Within the same general logic let us note that the media, and above all television, have a comparable and increasingly noticeable structural effect on many other sectors of social activity. Taking the place of the police and the law in those programmes, which are now common in Europe, the purpose of which is to find missing persons, even suspected criminals; exhibiting in the public sphere what comes from the private sphere, from the privacy of the doctor's consulting room, as in those programmes where couples with problems come to seek help from a sexologist-host, the media tend to take over the principle regulatory institutions in all sectors of our collective life.¹⁴

Conclusion

The strong similarity that we have tried to demonstrate between the development of the relations between the journalistic and political fields on the one hand and between the intellectual and journalistic fields on the other stem from a variety of structural factors whose temporal development needs reconstructing.

It is important to underline here, in conclusion, what these developments reveal concerning the shifting of the boundaries which structure French society, concerning the changes which all the elites have undergone, as much in their social origins and career paths as in their composition and in the institutions to which they belong. As Luc Boltanski has suggested:

. . . many journalists, especially those who belong to the journalistic establishment, were educated at the Science Po. Now it is also at the Science Po that a large number of top businessmen, of senior civil servants, of members of the political class are also educated. . . . Products of the same educational institution (and also often members of the same social class), journalists thus have in common with those their work often concerns, with those they have to

interview, comment upon, criticize etc., an immense ‘that goes without saying’: the universe of discussion risks in this case being excessively restricted compared to the universe of what is not discussed. (cited by Reiffel, 1984: 44)

The same shared definition of situations: this is how today’s public sphere can also be defined.

Thus the effect of the media on the work of French intellectuals and, through them, on the content of thought, is not the product of an external and mechanical determinant, a Gresham’s law flowing from the commercial logic of the media alone. The hybridization we have talked of is also linked, as we have seen, as much to general developments in the structure of the French population as to a crisis in the universities and to a shift in the role of journalists, a shift that can only be analysed in terms of increased competition if by that one covers many other things besides economic mechanisms.

Because they never stop themselves oscillating between the role of critic and that of creator, intellectual journalists tend to favour the cultural production which is most adapted to their own social and intellectual dispositions: in particular the inexhaustible politico-cultural debate on the ‘spirit of the times’ gives them not only a privileged status as participant, ready to summon, interrogate, judge those who claim to possess intellectual competence, but also the power to designate those whose advice is worthy of attention on the final and decisive questions of ‘modernity’ (‘the end of history’, ‘individualism’, ‘post-modernity’ . . .), those one is sure will reply to the questions that ‘everyone’ is asking and which are now addressed to them. Philosophical journalism is, supremely, the cultural formula thanks to which the mediators, pioneers and travellers, whether they are journalists, writers or academics, help to make collectively acceptable free movement in the intellectual field. (Pinto, 1994: 30)

Postscript

In defining the intellectual as ‘he who meddles in things that are not his business’, was Sartre thinking of journalists? It is hardly likely.

Notes

1. We see here the theme which will be developed later by Alvin Gouldner in *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class* (Gouldner, 1979). Our interest in Gouldner’s text is that it links the rise of this new class to its access to the media, a sort of property right that it claims to exercise over cultural production, to use a phrase of Basil Bernstein’s.

2. Symptomatic of the relations between intellectuals and journalists during this period is the systematic use of inverted commas by the former to discredit, not without hypocrisy, the practices of the latter. Today the word ‘academic’ performs

the same function in the press, since it is a question of stressing that one is dealing with something uselessly obscure and without doubt as old-fashioned as it is pretentious: it is the reversal of this power relation to which we will turn shortly.

3. The number of students enrolled in French universities went from 150,000 in 1955 to more than 850,000 in 1985. The number of higher education teachers grew in the same proportion during the same period to pass 40,000 in 1985.

4. Boudon cites as an example the case of Roland Barthes.

5. Also in comparison to the salaries paid, at the same level of qualification, by the private sector. If one simply takes the job advertisements published in the press, they show that a young graduate can today obtain on leaving university a salary higher than that of the teachers who taught him or her.

6. Ross (1991: 62) also speaks about the Americanization of the structure of French intellectual life, which takes the form of a professionalization quite contrary to the traditional model of the French intellectual. Remember that, according to Sartre, deprofessionalization was the very condition of a move from the status of a specialist technician to that of an intellectual.

7. It is not anecdotal to reveal that this journalist is the wife of an ex-minister in one of the socialist governments of the 1980s, which is also the case of another star journalist on a competing channel, Christine Ockrent.

8. While we are using his theoretical approach, we do not entirely agree with Bourdieu when he writes: 'It is therefore a question of examining how the structural constraint which gives this field its weight, *itself dominated by the constraints of the market*, more or less deeply modifies the power relations within the different fields, affecting what is done and produced there and having very similar effects in these superficially very different spheres' (Bourdieu, 1994: 3; emphasis added). By insisting too much on what he calls the 'external constraints' on the journalistic field, that is to say for him essentially the market, Bourdieu ends by minimizing the role played by all those developments the origins of which we have tried to describe, while, of course, borrowing from him several of the arguments we have used.

9. A reader well informed on things French will perhaps be surprised in this regard that in tracing the history of the media trajectories of French intellectuals we have not spoken at length about the weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*, usually an inevitable reference in these discussions and to which the sociologist Louis Pinto has devoted a whole book, cited elsewhere. An analysis of the role of this publication in the development of the process of hybridization between the intellectual and journalistic fields, starting in the 1960s, would require a whole monograph on its own, if only to retrace the professional and intellectual trajectories of all its external collaborators since its birth 30 years ago, those 'friends of L'Observateur' (as the editors called them) of which the list constitutes a sort of *Who's Who* of the French intelligentsia. We must therefore confine ourselves to this small note and to this remark: born under the joint patronage of Sartre and Mendès-France, the still present moral reference of the French left, *Le Nouvel Observateur* has since itself undergone a process of hybridization due this time to changes in the internal power relations within the media and has now in particular to devote a significant proportion of its paging to its television programme listings.

10. Competition from television has forced the press to change its whole concept of news. The multiplication of supplements devoted to books, show business, leisure, the economy, on the lines of the specialized television magazines, turns newspapers like *Libération* or *Le Monde* into a kind of daily weekly.

11. These figures taken from Charon (1993:36) are only indicative because of the lack of commonality between the three studies and the huge growth in the number of French journalists.

12. Jean Baudrillard has in this way gained widespread international recognition, especially in Anglo-Saxon university circles, while occupying subaltern functions within the French university.

13. The one published by the journal *Lire*, based upon the choices of 448 personalities (writers, academics, journalists, publishers, painters, etc.) in this way placed on the same level of classification as contemporary 'major thinkers' the Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser and the comic strip creator Claire Bretecher. It is true that the latter is the star of the weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*, the most typical of the products that Pinto has dubbed 'middle-brow intellectual culture' (Pinto, 1984: 47). One can read the analysis made of this hit-parade by Pierre Bourdieu in the appendix to his *Homo academicus* (Bourdieu, 1984: 274–86).

14. Number 63 (1994) of *Réseaux* is entirely devoted to these so-called 'télévérité' programmes.

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