

Culture

Section of the American Sociological Association

A Message from the Chair

Jeffrey C. Alexander
Yale University

Performance and Power¹

In this brief essay, I wish to approach the phenomenon of power from the perspective of "cultural pragmatics," a new approach to social action as social performance. I am persuaded that this new understanding has large implications for theories of social structure and change.

Cultural pragmatics is, at once, a micro theory of action theory and a macro theory of institutions and culture. Each of these three levels is imbedded, moreover, inside a theory of historical change, which describes deep transformations in the conditions for social performance. It is these historical shifts in the interrelation of action, institutions, and culture that form the backdrop for new thinking about power.

Cultural pragmatics intertwines the traditions of culturalism and pragmatics that were pitted against each in seemingly endless conflict throughout the last century. There were, of course, significant efforts to transcend this throughout that time. If the current effort is different, one reason is that it seeks resolution neither through a one-sided and polemical *coup de main*, which purports to demonstrate that the other side is hopelessly wrong, nor through a kind of arithmetic process that sets empirical conditions for when one side or the other "really" matters, an additive and subtractive effort at resolution that might be called the variable approach. With the idea of cultural pragmatics, I propose to resolve this long brewing conflict in a truly synthetic manner, which means, in effect, starting over. We need to begin from the beginning, with a basic philosophical or theoretical rethink. We need to do away with the traditional concepts of action and structure, and to dissolve, not reify, such dichotomies as culture versus institution and instrumental versus normative.

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2005 Section Award Statements

Best Book Award: Eva Illouz

This year's Culture Section Book Prize committee had a large but rewarding job. The committee considered 36 nominated books. Because of the breadth and quality of the work presented to it, the committee decided to cite two books for honorable mention in addition to awarding the prize.

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Editor's Note

This issue of *Culture* offers a special enticement to visit the Section's website. There is unfortunately too little space to publish all of Bruno Pequignot's featured article in the printed version of *Culture*. After reading his account of the origins of the sociology of art in France, below, you will want to download the virtual copy of this issue, from www.ibiblio.org/culture/newsletter/, where you can also find his magisterial thematic summary of that field's history up to the present. Many thanks to Mary Leontsini (Univ. of Crete), president, Groupe de recherche sociologie de l'art, GR 18, Association Internationale de Sociologues de Langue Française, who arranged for the submission of this article, and to Jan Marontate (Acadia University), president, Research Committee 37 (Sociology of Art), International Sociological Association, who translated it into English. And of course *merci surtout* a Bruno Pequignot.

As always, please send me your ideas for future submissions!

Mark D. Jacobs, Sociology, GMU, Fairfax VA 22031
mjacobs@gmu.edu; 703/993-1434

Sociology of Art and Culture in France: An Overview of Its Origins

Bruno Pequignot
Universite de Paris-3

Sociology of the arts and culture¹ is a particularly dynamic research area in French sociology, as several indicators attest: there are more than ten thesis defenses a year in the arts, 55 of the 1000 papers given at the first congress of the Association of French Sociology (in Villetaneuse 2004), and a journal in the area (*Sociologie de l'art*) which was first published by the Éditions La Lettre Volée (Brussels) and now by L'Harmattan (Paris). The question of art in sociology was an early research subject in France. At the end of the 19th century, M. Guyau published *Art from a sociological point of view* (*L'art au point de vue sociologique*) and there was a regular

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Actions are performative insofar as they can be understood as communicating meaning to an audience. For the purposes of understanding such performance, it does not matter what meaning “really” is, either for actors themselves or in some ontological or normative sense. What matters is how others interpret actors’ meaning. This does not mean, however, that the meaning of an action can be understood being emergent simply from interaction. Much more that is “structural” is involved.

How can we understand the “success” of a performative action? The notion of success, of course, comes from pragmatics. But it seems to me that success actually has a lot to do with meaning, and hence with communication. For an action to be successful, an individual or collective actor must be able to communicate the meanings of their actions that they consciously or unconsciously want others to believe.

Communication of belief is accomplished, metaphorically speaking, by becoming an actor in a script. Then, you need to get the others who constitute the putative audience for your action to take this script as real, to experience it, not as a “script,” not as symbolic or contrived, but as completely real, as having an ontological status. Such successful conveyance means that you, as an actor, seem authentic to your audience. If they are to identify with you and to connect emotionally with your script, then they must believe you. They must accept your symbolic projection. They must speak your language, so that you are both reading from the same page.

From the manner in which I have put this, it should be clear just why we need to connect sociology with performance studies. It is in discussions about theatricality that we can find the tools we need to understand social action as performance. Performance studies is a broad and growing field inside and outside the U.S. Emerging from the collaboration between the avant-garde dramatist Richard Schechner and the anthropologist Victor Turner, it draws also from Erving Goffman and Clifford Geertz and from John Austin’s language philosophy, which was taken up by Jacques Derrida and elaborated by Judith Butler. To this theoretical brew there is added more than a dash of traditional theatre and media studies and, more recently, a pinch of postcoloniality. Voila! You have the heady mix that makes up performance studies today.

For a multi-level sociological approach to performance, it seems essential to begin with the notion that every social performance is composed of certain elements. It is with the description of these elements, their interrelation and their historical variability, that the sociology of performance begins.

(1) Actor. This could be an individual, a group, an organization, and may reference any level from casual and unstructured flow to class, gender, and national conflicts, such regional identities as Europe, or processes in the global civil sphere. Actors can be skillful or not, lifelike or wooden, imaginative or dull.

(2) Collective representations. The languages actors speak are multiple, and the words and phrases that come out of their mouths are singular, but they are speech acts, not languages in the semiotic sense. Every speech is a play upon the variations of a background structure, the collective representations that define the symbolic references for every speech act. For most of human history these background representations had nothing written about them, though they

were highly organized. When these representations are first objects of writing, it marks a major watershed in social performance, for it crystallized the distinction between more latent background representations and scripts, the action-related subset of symbols that constitutes the immediate background for speech.

(3) Means of symbolic production. In order to communicate such foregrounded representations, actors need real material things, which are themselves, of course, meaningfully defined. For the messages of an actor to be projected, they need a stage, whether this is a place in the sand, a tree or a high spot of ground, a newspaper, television transmission, video cam, or website. Performers also need props, which can be a parrot beak, full costume regalia, background music, spotlight, or the semi-automatic rifle cradled casually on one’s arms.

(4) Mis-en-scene. Literally “putting into action,” this French phrase has come to represent what directors do. It is the arranging, and the doing, of actors’ movements in time and space. It is the tone of voice, the direction of the glance, the gestures of the body, the direction and intensity of the spot lighting.

(5) Social Power. This dimension of social performance, often invisible, is critical in making the elements of performance available, or not. It can be defined as resources, capacities, and hierarchies, but it involves also the power to project hermeneutical interpretations of performance from outside political and economic power in the narrow sense. (Though this understanding of power is related to the theory I develop below, it is narrow and more conventional.)

(6) Audience. All of the above become significant only insofar as they allow or prevent meanings from being successfully projected to an audience. Audiences are placed at different removes from actors, and they can be more homogeneous or divided.

Each of these elements can be examined in terms of its respective performative structure, which has critical implications for patterning performance. For example, the better the script, the more it is agonistic. From tension between pure protagonists and impure antagonists there can emerge the twisting and turning that grabs and intensifies reader identification. But scripts cannot be too complicated, for simplicity and clarity are also critical to performative force. Drawing on theatrical and literary theory, we can explore such critical technical considerations for each of the elements we have considered.

The challenge for social performance is to make its component parts invisible. If they are not invisible, action will *seem* to be performed. Not seeming to be contrived, making a performance seem real, is the sine qua non for successful performance. To create verisimilitude is to seamlessly string together performative parts. Everything must appear to be created for the here and now. Meaning must seem to come from the actor if it is to seem authentic, not from scripts, props, power, or audience. Performative success depends on connecting the audience to the actor, without mediation. Audiences see themselves in the action. They are pulled in; they identify. Artificiality disappears. There is fusion between actor and audience and, indeed, among all the elements of performance. To make artifice seem natural: this is what it takes to be believed, to get others to accept your meaning.

In the course of historical time, the relationship among performative elements has been transformed. The simpler the society – the smaller, the less differentiated, stratified, and complex – the easier it is to achieve fusion, and, indeed, the more often it occurs. This is why, from the beginning of social science, analysts have associated “rituals” with simpler societies, a designation that can refer to family, peer group, and ethnic enclave and not only to simple collectivities in the historical sense. Rituals are the quintessence of the fused performance. It is easier to weave the elements of performance seamlessly together if they are not too separated to begin with. If a society is simpler, then it is more likely that actors will be understood, that scripts will be believed, that audience and actors will be familiar with one another, that dramatizations will seem natural rather than forced, and that power will be invisible or, at least, accepted as a natural thing.

Achieving verisimilitude is never automatic. It is always a performative accomplishment. But as societies become larger, more stratified, and more complex, it becomes more and more challenging. The reason is that the very elements from which performances must be put together have become increasingly de-fused.

(1) When writing emerges, structures of background representations become transformed into objectified texts. Authenticity is, in this way, much more subject to scrutiny, with texts themselves becoming subject to continual revision and reconstruction.

(2) Actors become more likely to perform before audiences they don't know, with whom they do not share prior background understandings.

(3) Those who possess social power lead vastly different lives from audiences. In fact, they often are involved in deeply exploitative relationships with the very people whom they must performatively convince. Think here of the Egyptian Pharaohs, who sat at the top of a stratified social pyramid, but who needed to engage in continuous public ceremonies to maintain collective belief. It is no wonder that Weber called such leaders mystagogues.

(4) The means of symbolic production become more difficult to employ and to obtain, even as their role become more crucial. For, with the growing separation of audience from actors, elaborate forms of projection must be brought into play.

As the elements of performance become so de-fused, critics and intellectuals emerge. Conflict over interpretation becomes an always present dimension of social life. Even as state, class, and religious power become centralized and distant, so do audiences. As they become more distant, they are more doubting, more alienated, more fragmented by class and such other qualities as ethnicity, region, gender, race, and religion. No wonder that counter-publics develop and oppose the performances of centers. Or that as popular cultures enter into the public sphere, they are simultaneously a roadblock to the successful projection of high and official meanings and a source for enlarging the reservoir of authentic performance available to marginalized subaltern groups.

Even as the elements of performance become separated from one another, the challenge for performance remains determinedly to re-fuse them. Yet with this defusion, it becomes increasingly difficult to create the seamless sense of the real upon which success depends. Whether refusion can be

achieved becomes, for every performance, increasingly an open question. No longer ascribed or automatic, refusion must now be achieved, and the process of legitimation becomes of great interest to social science. It becomes a moral and aesthetic question, too. Since romanticism, philosophers and artists have worried about the problem of authenticity, railing against artificiality, bad art, and bad faith. These vocabularies of criticism enter every human society as the elements of performance become defused.

The paradigmatic representation of this defusion process is theatre. Theatrical drama grows out of religious ritual, emerging in periods of sharply increasing social complexity. Greek drama grew out of Dionysian rituals, which explains why the fusion-haunted Nietzsche hated it so, and European drama emerged, during the early modern period, from the medieval Mystery plays performed at Easter time.

In the world of theatre, the defusion of performative elements becomes recognized, the challenge of overcoming artificiality institutionalized. In ancient Greece, competitions were staged and prizes awarded for play writing and for acting. Today, Oscars and Emmys are given to masters at producing and staging the now much more variegated elements of mass performance. One should note here how crucial is collegial control. The ability to effectively produce the elements of performance, and to bring them seamlessly together, cannot be ordered from outside. These are matters of craft, and their evaluation is subject to the horizontal authority of practitioners, not the vertical dictate of bureaucrats or bosses. The surprises endemic to award ceremonies remind us that the effectiveness of performance is always open for grabs, no matter how great power or reputation, or how much money is spent.

It is not accidental that theatre develops alongside the emergence of publics of potentially empowered citizens. From the perspective I am developing here, citizenship can be conceived as the separation and autonomy of a critical element of social performance. Citizenship is the legal capacity for skeptical viewership, the right to criticize and choose among performances, and the right to form one's own performances in response.

The implications of performance theory for understanding power should, by now, be pretty clear. According to traditional conceptions, whether Weberian or Marxist, power is institutional-structural. It is the ability to make somebody do something whether they like it or not. Coercion, or the ability to threaten it, is critical from such a perspective, which leads to the centrality of such ideas as control over means of production or monopolization of the means of violence. According to this traditional conception, you don't need ideas to exercise power; you just need resources and capacities.

Such thinking about power is as simplistic as it is omnipresent, but it also has element of truth. By identifying something as power, as compared, for example, to love, religion, or prestige, we wish to indicate a dimension of social life in which coercion can be evoked. Resources and capacities matter.

What's wrong, then, with emphasizing them alone? It is because, while supplying some of the most distinctive bases for exercising power, by no means do they supply all. Indeed, they leave the “action” of power — the **performing** of power — untouched. Power theories concentrating on resources/

capacities leave out the independent shaping power of background symbols and forms, the figures and forms of script, the contingency of mis-en-scene and actor interpretation, and the extraordinary significance of audience separation. Perhaps most importantly of all, this approach neglects how **performing power** is always mediated by accounts of its meaning and effectiveness, via the intervention of reports by journalists, critics, and by the inchoate but deeply resonant currents of the public's opinion.

The institutional-structural approach seems to assume, in other words, that the performance of power is easily fused. It is as if theatre had never developed, as if there were no such thing as the public stage and no capacity for counter-power at all. Yet the public is a stage. It is not easy for power to bring the defused elements of performance into alignment. The capacity for counter-performance is omnipresent.

Before elaborating on the new panorama of power opened up by this performative understanding, I wish to acknowledge there is a different alternative to institutional-structural theory, one which brings in ideology and knowledge. In the power theorizing first of Gramsci and then Althusser and more recently of Foucault, there developed within the institutional-structural position a new emphasis on representations and scripts. In the hands of these thinkers, however, such emphases, which would otherwise be welcome, actually become part of the problem, not the solution.

Such concepts as hegemony, interpellation, and power-knowledge obscure the contingency of performance and the complexity and independence of its elements. They replicate, in fact, the problems of linguistic structuralism. Concentrating on language at the expense of speech, they ignore the very contingency of performance that cultural pragmatics aims to embrace. The problem is not that these approaches are materialistic. They do not ignore representations. What they do, instead, is to assume powerful scripts, great actors, compliant audiences, corrupted or brainwashed journalists, and bought-off critics. With a wave of the hand, texts become automatically transformed into successful action. Whether it is law, school books, movies, political campaigns, or wars, background representations are assumed to speak, and to speak persuasively. But we know from living our own lives and from the experience of history that this cannot be so. No text automatically achieves performative success. Neither does any actor, social power, or mis-en-scene. To look at language as power is no different than looking at power as if it were simply a language; it is to make Claude Levi-Strauss into Pierre Bourdieu.

If power cannot be simply coercive, it needs to be performative. If power is to be effective, performing power must be a success. To be really powerful means that social actors, no matter what resources and capacities they possess, must find a way to make their audiences believe them. To think about power more clearly, then, we need to consider the elements of performance, their internal complexity, and their independence. Judith Butler writes that "there is no power construed as a subject that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability," and she refers here to the relatively straightforward task of convincing an audience about one's gender. We need not agree with the literal proposition that power is not a subject who acts to accept Butler's larger,

more rhetorical point. Shorn of the post-structural language, Butler is saying that power is not *only* a subject acting. An actor, the purveyor of power, cannot make power, or more accurately sustain it, through his or her action alone. Power is subject to the rigors of performance. The rigor of greatest interest to Butler is the need for power to constantly "iterate" background narratives and codes. Performing power depends, however, on much more than that. It not only needs to iterate earlier beliefs but to sustain a productive relation to all the other elements of performance as well. Faced with such rigors, power can indeed exist only in its instability.

Let me conclude with two necessarily brief illustrations. In *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's 'Dirty War'*, Diana Taylor studies the Argentine Junta in terms of the performance of masculinity and aggression. With its uniforms, parades, and militant moralism, the dictatorship sought to transform tradition and Catholicism into militant and intimidating force. With its often very public abductions, which allowed thousands of invisible executions, it put coercion on display. Yet, despite the Junta's extraordinary control over state resources and capacity, these performances of dictatorship eventually came to naught. The "mothers of the disappeared" formed in the public square of Buenos Aires. The durability and visibility of the *madres* constituted a counter-performance, quietly recalling the regime's murdered enemies and silenced opponents. The *madres'* spectacle unfolded in the great public square of Buenos Aires everyday, and their symbolic authority, which drew upon some of the same traditional values as the Junta, was too great for them to be physically dispersed. Eventually, this performative power had tremendous effect. Certainly other factors were involved, but the performance of counter-power by the *madres* was one important reason why the Junta eventually disappeared.

Dictatorship is the ability for central power to re-fuse every element of its own performance, while preventing other potential powers from ever doing the same. In this manner, there is a primitivization of power: social performance is pulled back under the center's control. Such central control over the elements of performance can be sustained, however, only with tremendous ideological work and the relentless exercise of force. Certainly it is possible, even in modern and complex societies, for dictatorships to be successful. The repression and mass murders of Stalin, Hitler, Mao, and Pol Pot are proof. But even inside these brutal historic regimes there were latent counter-publics and audience alienation, and at some times and places counter-performances broke through. Fusion is much more difficult to sustain when dictators are less totalitarian in their ambitions and can draw on less complex and abundant ideological and material resources.

Let us turn from outright dictatorship to the concerted exercise of power inside of more democratic regimes, where the consequential defusion of the elements of performance is given much freer rein. Despite neo-conservative aims, energy, and interests, and their control of the reigns of national political power, the Bush administration's run-up to the Iraqi war depended on the success of a complex production process. Such a war could have been launched, for example, only after September 11, 2001, an explosive trauma that which strongly energized elements of a Manichean plot. It also depended upon a successful out-of-town run, or rehearsal, in Afghanistan. Even

with this, the Iraqi hawks still had to engage in endless performative evocations of the necessity for war, which they acted out in public speeches, interview, talk shows, and op-ed pages. But these performances met with only partial success. The ability to launch a legitimate war eventually came to depend on Secretary of State Colin Powell's giving the "performance of his life" before the Security Council at the UN.

Even after the ineptitude and tragedy of the administration's war-making became evident, the American citizen-audience remained more receptive than it might because of the performative weakness of the other side. Instead of a compelling counter-narrative, the enemy of the American and British occupation could display only murderous terror and a fundamentalist script repulsive to most democratic sensibilities. Nonetheless, despite the President's control over the levers of structural power, the performative success of his war making has steadily declined. His performance of war is mediated by critical accounts of journalists and pundits, by foreign leaders and intellectuals, and by angry parents of those who have died. The applause meter of public opinion polls is showing a slow but steady decline.

Skeptical audiences are the key to causing the performances of institutional power to fail. But the instability of power involves something more, the possibility of converting turned-off audiences into turned-on counter-powers through the staging of successful alternative plays. Democracy, in fact,

might be conceived as a system that allows counter-performances always to be made. It does so by ensuring the independence of the elements of performance, by making it illegal for any actors to monopolize them. Of course, efforts are always made to do so. Power corrupts, but in differentiated and fragmented social orders it is very difficult for power to corrupt absolutely. Scandals and social movements confront such monopolizing efforts with cries of corruption, and they are performances too.

ENDNOTE

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented at the session on Cultural Performance at the 2005 annual meetings of the ASA. In the following, I draw upon *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual*, to be published in a few months by Cambridge University Press, which I edited with Bernhard Giesen and Jason Mast, and previously published in *Sociological Theory*: "From the Depths of Despair: Performance and Counter-Performance on September 11th" (22 [1] 2004: 88-105) and "Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy" (Vol. 2 [4] 2004: 527-573).

Sociology of Art and Culture in France, continued

thematic listing for 'aesthetic sociology' in *l'Année Sociologique*, Emile Durkheim's pioneering French sociological journal, with contributors to the theme who were principal collaborators in the journal. For example, Marcel Mauss wrote in 1908: "Art has not only a social nature, but social effects too. It is the product of collective fantasy, but it is also that with which one can agree, the sentimental effects of which are relatively the same for all at a given moment in a given society" (Mauss 1908: 205). In this way Mauss laid down the general outline for developments in the sociology of art: social processes of the production of work and artists, reception and dissemination of works and their social effects. All that is missing in some ways is the question of the art market and issues related to cultural policies and institutions that implement them.

The first texts that present themselves as "sociology of art" are by art historian Pierre Francastel, who sought in sociology a means of escaping from what seemed to him to be an impasse in art history, by introducing research on ideologies, but also on material and techniques in the production of artworks in sociological analysis and interpretation. After publishing important historic works in the 1930s, it was mostly after World War II that these theses would be developed in sociology of art. Francastel was the first to place the work of art at the center of sociological research, as is evident in a quote, often decontextualized, that expresses this well: "consequently, a sociology of art can **only** be constituted on the level of a profound analysis of works" (Francastel, 1970:15; emphasis added). To avoid misunderstandings about this quo-

tation, it must be placed in context. Indeed, this sentence is preceded by another: "Thus one sees that a sociology of art worthy of this name – and capable of claiming to be scientific in character—does not imply taking into consideration the dispersion in society of objects that are considered to be miraculously created, but implies a new approach to a certain category of objects—figurative (representational) objects and monuments—that considers the idea that the artist represents one of the forms of fundamental activity of the human spirit" (Francastel 1970:14-15). I would like to insist here on his refusal of the notion of an "uncreated creator" that was correctly denounced by Pierre Bourdieu later. Pierre Francastel tells us that art is not the result of a miraculous activity, but an intellectual product accomplished in precise conditions by the human spirit, that is to say it is socially and historically situated. The "in-depth analysis" of works cannot therefore be interpreted as a purely internal analysis of the artwork, but rather always implies (and this is doubtless the mark of its in-depth character) an analysis of material and historic conditions for the production of the artwork. This is exactly what he specifies in the sentence that follows the citation in question: "Nothing serious can be done if we take as data about creation the object of this study instead of considering art works as the production of a problematic activity with technical possibilities as well as capacity for integrating abstract values, that vary according to the milieu considered and taking into account the unequal development of intellectual faculties in different milieus at different stages in history" (Francastel 1970: 15).

From this pivotal position, he proposes a theory of art as a “construction” or “composition” of elements drawn from the social life of an artist. This imaginary reconstruction is not a reflection of reality, but a way of apprehending or understanding that which structures reality. It is thus on the level of “relations” set in place in the work that the analysis of this particular composition becomes singular. “*The work of art is the unique product of an activity that is situated simultaneously on the level of material activities and imaginary activities of a given social group. In both cases, furthermore, it possesses a double nature—sociological and individual—as does the personality of the man who produced it. It follows from this situation that the study of the work of visual art must simultaneously consider both material and representational aspects of the work of art.*” (Francastel 1956: 109)

This pioneering work was to become the object of criticism by those who came to define this particular field of sociology, in particular with respect to the question raised by the use of the expression “only” in the above definition. It remains, however, an essential feature of the history of the field. Doubtless this approach was still too heavily marked by art history and too little attached to the concrete study of social conditions of the production and dissemination of works, but it has none the less defined some key questions.

The sociology of art developed above all since the middle of the 1970s: less speculative than German sociology of art, less linked to the Marxist heritage that continues to inspire British sociology of art, the discipline owes its rise, in France as in the United States, to the adoption of survey methods and instruments, and of conceptual tools from other sociological specialties—sociology of organizations, of work, of professions, of education, of public policies—and to a strong demand for knowledge originating in the main sectors involved with cultural interventions by public authorities. (Menger 1994). A short history of this sub-field can be sketched in two essential moments after the foundation: a first period during which the principal concepts and constructs of the research object were defined, a period marked by the work of L. Goldmann in literature, J. Duvignaud on theatre, P. Bourdieu on the social conditions of reception and creation, R. Moulin on the art market and cultural institutions and R. Bastide on relations between society and artistic production; and a second period inaugurated by the Marseille Meeting in 1985, followed by a series of International Meetings at Grenoble beginning in 1991. It is necessary here to give in a few words, albeit a bit overly reductive, a brief presentation of the theories of art of these figures, since it is from the standpoint of these proposals that current debates developed.

For Lucien Goldmann, the relations between art works and society are the basis for the very possibility of sociological work on art and should be sought at the level of what he designates “structural homologies”: *The relationship between collective thought and great individual literary, philosophical or theological creations resides not in the identity of the contents but in a more or less developed coherence and in a homology of structures, which can express itself by extremely different imaginary content of the real content of collective consciousness*” (Goldmann 1964:41). In the work imaginary elements are related and these elements may or may not issue from collective representations of the time but their structural orga-

nization is generated by that of collective representations. In the end, the essence of Goldmann’s theory is that it shows the genesis of the literary work from real social life and situates this genesis at a structural level of the organization of the class-based world view itself. The structure of the work is a production of the structure of collective representations, the author is himself a product of class relations in a given economic system.

R. Bastide insists on the necessity of distinguishing sociology of the art producer from sociology of enjoyment (which we might call sociology of reception). The first seeks to understand the process of production of new aesthetic values, the other seeks to establish consequences of this production for consumers and beyond that for society itself. He emphasizes above all that theories of the social definition of the artist are most frequently insufficient for an account of the creative process. Indeed, public pressures, the reality of the art market, and art ideologies pressure the artist and contribute to the creative process, although since the artist creates new values he cannot be reduced to such “determining” factors: the analysis must include the imagination, to allow for the transformation of empirical data into work and to explain that the artist is at once dependent on the society in which he lives and from which he emancipates himself. *In a word, if instead of considering the social as a static reality one considers it a dynamic reality, the art producer is the one who by the strength of his imagination takes possession of developments in order to surpass them and make them express his creative originality. The artist is less the reflection of society than the person who gives birth to all of society’s novelties* (Bastide 1977:77). What characterizes the artist, then, is not so much being situated in a social reality, as is anyone, but rather drawing out something that was only potentially there in an unpredictable, improbable way and that would never have been brought to our consciousness without the gesture of the artist. This position has the advantage of giving to the artist and to art a specific function in society, a critical – even revolutionary—function in a field which belongs to the artist: the symbolic.

Jean Duvignaud seeks to establish concepts for sociology of art that permit an understanding of *the totality of artistic experience in the totality of social experience* (Duvignaud, 1967:34). To this end he sets forth five concepts that allow him to clear terrain for a field of sociological investigation: drama, polemic signs, the combination of cosmic classification systems and social classification systems, anomie and atypical phenomena. With these five concepts the author proposes a global vision of the function of the work of art, its genesis and its social consequences. For Duvignaud the research object of sociology of art is the conjunction of two dynamics: that of art in the making and that of society in transformation. The endpoint of sociology is thus to understand the place of art and its function in so far as it *continues social dynamism by other means* (Duvignaud 1967: 136).

Pierre Bourdieu’s theory seeks to re-inscribe art in the “material” aspects of social relations. He defines his research questions against the refusal of artists and philosophers to consider the artist and art as phenomena inscribed in a history and a society. *Breaking with these different ways of being unaware of production itself, the sociology of works (of art) in the way I conceive it takes as its object the field of cultural*

production, and inseparably, the relation between the field of production and the field of consumption (Bourdieu 1980:210). In other words sociological knowledge of the (art)work is attained through knowledge of socio-cultural contexts of its appearance and reception. He writes: *That which one calls "creation" is the meeting of a habitus that is socially constituted and a certain position already instituted or possible in the division of labor of cultural production (and by extension, in the second degree, in the division of labor of domination); the work with which the artist makes his (or her) work and, inseparably, makes himself (or herself) as artist (and when he or she is part of the demand in the field, as an original, singular artist) could be described as the dialectical relation between his (or her) job, which, often pre-exists for him and outlives him (with obligation, for example, the "artist's life," attributes, tradition, modes of expression, etc) and his or her habitus which predisposes him more or less totally to occupy this position or—which could perhaps be one of the prerequisites inscribed in the position—to transform it more or less completely* (Bourdieu 1980: 210-11). The artwork is thus determined by the conjunction of social and historical conditions of production of the artist as a human individual, social agent, professional artist, etc, that is to say as occupying a certain function in the social division of labor in general and in the social division of intellectual work in particular. Creation is a social act determined in its existence as in its form by the conjunction of a habitus and a social system of cultural production: the field of this production, but also of its dissemination and its reception. Knowledge of the artwork passes by that of relations between the different social fields.

For Raymonde Moulin, finally *Sociology of art, like sociology of science, has made rapid progress over the two last decades in leaving behind strictly conceptual reflection on the relation between art and society in order to become interested in the social contexts of emergence and reception of artworks, with means that are specifically sociological*, (Moulin 1988:185). The object of sociology of art, then, is the study of the conditions of production and reception. In fact in her own work, R. Moulin has been particularly associated with the study of reception through the intermediary of an analysis of the market for painting. Her research treats relations between painters and social institutions which "commission" or "create a demand for" painting, a study in part historical, but also and above all sociological with attention to the importance of competition and connivance of museums, picture galleries and collectors. Her body of work on the market and on legitimation processes does not prevent her from raising major questions for a sociologist of art (in contradistinction from other authors who either forget it or explicitly reject it as outside of the field of sociology): *If one must compliment the multiplicity of current research for knowledge production one cannot not however avoid asking oneself what the majority of them conceive of as the quality of the artwork.*(Moulin 1988: 192)

This first period, particularly rich in works, reached its apogee in the organization of the *First International Colloquium in Sociology of Art* in Marseille in 1985 under the direction of R. Moulin. This conference was an essential step. It was the occasion for a summary of previous research and on this basis became the departure point for a new period of research follow-

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ing but also expanding the field to include new research objects or new approaches. Thus the following areas became the objects of important renewed activity: analysis of institutions and cultural policies (Moulin, Urfalino for example); the question of artistic professions in France (Menger, Paradeise, Fabiani); and that of publics and of their place in sociological research (Hennion, Leenhardt, Ducret). Of course, one could add other names for each of these themes and the works of each of these researchers cannot be reduced only to these questions. Another important dimension is that of the study of cultural practices and consumption after the work of P. Bourdieu (X. Donnat).

A second period developed out of this conference during which theoretical and empirical work multiplied in each of the areas that began to open up at this time. Before entering into the necessarily brief presentation of the principal themes of this research it is important to emphasize that sociology of art and culture is first and foremost sociology, that is a science that seeks to describe, explain and understand the logics at work in social life in all aspects. This clarification is useful for understanding that beyond specific theoretical and methodological rifts linked to the research object, this sub-field of sociology is marked by the same conceptual and methodological debates as the whole discipline. Obviously, I cannot take these up here, but it is necessary to keep in mind that research in this disciplinary sub-field has developed in part at the same rhythm as in the discipline as a whole.

This second period is marked institutionally by the organization in France of regular international meetings since 1991 in Grenoble, and then since 1999 every year in the context of a Research Group (GDR) financed by the National Centre of Scientific Research (CNRS): the research group known as OPuS (which stands for "works"(*oeuvres*), publics and society) and occasionally elsewhere (Greece 2004, Canada 2005) that have facilitated the constitution of networks of research teams and researchers in France at first and now internationally in collaboration with international networks of the International Sociological Association and the International French-speaking association of sociologists (L'Association Internationale des sociologies de langue Française). The principal journal in this field *Sociologie de l'Art* has developed and expanded in length and frequency (now two issues a year). Finally the publication of conference proceedings allows for an accumulation of findings and has contributed to the production of a common scientific culture.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that sociology of the arts and culture is one of many chapters in sociology. We find in it the same methods of inquiry, the same concepts, the same research questions. However, like other chapters, sociology of the arts brings to the discipline specific questions for different aspects of sociological activity. For example, studies about visual arts have brought fresh reflections to the status of the image in sociology; research on arts occupations has imposed new frameworks that sociology of work had not encountered in the study of professional groups and allowed for the analysis of processes from new perspectives. We could mention here the remarkable work of P. M. Menger on the acting profession and in particular his analysis of the status of workers involved with stage and screen arts (1997).

Furthermore, the necessary openness to interdisciplinarity of this branch of sociology with respect to disciplines like economics (study of the art market, analysis of economic conditions for the production of “expensive” works like cinema, concerts and opera) (Menger 1983, Benghozi 1989, Creton 2004), art history (Poulot) and more generally history (Passeron 1992), language studies and so forth have made fruitful conceptual and methodological exchanges possible in way that have enriched the entire field of sociology in France.

[Editor’s Note: Unfortunately, space considerations necessitate abridging the text of this essay in the hard-copy version of *Culture*. Fortunately, however, the virtual version of *Culture*, readily available on the Section’s website—<http://www.ibiblio.org/culture/newsletter/>—contains “bonus” pages at the end, where you will find the continuation of Bruno Pequignot’s magisterial survey.]

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ENDNOTE

- ¹. This article is a revised and updated version of a chapter I wrote about this question in 2000 that was published in Jean-Michel Bethellot’s *sociologie française contemporaine*, Paris, PUF, 2000 réédité PUF Quadrige, 2003.

2005 Culture Section Awards, continued

One honorable mention is for **Tia DeNora’s *After Adorno: Rethinking Music Sociology***, published by Cambridge University Press in 2003. DeNora revisits the work of a founding author of modern critical analysis and uses it to neatly reverse the lens through which much social science appraises music. Rather than presuming social influences on music, DeNora argues that we should presume musical influences on society; in other words, that we should assess music as a constitutive component of social life. Drawing on empirical and theoretical scholarship in a wide range of fields, DeNora convincingly shows that music helps define a wide range of human phenomena: our sense of proper emotional response, for example, and our conceptions of intellectual and social order. Broad in scope, careful in argument, and clear in prose, the committee expects that ***After Adorno*** will be a must-read for critical students of music both within and beyond sociology.

The other honorable mention is for **Mario Luis Small’s *Villa Victoria: The Transformation of Social Capital in a Boston Barrio***, published by the University of Chicago Press in 2004. Small deftly integrates demographic, historical, and ethnographic methods to build a lucid analysis of how a subsidized housing facility in Boston’s South End gradually changed from a tightly knit Puerto Rican community with only modest signs of urban decay into the kind of anomic neighborhood predicted by general theories of neighborhood poverty and social disorganization. The book ably demonstrates how regional demographics are only part of the story of urban neighborhood decline – residents’ cultural framings of a place’s meaning and

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YEAR’S AWARDS--
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of their own obligations to it matter just as much as the easily measurable population-level factors typically examined in demographic research. In making his argument Small brings the utility of culturalist notions of frames and repertoires to bear on pressing issues in urban planning and public policy.

The winner of the ASA Culture Section’s 2005 book award is **Eva Illouz** of The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, for her work: ***Oprah Winfrey and the Glamour of Misery: An Essay on Popular Culture***, published by Columbia University Press in 2003. On this choice the committee’s decision was swift and unanimous.

Building on years of virtual immersion in the textual universe of Oprah Winfrey – not only transcripts of the show itself but also the myriad Internet, magazine, and book venues through which her subject’s “tentacular structure” is realized, Illouz argues that Oprah is not just your everyday TV star, and that her medium is far more than just a television show. Rather – and I will here quote Illouz directly and at length, to give you a sense of the extraordinary clarity of her prose:

The confessional talk show is to the late twentieth century what the novel was to the eighteenth century: a new and powerful cultural form that captures the central problems posed to identity in the contemporary era and resolves them with a particular narrative formula. In the same way that the eighteenth-century novel emerged from and in turn codified bourgeois domesticity, ideals of love, and market mobility, twentieth-century talk shows have captured and codified the postmodern collapse of selfhood, identity, and family in the framework of daily life. While the novel presupposed a coherent self that could struggle against and triumph over society...the Oprah Winfrey show's core 'fiction' is that of an individual whose moral foundations have collapsed...and who struggles with herself to regain functionality in the basic institutions of society (most notably, the market and the family) (p. 48).

At bottom, Illouz argues, the confessional talk show teaches its viewers how to think about the project of living. It does so by catalyzing a psycho-therapeutic conception of health and pathology into peculiarly commodified stories about self-struggle and self accomplishment that resonate with the social circumstances of the people who tune in to them each day.

Illouz carefully analyzes how Oprah's creation is built with a wide array of cultural raw materials: the talk show format invented by Phil Donahue and others before him; the troubled history of black America, and the traditions of struggle, spirituality, and solidarity that African Americans have built while tra-

versing that history; the wider culture's objectification of women's bodies, and the contradictory ideas our culture sustains about the relationship between physical and psychic health. Illouz shows how Oprah draws from all of this disparate stuff to craft something new under the sun, an object as mundane as daytime television but, in its evident capacity to intervene in people's apprehension of their own experience, just about as consequential as a work of art can be.

Oprah Winfrey and the Glamour of Misery both utilizes and extends cutting-edge developments in the sociology of culture regarding the role of popular media in constituting subjectivities; the gender and racial dimensions of cultural production and reception; and the complex relationship between individual cultural authorship and broader divisions of cultural labor.

In the end, though, I would suggest that Illouz' work is itself a work of art as much as of scholarship. As the book's subtitle plainly discloses, it is an essay, a literary genre that contemporary American sociology perhaps too often leaves to scholars in other fields (and other nations). Essays are built from evidence, but they do not fetishize method, nor do they imprison their readers in the minutiae of data. Essays are carefully argued, but they also are unequivocally positioned. Most important, essays do not just analyze things. Essays redefine them. You see this sort of work in our business, but rarely; Goffman on asylums; Erikson on deviance; Abbott on professions; Tilly on inequality. It is the sort of work whose primary consequence is not an argument but a way of seeing.

Committee Members: Mitchell Stevens (Chair), Lyn Spillman, Sharon Zukin

Best Paper Award: Nina Eliasoph and Paul Lichterman

Our choice for the best article award is "Culture in Interaction," by Nina Eliasoph and Paul Lichterman (2003, *American Journal of Sociology* 108: 735-94). This article lays out a compelling agenda for refining sociological research on culture, structure, civic participation, and inequalities. The authors argue that cultural sociologists need to study culture in interaction, the creation of meaning and use/subversion of symbols and representations within small, everyday groups.

The piece is ambitious, both methodologically and theoretically. It is nicely argued with four concrete, ethnographic cases. The argument about how culture is created in interaction fills an important hole in the way culture is typically theo-

riodized and studied. Little work in sociology of culture grapples seriously with the role interaction plays in shaping cultural meaning, and ethnographers, who do address this issue, generally do not directly engage the sociology of culture literature. This article could therefore energize both sociology of culture and ethnography.

We especially liked the "Implications for Further Research" section, where the authors clearly spell out what their approach adds to extant theories, including symbolic boundary drawing and neoinstitutionalism. It is an agenda-setting piece that will likely be influential for future work in the field.

Committee: Mary Blair-Loy (Chair), Abigail Saguy, and Ron Eyerman

Best Student Paper Award: Gregoire Mallard

The graduate student article prize committee for the culture section this year received 27 entries and were pleased to see how much excellent work is being done by young cultural sociologists poised to enter the field. The paper that received the highest score from all three of us is by Gregoire Mallard of Princeton University, and is titled "Communities of Interpreters and their Technical Instruments." Drawing on interviews with Balzac scholars in France and mobilizing the theoretical frame-

work of Bruno Latour, Mallard argues that standardized textual editions for humanities scholars fulfill much the same function as standardized specimens and laboratory instruments for natural scientists: by embodying paradigmatic assumptions (with respect to the content of annotation, for example, or the nature of the physical format employed) and thus allowing scholars who use them to bracket presuppositional disputes, such editions can greatly enhance levels of scholarly productivity.

Committee Members: Neil Gross, Lynn Chancer, Al Young

2006 Section Award Committees

Best Article Prize

Works published in 2003-2005 are eligible. Authors can submit their own work or nominations may be made by others. Send a copy of the nominated article electronically to each member of the prize committee:

Mabel Berezin (Chair) Sociology, Cornell University (mmb39@cornell.edu);

Nina Eliasoph, Sociology, University of Southern California (eliasoph@usc.edu);

Eric Magnuson, Sociology, Loyola Marymount University (emagnuson@lmu.edu).

The deadline for nominations is **March 1, 2006**.

Best Book Prize

Section members, authors, or publishers may nominate books published in 2004-2006. Self-nominations are welcome. Send a nominating letter, including a description of the book and its significance, as well as a copy of the book, to each member of the prize committee:

Ron Jacobs (chair), Department of Sociology, Arts and Sciences 351, University at Albany, State University of New York, Albany, NY 12222 (rjacobs@albany.edu);

Laura Edles, Vanguard University, 55 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 (laura.d.edles@csun.edu);

Francesca Polletta, Department of Sociology, 3151 Social Science Plaza, University of California, Irvine, Irvine, CA 92697-5100 (polletta@uci.edu).

The deadline for nominations is **March 1, 2006**.

Best Student Paper

Any work (published or unpublished but not previously submitted for this prize) by someone who is a student at the time of submission. Authors can submit their own work or nominations can be made by others. This award includes a \$300 prize to reimburse part of the cost of attending the 2006 ASA Annual Meeting. Send a copy of the paper electronically to each of the committee members:

Anne Kane (chair), University of Houston-Downtown, kanea@uhd.edu;

Alexander Riley, Bucknell, atriley@bucknell.edu;

Grant Blank, American University, grant.blank@acm.org.

The deadline for nominations is **March 1, 2006**.

ASA 2006 Culture Section Sessions--

NOTE THAT WE'VE SURPASSED 1000 MEMBERS AND EARNED AN EXTRA SESSION!

Roundtables: Sociology of Culture

Organizer: Jennifer Jordan, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Jennifer Jordan

Department of Sociology

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Bolton 732

P.O. Box 413

Milwaukee, WI 53201

Phone: 414 229 5074

Fax: 414 229 4266

jajordan@csd.uwm.edu

Regular Section Session: Musical Lifeworlds

Organizer: Tia DiNora, Exeter University

Tia DeNora

Sociology, SHiPSS

University of Exeter

Amory Building, Rennes Drive, Exeter EX4 4RJ

phone: +44 (0)1392-263280

secretary: +44 (0)1392-263276

fax: +44 (0)1392-263285

T.DeNora@exeter.ac.uk

Music is a powerful part of lifeworlds. Tastes in music bind and divide people. Listening to music can heal, inspire, or tranquilize them. Workers use songs to coordinate their tasks and bring some agency to activities controlled by others. Ama-

teurs spend their leisure making it. Professionals learn techniques of working musically with others. Musical worlds need instruments, spaces, and other resources, and rely on people to provide them. Papers are solicited on any of these or related topics.

Regular Section Session: Cultural Beginnings and Endings

Organizer: Robin Wagner-Pacifici, Swarthmore

Robin Wagner-Pacifici

Professor of Sociology

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Swarthmore College

Swarthmore, PA. 19081

phone: 610-328-8638

rwagner1@swarthmore.edu

Beginnings and endings are important cultural forms that mark transitions between regimes of power, ordinary and non-ordinary realities, back-stages and front-stages, students and graduates, children and adults. This session is an opportunity to look at the variety of forms they can take, and how they are used to order the world in both cultural and social terms. Papers are welcome on political, family or other institutional rituals; media conventions; rites of passage; ceremonies of subordination/superordination; and any art forms that represent these.

Regular Section Session: Culture, Materiality and the Modern City

Organizer: Patrick Carroll, UC Davis
Prof. Patrick Carroll
Department of Sociology
Science & Technology Studies Program
University of California
Davis, 95616, USA
Phone: 530-752-5388
carrollx@earthlink.net

Over the last few decades the concept of culture has been expanded beyond a focus on symbolic meaning (whether agential or structural) to include both practices and materiality. The material world transformed by human activity, i.e., material culture, has been shown to structure interaction, shape symbolic meaning, construct and sustain historical memory, secure social order, and serve the designs of political power. Nowhere is this more evident than in the modern city; brutally so when the material culture fails, as in the case of New Orleans. Papers are invited that address any of the ways that materiality expresses, shapes, or sustains culture in the modern city. Also welcome are papers that address the relationship between the built environment and social disasters such as epidemics and floods, relations between the city and countryside, or the material design of segregation and urban ghettos.

Regular Section Session: Cultures of the Marketplace

Organizer: Laura Miller, Brandeis University

Laura Miller
Department of Sociology, MS 071
Brandeis University
415 South Street
Waltham, MA 02454-9110
Phone: 781-736-2643
Fax: 781-736-2653
lamiller@brandeis.edu

Economic life entails not only the exchange of assets, but also ways of life, material cultures, forms of accounting, rituals of exchanges, stores, warehouses, display windows, advertising forms, and mannequins. This session is intended to explore these cultural forms, and to consider how objects are given economic value through them.

Regular Section Session: Playful Technocultures

Organizer: Bart Simon, Concordia University
Bart Simon
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Concordia University
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W, H-1125-25
Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8
Phone: 514-848-2424 x 2164
Fax: 514-848-4539
simonb@alcor.concordia.ca

This session will consider the intersections between play and technology in addressing issues in the organization and practice of historical, cross-cultural and contemporary technocultures. Papers theorizing aspects of technological play are welcome along with theoretical and/or empirical studies of children or youth and technology, toys and gadgets, geek culture, playful engineering, technology and consumption, and online play.

Holt's *Sociology of Culture Teaching Guide*, 3d Edition

The Sociology of Culture Teaching Guide, 3rd edition, edited by William Holt, University of Connecticut, is now available on-line from the American Sociological Association's bookstore. Drawing from the works of thirty-three contributors, the 300-page volume is divided into four sections. The first section includes nine undergraduate syllabi and exercises for sociology of culture survey courses. The second section contains eight graduate syllabi survey courses as well as materials on

comprehensive exams in cultural sociology. Additionally, the volume's third section includes fourteen syllabi on subfield seminars in Arts & Arts Policy, Cognition, Time and Memory, Identity, Mass Media and Popular Culture, Theory and Methods, and Values, Morals, and Culture Wars. Finally, as a new component from previous editions, the fourth section includes five syllabi from international departments.

ISA Sociology of Art and Culture Conference, March 29-31, 2005

Jeffrey A. Halley, The University of Texas San Antonio

Participants from 11 countries converged on San Antonio, Texas, for a joint interim conference of Research Committee 37, Sociology of the Arts, and Research Committee 14, Sociology of Communication, Knowledge, and Culture. The Conference had a nice mix of international and national attendees, as well as faculty and students from The University of Texas at San Antonio, and interested members of the community. The first Plenary session concerned museums and exhibitions, fol-

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lowed by a session on post-modernism, and after lunch, one on rationalization and resistance, followed by a session on media. On Tuesday evening we were privileged to have Professor Richard "Pete" Peterson present the keynote address, "Roll over Beethoven: Whatever Happened to 'Highbrow'". His lecture, co-authored with Gabriel Rossman from Princeton and UCLA, filled a large auditorium. Wednesday morning commenced with a plenary session on theory, followed by one on

nationalism and regions. We had two parallel sessions in the afternoon, the first concerning the institutional legitimation of art, and another about the analysis of literature.

One of the high points of the conference was the tour we took that afternoon to see "in situ" Mexican American Mural art on the West Side neighborhood with San Anto Cultural arts (www.sananto.org), one of the Mexican American Community Arts Centers (CAC's) in San Antonio. It is interesting to note that the murals are not covered by graffiti as are other naked walls in the community

The Conference concluded the next morning with a plenary session on the Spanish language media in the US and Mexico, followed by a presentation concerning the state's use of the arts for legitimation of power.

We encourage all to come to the World Congress of Sociology in Durban in 2006. All the information is on the respective web sites: http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/congress2006/rc/rc14_durban.htm; http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/congress2006/rc/rc37_durban.htm.

NEXT ISSUE--

**NEWS OF THE NEW RESEARCH NETWORK ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF CULTURE
OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**

READ BRUNO PEQUIGNOT'S

**"THE SOCIOLOGY OF ART IN FRANCE: A THEMATIC OVERVIEW"
ONLINE AT <http://www.ibiblio.org/culture/newsletter/>**

The Sociology of Art in France: A Thematic Overview

Bruno Pequignot, Université de Paris-3

Let us present an overview of this research focusing on six essential points:

1. Institutions and cultural politics

This area is marked by specificity of the French context: since the 16th century the State, be it royal, revolutionary or democratic, developed arts and culture policy: it is without a doubt with François 1st that state intervention begins. He founded three fundamental institutions for culture in a few years between 1530 and 1539: the *Collège de France* to make dissemination of knowledge autonomous with respect to the power of the Church, the Royal Archives to establish conditions for memorializing national identity and finally the imposition of the French language to fight the Latin church and work against foreign influence (notably the linguistic dominance of Spain). On this basis, from Louis XIV, who founded the Academy of Fine Arts or the Comédie Française; to J. Lang, who created FRAC (the *Fonds Régionaux d'Art Contemporain*), the regional funding program for contemporary art, and who also developed contemporary art museums, supported new art forms (rock, comics etc.); passing through the revolutionary governments that created the Louvre Museum and the National Library; to Napoleon III, who developed the system of National Monuments; followed by Malraux, who, moreover, supported a democratization policy after the Fourth Republic (Popular Theatre); to G. Pompidou, who gave Paris the Beaubourg Contemporary Art Centre that now bears his name; then to V. Giscard d'Estaing, who created the centre of La Villette for sciences or the Musée d'Orsay for 19th century art; and finally to J. Lang during the F. Mitterrand presidency, who introduced the "Grand Louvre", the new Library of France, etc.—there has developed in a continuous manner what has come to be termed "the French cultural exception". Culture in the broad sense is certainly one of the essential axes of French political identity.

Research has found essential and decisive support in State demand. Studies have examined cultural institutions: museums, theatre, but also purchasing policies and their consequences for artists' lives, the art market, etc. The regional contemporary art institutions (FRAC) introduced a new aesthetic debate into state administrations (Urfalino and Vilkas 1993). R. Moulin shows how this massive state intervention came to transform the status of artists and changed the way the art market works in France. This research enhances understanding about the establishment of a veritable national and regional cultural "bureaucracy" (Liot 2004), and established the decision-making processes, for example regarding policies related to music (Menger 1983, Veitl 1997). Important research was carried out on artistic heritage policies, as well as the place of architectural or ethnological heritage in local development (tourism) but also as a vector of cultural identity (Poulot 1998, Lany 1996).

2. Art markets and artistic professions

Pioneering works include those by R. Moulin (1967) on painting. Her research focused on three major questions: What does art mean for individuals or institutions at the origins of demand? What social or economic constraints does the current system of recognition (in the Hegelian sense) and commercialization of art exercise on the relation that artists have with their works? What is the relationship between economic value and aesthetic value in a society that attributes primacy to economic values to such a degree that one can question pessimistically whether it is possible that art can be perceived independently from its monetary significance at a level of profound consciousness by those who buy it, and even by those who look at it (Moulin 1967:7)? She showed the mechanisms at work in this particular economic market, the agents and their interactions, the specific logics of different markets for painting: historic, contemporary, national or international markets, local markets. Pierre Bourdieu's work bears on general conditions for the constitution of a specific social field within which the market operations: the field of literature (1992), of visual arts and so forth. A field in this sense is a *structured space of positions (or jobs) with properties that depend on their position in this space and which can be analyzed independently of the characteristics of their occupants (in part determined by the positions)* (Bourdieu 1980:113).

This research was extended by studies on artistic professionals: Pierre-Michel Menger's early research concerned the current situation of musicians. His work explored the laws of the market for music and the activities of institutions that orient the development of this market, the very unequal conditions of existence for composers, relations of musicians' social lives, professional careers and creative activities, issues related to aesthetic conflicts and their impact on musical life in France, effects of constantly expanding state intervention, the role of publishers, media and the development of relationships between contemporary music and opera lovers (Menger 1983). He and others studied actors (Menger 1997, Paradeise 1998); the genesis of the artistic profession and its distinction from that of skilled craftsmen (Heinich 1993); architects (Champy 1998); also intermediaries such as auctioneers (Quemin 1997); training institutions-- the school of fine arts (Segré 1998), education of curators (Octobre 1996), jazz musicians (Fabiani 1985, Coulageon 1998); and finally, debates concerned with public commissions of works of art (Moulin 1992, Ducret 1994).

3. Reception and legitimation

Studies of dissemination and reception undertaken through an analysis of publics for cultural works, following in the path of the work of Bourdieu and Darbel (1969), developed new research on different publics: "Amateurs" (a term that comprises both art lovers or amateur artists), initiates or experts (Heinich 1998, Menger 1983, Hennion 1993) on intermediaries like art critics and cultural event organizers and so forth (Menger 1983, Hennion 1993, Bera 1998). Legitimation is one of the key

concepts in the analysis of reception: for example J. C. Passeron analyzed labeling processes (popular culture vs. "cultivated" or legitimate or "distinguished" culture to use the term proposed by Bourdieu). Social recognition processes are a function of artistic practice, targeted publics and means used. Each of these levels has been researched in numerous focused studies: Hennion developed the concept of "mediation" to think about relationships between these different levels of analysis: *To make the sociology of mediation and not a relativist sociology (in which nothing endures) or a 'sociologist's sociology' (the sole objectivity is that which the sociologist reveals underlying the objects-pretexts of actors), is to take seriously the inscription of our relations in things. Thus we should not unravel them through thought as though they cannot resist, the montages and devices at once physical and social, that serve to establish a real sharing, leaving to one side an autonomous object and to the other a public that could be analyzed sociologically. To interpret is not to explain, to regress towards the purity of unique external causes that actors seek as we do. It is to show the irreversibilities that these mixed relations have set forth between humans, things, humans and things: what else is music?* (Hennion 1993: 373). Passeron and Pedler analyzed the modes of reception of painting in a museum (1991) and the reception of opera (Pedler 1999). Heinich analyzed the reception of contemporary art in studies of its rejection (1998) for example. This legitimation process is as economic (as Moulin and Menger have shown) as it is symbolic (Bourdieu, Passeron, Grigon). It could be the object of a *post mortem* re-evaluation as in the exemplary case of Van Gogh (Heinich 1991).

4. Cultural practices and consumption

Here again Bourdieu and Darbel's research on museum publics (1969) opened an important field of study. Cultural practices and consumption have been the subject of large systematic studies financed by the Ministry of Culture. X. Donnat and his team have published and commented on the principal results, showing both the social-cultural distribution of practices and consumption and their historic development over the last thirty years. They likewise show the constitution of genuine classes of practitioners or consumers in relation to social criteria: level of education, profession, size of residential area, sex, age and so forth (Donnat and Cogneau, Donnat 1996). The practices of art-lovers and amateurs are social issues connected to major changes in our time, economic in character (because the practices entail the establishment of organizational structures and employment), and ultimately artistic. *Developments over the past thirty years and those that are coming call for a profound renewal of artistic activities of art lovers (amateurs), which were generally defined during the 1960s and this entails a reconsideration of the issues of how French people relate to art and culture.... Progress in schooling has meant that more and more French people have received an introduction to the arts in school or during leisure activities and this creates, for the years to come, favorable conditions for a (re)discovery of artistic activities in adulthood or in retirement, the moreso since those who have had the opportunity to engage in artistic practice during their childhood or adolescence express regret at having stopped. Numerous factors, part of the profound changes in our society, suggest this hypothesis:*

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the development of free time in connection with the reduction of the work week, improvement on the living conditions for retired people, the fact that adults and retired people are called upon ... to redefine their social identity when faced by professional or family crises (unemployment, occupational retraining, divorce, separation from children, etc.). All these factors work together to give rise to new needs for training and framing the artistic activities of art lovers and amateurs at every age (Nicolas in Donnat 1996:16).

These big surveys were accompanied by more specific studies on museum attendance, reading practices (Leenhardt, de Singly, Chaudron, Seibel, Péquignot) on the place of publics in high culture music (Hennion, Menger) or popular music, rock, rap and so for the (Hennion, Green) or about popular cultural practices (Passeron, Verret).

5. The arts

In describing the field of sociology of art and culture according to big themes we could have favored an approach by each of the arts under consideration. The choice made come from the desire to show that approaches and research questions are pertinent to all art forms, or in any case to many of them. This relative unity of the field does not however mean that there is no specificity in different research approaches according to such and such an artistic practice, the contents of literature or music cannot be approached in the same way, similarly economic problems are not the same for cinema, theatre, comics or literature.

It would take too long to describe in detail research on each art forms. It is however interesting to note here that progressively the expression sociology of art is preferred rather than sociology of the arts (the name adopted by the Sociology of the arts lab(in the National Centre for Scientific Research (CRNS) and the School of Graduate Studies in Social Sciences and Economics in Paris, founded by R. Moulin and now directed by P.M. Menger) to emphasize the diversity of research areas and relative autonomy of studies done on each of the arts:

- Visual arts have been studied by Francastel (painting), Moulin (the art market for painting), Passeron and Pedler (reception of painting), Ducret (painting and sculpture), Heinich (painting), Sauvageot (image-making) and more recently Ancel (installations) or Neyrat (painting), Péquignot (painting and cinema), Girel (performance), Brun (Land Art).

- -Music: Menger (status of musicians and contemporary music), Hennion (contemporary interpretation of Baroque music, as well as rock), Green (popular practices and the consumption of musical forms such as rock, rap, etc.), Veitl (policy in contemporary music), Fabiani (jazz), Coulageon (jazz and its actors in France), Pedler (reception of opera), Benetollo (rock and politics), Dutheil-Pesson (realist singing), Brenel (flamenco), Ravet (musical genres).

- Cinema: Darré, Benghozi (economics of cinema), a. Goldmann (cinema and society), Sorlin, Thevenin (cinema and sociology, J.L. Gogard), Esquenazi (publics, reception), Tessier (reception of war films).

- Photography and synthetic images : Bourdieu, Boltanski, Castel and Chamboredon (photography as a minor art form), Maresca (sociological uses of photography), Barboza

(photography and synthetic images), Spadone (photography as memory)

- Architecture: Francastel (technique and aesthetics), Ruby (postmodernist debates), Champy (architecture as a profession), Ducret (art in public spaces).

- Literature: L. Goldmann (literature and social class), Leenhardt (interactions between readers and books), Pessin (literary figures of “the people”), Gaudez (literature as an instrument for sociological investigation), Heinich (women in novels), Péquignot (popular literature), Levy (Jewish writers), Lassave (literature and sociology), Naudier (literature and genre).

- Theatre: Duvignaud (theatre, festivals or parties, actors), Menger (acting profession), Paradeise (acting profession), Blondel (decentralization of theatre), Redon (organization of acting companies).

6. A science of art works

As R. Moulin justly emphasized, the question that remains is that of artworks themselves: *The return to the word “art” to designate what one called during the 1960s and 1970s sociology of culture means first of all that we emphasize the study of social mechanisms for artistic labeling. We should congratulate ourselves for our accomplishments in escaping deterministic reductionism; but we cannot avoid asking ourselves about the quality of the artwork itself—that which eludes most analyses—through the combined effect of sociological relativism (which is a methodological postulate) and aesthetic hyper-relativism (which characterizes the 20th century)*(Moulin 1989 ART entry in *Dictionnaire de la Sociologie*). There was a wish to take into account what P. Bourdieu termed a materialist position, after what has often been considered excessive in Francastel’s work (with the imprudent use of the well-known adverb “only”) and against some philosophical digressions that idealize the work of art and the artist. This position made considerable progress possible as we have seen above in understanding art markets, occupations and institutions. Since 1985 and the Marseille Conference where participants raised the question “is a sociology of artworks possible?,” important developments have occurred in this chapter of sociology of the arts.

The essential debate concerns the question of what sociology can say about or working from the artwork. Is there a risk of falling into the rut of philosophical hermeneutics or of confusing one’s role with that of an art critic? How can limits be established for mastery of scientific interpretation? Many positions can be taken in this respect: for example the work of art, particularly literary works but also film, can be used as an illustration of a sociological thesis. Artworks can also be proposed as models for interpretation or classification of sociological phenomena, following Durkheim’s example in his definitions of different types of suicide using literary examples. (More recently Heinich did this in a way in order to identify certain *states of being women*). The work of art can also be a place for finding and understanding structures of collective representations (Leenhardt), or it can be considered a form of thought experiment in the sense of the American epistemologist Kuhn, and the work can become an ‘epistemological partner’, an instrument for investigating and understanding social reality (Majastre, Pessin, Gaudez). It can finally be considered a place for the crystallization of collective representations

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and their evolution (and this is not contradictory with proceeding positions) following the work of Bastide: *In a word, because art has sociological roots, it becomes both a document and an analytical technique for better understanding the social- in that which it represents that is most difficult to attain and most obscure for sociologists using other approaches. The knot is tied in this way. We started with a sociology that sought the social in art and we arrived at a sociology that, on the contrary, goes from understanding art to understanding the social.* (Bastide 1945: 190, Ancel, Neyrat, Péquignot). In this last step the distinction between internal and external analysis disappears in favor of a permanent exchange between the two approaches: insights from internal analysis must find scaffolding in external facts (conditions of production and-or reception) and inversely that which is discerned in an external survey must find its corresponding manifestation in internal investigation. This program was well defined by J.C. Passeron: *Sociology of art only exists if it insists on relating structures of the artwork and the internal functions of its elements to structures of the social world in which this creation, circulation and reception of the artwork mean something or perform some function. It is thus at once to say that the analysis of effects of social contexts of art call for internal structural analysis of artworks, and more precisely of singular artworks because such analysis cannot be conducted as a “go anywhere” analysis of an anonymous symbolic practice without risking self-canceling—contrary to externalist “sociologism”; and, against enslaved internalist formalism that makes it necessary for internal “literal” analysis or analysis of pictorial iconic character of the structure of the text or icon to find sufficient causes and pertinent questions that constrain and guide external analysis of the function of works as a cultural function*(Passeron in Moulin, 1986:455).

To conclude on this point, I would like to take up again a question raised by André Ducret in his book *Mesures. Études sur la pensée plastique (Measures. Studies on thinking in the visual arts)*. *Why should sociology of art be condemned to remain mute, if not about aesthetic quality, at least about the collective part of works that sociology tears away from to deconstruct identity or reconstruct genesis? The work of art inflects the sensibility of the era, marks its memory and defines its culture.* This seems to me to eminently make it a legitimate object for sociology.

After Marseille in 1985, debates re-emerged in Grenoble in 1991, Lyon in 1992 then again in Grenoble in 1993, which are the main group meetings I recall. We could add two sessions of seminars at Besançon with André Ducret in 1994 and Nathalie Heinich in 1995, and the Paris seminar organized by Antoine de Baecque (1995) where the question was examined and more recently) in the book by Nathalie Heinich *What art does to sociology as (Ce que l’art fait à la sociologie)* as well as the editorial by Antoine Hennion in number 11 of the journal *Sociologie de l’art* (Heinich 1998:35).

Taken together, these meetings, debates and occasional polemics led to progress in diverse interrogations, critiques and remark that have spurred various researchers to refine their thinking, concepts and methods. If I insist on this point it is

because it seems to me that the community of sociologists of the arts has been exemplary in what should be normal relations between scholars.

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