Knowledge politics and anti-politics: Toward a critical appraisal of Bourdieu's concept of intellectual autonomy

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Autonomy and duality

While intellectuals have for centuries stood rather close to God, they have lately come down in the world in the footsteps of their former employer. They are less magisterial and solemn than they used to be. In the postmodern and post-Marxist West, intellectuals have massively renounced their exalted position as guardians of universally grounded values and truths, or as spokesmen for classes that they first endowed with a solemn historical mission. They no longer claim an exquisite calling, an obligatory normative identity, or a special accountability for the whole. Shorn of its rationalistic paraphernalia and missionary ideology, the intellectual profession reveals itself to be as beautiful and ugly as all other occupations, and vulnerable to the temptations that wait upon all forms of professional specialization.[1]

This worldly descent of the intellectuals follows a similar "normalization" of the exceptional stature of science. To Feyerabend's notorious question "what is so special about science?" the modern social studies of science univocally reply: little or nothing. The demarcation between science and society is no longer a self-evident outcome of stable norms of rationality or secure methodical principles, but tends to be seen as contextually variable and essentially contestable. The ancient privilege that accorded science a less messy, opportunistic, idiosyncratic, interest-ridden, and "political" character than other social practices has been largely rescinded. That science is "something special" and differs in essential respects from other cultural and social activities is exposed as little more than a tenacious prejudice.[2]

In this article I argue that the intellectual profession, while perhaps representing "nothing special" in philosophical terms, still retains a par-

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ticularity of its own, a specific difference or autonomy that it is important to emphasize and maintain. The postmodernist disenchanters of the intellect and the constructivist normalizers of science are perhaps too zealous in relativizing and levelling down distinctions. Feyerabend's tarnishing of the intellectual experts as "one special and rather greedy group" goes hand-in-hand with a rather drastic idealization of the layman and his capacity for democratically supervising science. A similar anarchist streak is encountered in Foucault, who, in his effort to defrock all intellectual prophets, lawgivers, and problems-solvers, at one point exclaims: "down with spokespersons!" Bourdieu's suggestion that every man should become his own spokesperson and must learn "to speak rather than being spoken to" likewise antechambers in this anarchist utopia.[3]

In all of these postures, however, the initial radicalism is eventually tempered. Feyerabend wisely refuses to root out the experts entirely: he advises using them, but never fully trusting them. Foucault is sensible enough not to preach the annihilation of all those who speak "*for* and *above* the others," but spells out more modest tasks for what he terms the "specific" intellectual. Bourdieu even advocates a "*Realpolitik* of Reason," according to which a self-consciously "corporatist" defense of the autonomous interests of intellectuals providentially coincides with a "politics of the universal."[4] These examples suggest that the profanation of intellectual work cannot result in a complete effacing of all sociological distinctions and epistemological demarcations without putting the principle of social differentiation itself at risk. The very fact that the intellectual is scaled down to more modest dimensions rather enjoins us to defend the *autonomy* of intellectual work in a pragmatic and more political sense, without having to resort to traditionally high-strung values and principles such as the "desire for truth," "rationality," or "value-freedom," or to sovereign distinctions such as those that divide knowledge from interest, power, and profit.

Although professionalized knowledge production does of course presuppose a minimal craftsmanlike claim to cognitive and methodological superiority, this claim need no longer be certified by a traditional logic of justification. Since expert knowledge is manufactured in autonomously specialized fields of social activity, it is in several respects superior (albeit in other aspects inferior) to the knowledge fabricated outside. Knowledge-producing institutions are social sanctuaries, loci of institutionalized distanciation that insulate themselves to a certain extent from the realms of professional politics and economics and from

unspecialized ordinary life. They obey a distinctive, more relaxed time economy than other specialized occupations (e.g., journalism), are screened off to a certain extent from the pressures of publicity, and produce for a comparatively more esoteric collegial audience. The defense of intellectual autonomy thus entails the protection of the institutional capacity for systematic, methodical knowledge production, in a minimal definition that does not entail commitment to a particular scientific methodology.[5]

This is why the idea of intellectual autonomy constitutes the central lever of my subsequent considerations. "Autonomy" is a felicitous knowledge-political term because it not only specifies a crucial precondition for sustained professional competence, but simultaneously sensitizes us to the "corporatist" and conspiratorial dark side that inheres in all forms of professionalism. In this dual role, it also defines the axis of recent sociological debates about the productive and repressive functions of modern higher knowledge professions. The classical functionalist view disseminated by Durkheim, Spencer, Tawney, and Parsons emphasized positive characteristics such as institutionalized expertise, democratic control over knowledge and technology, and a collective ethos of disinterested public service. The critical approach that was elaborated from the middle sixties on by authors such as Johnson, Freidson, Larson, and Illich, chose to highlight negative traits such as social closure, self-interest, privilege, control over clients and their needs, and the ideological legitimation thereof.[6]

The former approach, which rubbed shoulders with the vested complimentary self-image of professionals, encoded the quest for autonomy in the bid for rational self-regulation that the production and application of superior knowledge and complex skills in the service of the general interest supposedly required. In the alternative approach, autonomy was instead connected to the private interest of professional elites who wished to extend their monopolistic control over a specific market of expertise and the material and immaterial profits that were promised by it.[7] As a result of such contradictory determinations, the concept of professional autonomy gradually adopted a Janus face: it came to display an intrinsic duplicity or *duality* in which good and evil, functional necessity and dysfunctional domination, appeared to conspire closely.[8]

In what follows I focus more intently upon this "simultaneity" or intrinsic coalition of these two faces of modern (intellectual) professionalism,

in an effort to supersede the barren opposition between the functionalist and critical traditions. I shall proceed from the hypothesis that the enabling and disabling dimensions of intellectual professions are interconnected in a much more immediate and constitutive sense than can be grasped from the dualistic opposition in which both traditions hold each other prisoner. "Duality" does not mean that the productive and exploitative dimensions, "eufunctions" and dysfunctions, can simply be joined together by simple addition. It entails something like a generative or symbiotic coincidence of "light" and "dark" sides. These polarities appear to presume and precondition one another in a sense that falls out of range for one-dimensional "optimistic" or "pessimistic" approaches.

If applied to the issue of intellectuals and spokespersons, one implication is that their social indispensability is organically tied to the social threat that is generated by their presence in the division of labor. Intellectuals are necessary and useful, but they simultaneously present a social hazard. Indeed, what makes intellectual work socially risky inheres in the same structural properties that define its social utility. Intellectuals are socially "freed" to exercise the office of professional thinking, researching, speaking, and writing. Because they have been educated and trained in such skills and exercise them as workaday routines, they are in many respects better at them than ordinary people. But the same professionalism and specialty turns intellectual spokesmen into a social threat, since by definition they speak *on behalf of and in the place of* others; and in extreme cases strive permanently to exclude others from entering the arenas where one may speak publicly and from the means by which one may learn to do so. Because this is how they earn their daily bread and whence they derive power and prestige, intellectuals develop both individual and collective interests in opposition to those whom their services degrade into dependents.

In this dual conception of intellectual autonomy, the optimistic and pessimistic connotations of "disinterestedness" and "interest" intermingle, dismissing traditional dualisms such as those that divide truth from power or involvement from detachment. Detachment and involvement can no longer be treated as contrary concepts or as polar extremities that draw a field of force or a continuum between them, but henceforth make up two faces of one and the same "knowledge-political" Janus head.[9] The autonomous, occupationally differentiated production of knowledge presupposes something like an *institutional* distanciation or a *socially* defined form of detachment that is inseparable

from a close involvement with shared corporative or professional interests. This implies that detachment as a social-institutional determinant of intellectual and scientific practice no longer needs the protective justification of a philosophical theory of value-freedom.

Protection of relative autonomy toward the *outside* (the celebrated "academic freedom") is not a normative principle that self-evidently emerges from the "nature" of intellectual and scientific work, but an entrenchment requiring incessant knowledge-political efforts toward the formation and upkeep of corporatist interest coalitions. *Inside* the relatively autonomous and hence collectively distanced field, knowledge-political competition rages and once again erases all traces of disinterestedness. Initially, therefore, detachment is little more than a secondary effect of the institutionalized objectivity or collective "estrangement" that an autonomous intellectual industry is capable of imposing upon its industrialists. Secondly, detachment is produced by the interested objectifications to which intellectual competitors mutually force each other in their agonistic crossplay of criticism and anti-criticism. Both externally and internally such objectifying mechanisms have everything to do with the politics of knowledge and next to nothing with the classical ethos of value-freedom.

The scientific field

In this section, I examine a theory, elements of which have already surfaced in the previous section, that supplies intriguing thought material for a further elaboration of a pragmatic, knowledge-political notion of intellectual autonomy. Indeed, Pierre Bourdieu's field theory of science and his conception of the role of intellectuals positions the concept of autonomy so centrally that it performs almost as a sociological deputy of more traditional criteria of truth and rationality. Professionalism and autonomy go far toward defining the specificity of the intellectual and scientific fields in their most authentic state. Furthermore, in critical abnegation of the de-differentation proclaimed by radical social studies of science, Bourdieu maintains a principled distinction between an "external reading," which thematizes the incorporation of science in the wider social cosmos, and an "internal reading," which is oriented toward the concatenation of knowledge and (symbolic) power inside the scientific microcosmos itself.[10]

Before entering upon a discussion of Bourdieu's perspective, however, I first need to clarify my usage of the protean concept of "intellectual" and its relation to adjacent concepts such as "professional," "expert," and "academic scientist." First, it makes little sense to hope for "objective" definitions of any of these categories, attainable by means of enumerative or "finger-pointing" exercises. All defining portraits of intellectuals, professionals, experts, and scientists are simultaneously self-portraits, often attempts to delineate a cherished identity, and hence liable to entail claims that are essentially knowledge-political in nature. For Bourdieu, the very definition of intellectuals, scientists, and professionals is itself continually at risk and at stake in struggles within intellectual, professional, and scientific fields.[11] Secondly, as evidenced by the above account, and following the lead of Feyerabend, Foucault, and again Bourdieu, I refrain from drawing any hard-and-fast demarcation lines between intellectuals and professionals or scientific experts.[12] The reported fall of the "general" and the concomitant rise of the "specific" intellectual has erased much of the sociological and normative distance between properly intellectual and professional work, which can no longer be usefully counterposed in the manner of a universalist, critical dedication to Culture or to the moral community as a Whole vs. a particularist devotion to self-serving corporative interests. Cultural pessimists such as Hofstadter, Bloom, and Jacoby consistently underrate both the elitist hazards of emphasizing the universalist calling of intellectuals as well as the technical and social necessity of specialization, ignoring the extent to which professionalism has become an inescapable foundation for the credible performance of intellectuals in the public world.

Nevertheless, Feyerabend, Foucault, and Bourdieu continue to portray intellectuals as (somewhat) *more than* experts and scientists, insofar as the former tend to take on wider issues that open up the professions to each other and to the political. In contrast to the deceased "grand" intellectual, however, the new professional intellectual remains more closely involved with partial fields of competence and their local politics of knowledge, and refuses to enter the arena of "big" politics as an alter ego and potential substitute for the professional politician. As an "anti-political" politician, she first of all engages with political issues within the profession, and typically meddles with "big" politics where domestic professional issues border on or erupt into larger public debates. Meanwhile, she does so as a part-time, though sophisticated amateur, anxious both to guard her own professional autonomy and to respect that of the politicians she challenges and criticizes. In this

framework, the problem of the public role of intellectuals is recast as a problem of the "two faces" of intellectual professionalism, irrespective of whether intellectuals speak for people or for things, or whether they speak in public places or in the more restricted spaces where they primarily encounter their fellow professionals.

It is precisely this tense coalition between knowledge-political duality and professional autonomy that is also at the heart of Bourdieu's view of the social logic of science. Indeed, Bourdieu's field theory of science attempts to balance a *generic* definition, which has a *levelling* or disenchanting effect, with a *specification*, which produces a contrary *demarcating* effect. The generic definition undercuts the traditional celebration of science as an exception to the rule of a general theory of fields or a generalized "economy of practices." The operation of the scientific field presupposes the existence of and itself generates a specific type of interest; scientific practices only appear disinterested when compared with alternative interests that are produced in different fields. The competitive game of science is oriented toward the specific stake of gaining a monopoly over scientific authority, in which technical competence and symbolic power are inextricably intertwined. Hence the scientific struggle is characterized by an "essential duality" in which intrinsic intellectual and extrinsic material interests, intellectual and political strategies, epistemological conflicts and power conflicts are indissolubly joined.[13]

In the specifying operation, the emphasis is displaced from the interested, political-strategic, "capitalizing" character of scientific practice toward the "other means" with which this quasi-political or quasi-economic rivalry is conducted. Here we are not so much concerned with knowledge *politics* but rather with *knowledge* politics; not with the accumulation of economic or political capital but rather with that of *cultural* or *informational* capital. The axiom about "intrinsic duality" is now read in reverse, because the analytic focus is redirected toward the specific manner in which rational-scientific knowledge and technical competences turn into vehicles for the accumulation of symbolic power or symbolic capital. Not "ordinary" profit-seeking or "naked" power-grabbing (insofar as these exist at all) are operative here, but the urge for recognition, for a brilliant reputation, for a distinctive name; a form of interest that is simultaneously constituted and mystified by the overt dismissal of "ordinary" and "vulgar" objects of interest such as money and power.

In this manner Bourdieu's model does justice both to the internal cohabitation of knowledge and politics and to the external divorce between the professional manufacture of knowledge and "outside worlds" such as politics, economics, or journalism. Both in the interface between science and the outside world and in the agonistic world inside, the traditional opposition between disinterestedness and interest evaporates, severing the time-honored connection between intellectual distanciation and the positivist or Weberian conception of neutrality. Indeed, if the truth about the social world is not constituted *in spite* of but precisely *as a result* of the knowledge-political interests of the sociologist,[14] the political logic of knowledge can only fully unfold as soon as science has emancipated itself sufficiently from *external* political (or economic) interests. On balance, the very science that nervously advertises itself as neutral and detached turns out to be pulled by political strings, while truly autonomous science can live without this posture of objectivity and neutrality.

Thus distanciation, both in its external and internal dimensions, is immediately derived from specific forms of engagement. With respect to the broader relation between "theory" and "practice" or between the intellectual world and the everyday life world, Bourdieu draws our attention to the social determinations that condition the intellectual attitude as such, the "scholarly" or "contemplative" gaze directed towards the social world. As soon as we begin to observe, we effect an epistemological break that is simultaneously a social break, because we withdraw more or less completely from the world. This posture of the "impartial spectator" is not only socially exceptional but is also supported by concrete social privileges. Detachment is not a product of methodological morality but of the "scholarly situation," the specific habitus of professional "schoolmen," and presupposes the "scholè or *otium*" or the specific "idleness" that marks out the contemplative life. Distanciation is a practical relation to practice. It is this practical engagement that the "ethnocentrism of the *savants*" functions to conceal.[15]

A similarly intrinsic rapport between involvement and detachment is manifest in the internal analysis. The scientific field constitutes the theatre of a more or less unequal struggle between (usually) two parties who are endowed with unequal quantities of specific capital and are therefore unequally equipped to appropriate the products and profits of scientific labor: the dominant or established elite and the dominated groups of outsiders and newcomers. The established group normally

opts for a strategy of conservation of the scientific status quo with which its interests are immediately linked. New entrants are capable of "choosing" a comparatively tranquil strategy of succession, or they can adopt the risk strategy of subversion of vested scientific authority, entailing novel redefinitions of the stakes and confines of the game. The struggle every actor has to engage in to enforce his own authority as a legitimate producer is invariably also a struggle to impose the "mode of production" and the definition of scientificity that maximally concurs with his own specific interests.[16]

It is this objective logic of rivalry between established and newcomers and the resultant cross-checking of their mutual products, which unintentionally turns the pursuit of self-interest into a motor of scientific progress. The anarchic antagonism of private interests is transformed into a scientific dialectic, as every actor is forced, when challenging and resisting his opponents, to adopt an instrumentarium that lends his polemical purposes the universal scope of a methodical critique. This is how social mechanisms enforce the realization of universal norms of rationality. The *libido dominandi* can only be satisfied by submitting to the specific censorship of the field, and by being sublimated into a *libido sciendi*, which can only triumph over its adversaries by opposing theorem to theorem, refutation to demonstration, and one scientific fact to another scientific fact.[17]

Facts, values, and performative effects

Although "duality" and "autonomy" figure prominently in Bourdieu's sociology of science, the epistemological status of these key terms remains troublesome. Duality is of course first of all an escape word, a polemical foil that twice delimits one's position: over against free-floating intellectualism on the one hand and all forms of (economic and political) interest-reductionism on the other. This is enough to transform it into a term of embarassment that only provisionally liberates us from the procrustean alternative imposed by such well-established conceptual dichotomies. In addition, adjectives such as "intrinsic" or "essential" are epistemologically perplexing, because they suggest an essentialist dialectic that claims to discover objectively determined contradictions in the heart of things.

Bourdieu himself tends to present the principle of duality as a theoretical summary of a string of empirical-analytical observations.[18] The

same empirical rigor is invested in his presentation of the concept of relative autonomy and his view of the historically structured specificity of the intellectual, scientific, and other cultural fields. Beneath such stoically descriptive or explanatory intentions, however, concepts such as duality and autonomy also appear to effectuate a subterranean *normativity* that is nowhere accounted for or recognized in so many words. Obviously, Bourdieu's Nietzschean (or better: Spinozist) impatience with all forms of utopianism and moralism is so pervasive, and his trust in the capabilities of a "rigorously" empirical science so overwhelming, that his field theory regularly slides toward objectivism and the risk of reification.[19]

Although a score of classical dualisms are convincingly put to rest, Bourdieu appears to underestimate the continuing hold upon his work of the obstinate antinomy of normativism versus naturalism or that of facts versus values.[20] On this point, his reflexive critique of objectivism appears insufficiently radical. Even though he announces his intention to think beyond the old antinomy between the positive and the normative, and reaches for a form of ethics that purports to supersede it, it remains unclear *which version* of the classical antinomy is put to the test (the neo-Kantian one? the positivist one?) and how precisely the rift between *Sein* and *Sollen* should be mended. It should also be noted that Bourdieu retains a distinctly positivistic, Durkheimian order of epistemological priority, according to which the ethical quality of social science is ultimately derivable from its explanatory power. It is the knowledge of objective determinations and objective necessities that circumscribes a form of freedom that in turn may condition a modest practical ethics. Indeed, reflexive sociology is an ethic *because* it is a science.[21] Elsewhere Bourdieu frames his critique of the naive utopianism of the classical philosophy and sociology of science in such a manner as virtually to presuppose an epistemological distinction between facts and values. Merton is indicted for incorrectly offering the normative rules that figure in scientists' self-images as descriptions of the positive laws of the scientific mode of production itself, whereas "the market in scientific goods has its laws, and they have nothing to do with ethics." This is enough to suggest that these "immanent" laws of the field can be determined according to a canon of empirical exactitude that is exempt from all normativity.[22]

Both the principle of duality and that of autonomy, however, can only be sensibly defended if one acknowledges that they both represent more than descriptive generalizations, and circularly knot together

normative and empirical propositions in a seamless epistemological web. In both cases the description immediately posits the norm. "Inescapable" or "intrinsic" duality, of course, is one way of saying that the good or functional and the bad or dysfunctional aspects of intellectual practices are tied together much more closely than is normally accounted for.[23] Due to such rapprochements, the polar opposites change their normative hue. The good shades into something less good, but what used to be considered evil also becomes a little less so. The *démasqué* of the mandarins and of their narcissistic ideology of disinterestedness and disengagement is balanced by the epistemological rehabilitation of previously dark and marginal phenomena such as competition, interest, accumulation of symbolic capital, and (knowledge) politics.

For example, the definition of the intellectual and scientific world as an agonistic arena or as a capital market where unequally endowed parties compete for mutual recognition and distinction, constitutes much more than a cool observation concerning the allegedly impersonal operation of the objective laws of the field. This way of describing things includes a fair sample of normative suggestions: that scientific rationality is not a singular and uniform phenomenon, that it is not definitionally constrained by the quest for consensus, and that conflict, competition, and struggle fulfill a positive, generative function in the production of knowledge.[24] A similar observation is valid for the definition of the stake of the intellectual game as itself one of the stakes in the intellectual game, and the concomitant thesis that there are no arbiters in the field who are not themselves interested parties to the dispute.[25] At first hearing, this may sound like an empirical generalization; but the proposition is at least as normative as it is descriptive, because it entails an implicit plea for a radical pluralism of truth and method.[26]

If it is true that the bulk of analytical concepts and propositions in Bourdieu's sociological lexicon carry a normative surplus and mingle facts with values, they can more fruitfully be read as *performative definitions* that (re)describe their object in such a manner that the description simultaneously *attempts to (re)create* what it purports to describe. "Performativity" is a useful denotation of the knowledge-political construction effect of representations that naturally combine normative and empirical judgments. Notwithstanding Bourdieu's extraordinary sensitivity to the ordering function of language and to the constructivist truth that words can make and break things,[27] his approach once again appears to incur a reflexive deficit. His failure to appreciate

the performative significance of his own theory tends to transform all supposedly "realistic" statements about objective structures, relationships, and positions, or about the incontrovertible primacy of objective laws of the field, into ever so many reifications. In violation of his stated principles, Bourdieu appears to abandon his theory in the nick of time to embrace a rhetoric of totality and transcendence according to which the "complete system of strategies," the "game as such," may now be reviewed from an allegedly neutral position outside and above the game.[28]

If we refocus upon the problem of specificity or relative autonomy, we encounter a similar objectivist slant. Despite a deep sensitivity to the classifying effect of social and social-scientific classifications, which definitely sets him apart from the crowd of his fellow-sociologists, Bourdieu still underestimates the extent to which every codifying representation of social likenesses and differences, of frontiers, domains, articulations, and instances, functions to create the same social universe that it claims objectively or realistically to mirror. The defining sociologist engages just like any ordinary actor in the struggle for the imposition of legitimate classifications, and classifies others in order "to tell them what they are and what they have to be."[29] In similar fashion, sociological claims about specificity or relative autonomy, according to which different social fields are expected to "obey" different objective logics or different "immanent necessities," are not *ostensive* but *performative* definitions by means of which the sociologist forces the social facts that he defines into obedience and submission.[30] Like everybody else, Bourdieu participates in the social struggle for classification. Like everybody else, he "works on" the field rather than divining its innermost logic.

In this interpretation, the relative autonomy of the scientific field not only constitutes an empirical-historical variable but also erects a normative yardstick. The historical-sociological analysis of science immediately (and circularly) suggests its own criterion of scientificity.[31] The autonomization of the scientific field secures the development of specific field laws which in turn guarantee the advance of rationality. As the accumulated scientific stock multiplies, the struggle for social recognition is increasingly sublimated into a struggle for scientific recognition, i.e., a type of recognition that can only be conferred in a field of "restricted production," in a system of peer review by colleagues who are simultaneously competitors. The performative implication is that scientists *should* actually recognize no other clients than

their competitors, and *should* in fact exclude as illegitimate all exchanges not considered legal tender in the field.

This performative tonality is also discernible in Bourdieu's conception of the "inaugural revolution," according to which the development of the relative autonomy of a particular field takes a qualitative jump that fundamentally alters its domestic logic of competition. Because the costs of entry rise steeply and continued investment in the field becomes increasingly drawn-out and costly, homogeneity among the competitors increases, the contrast between conservative and subversive strategies diminishes, and great periodic revolutions are replaced by numerous small permanent revolutions that are liberated from external political effects and "social arbitrariness."[32] An "authentic" scientific field is accordingly defined as one in which polemical disputes are encased in a more fundamental consensus about the stakes of the game and the means with which to resolve disagreements; a dissensus that derives its productivity precisely from the objective agreement that undergirds it.[33]

A Realpolitik of reason?

In my view, therefore, the principles of knowledge-political "duality" and "relative autonomy" must be read as performative propositions, which together lay the foundations for a new normative-empirical epistemology. The double operation of Bourdieuan field theory, which "evens out" the deconstruction of the traditional concept of truth with a *social* demarcation between science and other social fields, appears rigorously to exchange normative propositions for empirical ones, but at closer range turns out to be unable to divest itself of a residual normativity. Truth and rationality are conceived as compelling effects of a social mechanism of nonviolent (but not interest-free) rivalry, which can only be installed in a self-regulating and autarchic scientific field. Thus, knowledge-political rivalry and relative field autonomy take the place formerly reserved for classical criteria of rationality, and combine to make up a new twofold criterion of scientificity. They constitute two sides of the same social-epistemological coin.

However, Bourdieu's work also bears traces of an objectivistic "misrecognition" of its own basic principles. His claim to be able to *survoler* the entire complex of strategies in the field still underwrites the possibility of a sovereign, totalizing point of view and a neutral outsider's

position, which are twice incompatible with the radical perspectivism of a dual theory of interests. Bourdieu seems imperfectly aware of the fact that his statements about so-called objective laws of the scientific field possess a crypto-normative quality and are without exception performative constructions. This "field objectivism" tends to invite reifying definitions of the *limits* and specific *stakes* of particular fields, which in turn conflict with the neighboring conviction that both, and hence also the identity of the legitimate players in the field, are permanently and irreversibly contested and contestable.[34]

In summary, the idea of a neutral foundation for objective truth and for universal conditions of scientific rationality are furtively readmitted through the sociological back door. Indeed, Bourdieu tends to advance his field theory as a sociological underpinning of the "universal validity of scientific reason," for example when he summarily crucifies the "nihilistic subjectivism" that is attributed to the Strong Programme and to Woolgar & Latour, or takes on postmodernist philosophy more generally.[35] In conscious paradox, this brand of universalism is consistently paired to and grounded in a particularistic interest theory. Rather than quarrying in a Habermasian vein for universal preconditions of communicative rationality, Bourdieu insists upon specifying the social and historical conditions that force actors to *take an interest* in the universal, i.e., constrain them to contribute to the production of universal truth through the push and pull of their strategic self-interests. That is why he counteracts the idea of a universalist pragmatics of language with his own alternative of a "politics of the universal" or a "*Realpolitik* of Reason."[36]

In this defense of universalism by particularistic means ("private vices, public virtues"), the idea of relative autonomy once again occupies a prominent position. This is clearly corroborated by Bourdieu's conception of the "anti-political" calling of intellectuals. Intellectuals are "paradoxical beings" who enter upon the historical stage by superseding the opposition between pure culture and social engagement. They are "bi-dimensional" beings that belong to an intellectually autonomous field and hence must respect its indigenous laws, but who simultaneously deploy their specific expertise and authority in political activity outside of it. They intervene in politics without turning into politicians, without ceasing to be full-time cultural producers. Contrary to the traditional antinomy between autonomy and engagement, it is therefore perfectly possible to exercise both simultaneously.[37]

We cannot fail to notice that this portrayal of the identity of intellectuals is once again predominantly introduced as a *realistic*, empirical-genetic definition. Ethical-political interventions by intellectuals should be grounded first and foremost upon a "rigorous" understanding of the operation and historical constitution of the intellectual field. Both formulation and context, however, make it abundantly clear that this definition harbors critically normative elements, and that, as a result, the figure of the intellectual acquires a distinctly performative profile.[38] The representation of intellectuals as two-dimensional beings and the stylization of their anti-political engagement constitute a hybrid mixture of facts and values, and cannot be simply derived from a detached reading of historical events. A non-polemical, non-perspectival characterization of their "essential" identity, such as Bourdieu still seems to advocate here, of course also runs against his conviction, vented elsewhere, that the definition of what makes a "true" intellectual is always and invariably at stake in the intellectual field itself.[39]

Leaving aside this epistemological conundrum, we may notice that Bourdieu's conception of an "anti-political politics" of the intellectuals harbors the same explicit synthesis of involvement and detachment we have encountered several times before. The "paradoxical" nature of intellectuals simultaneously requires us to strengthen their autonomy and to guard against the temptations of the ivory tower. This is realizable if institutions are created that enable them to intervene in politics under their own authority, especially in order to gain control over the material means of cultural production and intellectual legitimation. Intellectuals are therefore under an obligation to value the defense of their own autonomous interests as their primary task: defense of the autonomy of the field must even be accorded top priority.[40] For too long intellectuals have sheltered themselves behind the interests of other groups and classes and celebrated these as universal interests. Now it is time to speak up for their own. Intellectuals must no longer feel remorse in defending their own corporatist privileges, since "by defending themselves as a whole, they defend the universal." Protection of their corporative autonomy thus effectively coincides with the defense of the social conditions of the possibility of rational thought, as they are paradigmatically exemplified in the scientific field, where no one is able to succeed over anyone else without arming himself with better arguments, reasonings, and demonstrations.[41]

What is most striking in this "corporatism of the universal" is its almost dialectical configuration of opposites. On the one hand, Bourdieu does

not hesitate to picture the defense of intellectuals' professional autonomy as a matter of collective interest bargaining. But neither does he shrink from sublimating this corporative interest into a universal interest, so that universalism tends to turn into an immediate corollary of field autonomy. Consequently, his *politique de la raison* is still tainted with a residue of rationalistic idealism and by a concomitant underestimation of the dark sides of intellectual professionalism – including his own. The corporatism of the intellectuals is euphemistically wrapped in a residually Hegelian notion about the universal class. Different from Gouldner's "neo-Hegelian" notion about intellectuals as a "flawed universal class," however, universalism does not arise from the internalization of a normative "culture of critical discourse," but from a set of sociological *constraints* that force critical cross-control of intellectual products; while the corporatist "flaws" are not so much set in contradiction to, as seen as pertinently *instrumental* to the attainment of whatever universality there is currently to be gained. This indeed is true *Realpolitik*, because local corporatist interests are no longer *masked* by universalistic claims, but are now openly celebrated as central cog-wheels in the grand engine of sociological providence.

Bourdieu, then, steadily tends to universalize this corporatism and its adjoining sociological theory of rationality.[42] His "dual" interest perspective is therefore euphemized both in the internal and in the external dimensions. On balance, and like Gouldner, he has difficulty in accommodating the true Janus face of intellectual autonomy, according to which general interests and group interests, public benefits and private vices (or "good" and "evil") come together much more intrinsically and symbiotically than is accounted for by the optimistic mechanics of his latter-day invisible hand. The professionalization of intellectual labor inescapably includes a dark side of academism, symbolic violence, clientelism, and monopolistic expropriation. It is therefore highly debatable whether the autarchy of the intellectual field should really be developed to such an extent that the assignment of reputation in the intellectual marketplace is restricted solely to an audience of collegial competitors. One may likewise question the capacity and wisdom of the social sciences to carry through an inaugural revolution that would definitely put politics and other social practices at large, and would reach for the homogeneity of investments and the methodological consensus that Bourdieu conceives as a prerequisite for a truly scientific dialectic.[43]

Bourdieu himself places exclusive emphasis upon the threat to intellectual autonomy that is posed by heteronomous interests such as those of the new mandarins of state and economy and the media technocrats. But this tends once again to veil the threat to society constituted by the epistemocracy of the intellectuals themselves. The "anarchist" question posed by Feyerabend and Foucault, i.e., how may society defend itself against the privileges and the interest politics of the intellectuals, should therefore be weighed more seriously. In this respect at least, Habermas's drive to force open the esoteric cultures of expertise in science, morality, and art, and to restore an open channel of communication between them and the practice of everyday life, appears to offer a more balanced point of departure.[44]

This does not diminish the fact that Bourdieu's (anti-Habermasian) defense of intellectual autonomy as a form of *interest politics* contains a reflexive insight of the greatest fertility. The relative autonomy of the intellect (and the concomitant social distance) can henceforth be claimed without the epistemological drapery of the ethos of value-freedom. This social demarcation stands as a prerequisite for the unfolding of a specific rivalry logic in which strategic interests and communicative arguments are syncretically matched. *Pace* Habermas, rationality is not constituted through the exclusion of strategic elements, but through a (performative) recognition of their very omnipresence. And what is valid for the internal reading also extends to the external one: the field-autonomy that is the prerequisite of scientificity can only be defended in the form of a sober-minded intellectual corporatism.

Conclusion: Knowledge politics and anti-politics

Bourdieu's sociology of knowledge, as we have amply seen, successfully "evens out" the profanation of philosophical conceptions of rationality and truth by means of a *social* demarcation of science as an autonomous line of work. The resulting precarious equilibrium between these two apparently contrary tendencies, I claim, suggests nothing less than a novel solution to the traditional conundrum of Reason versus Power or Right versus Might. The first, demystifying, operation levels down the intellectualist hierarchy of the Mind and posits an intrinsic *juncture* between intellect and politics, knowledge and interest, reason and power, which is not too dissimilar from Foucault's principle of *pouvoir/savoir*. The second operation counter-

balances this by an equally principled *disjuncture*, insofar as the social realms of culture and politics are institutionally divorced, and their respective autonomy is defended over against attempts to blur or erase their mutual boundaries. It is this precarious balance between the principles of "knowledge politics" and "anti-politics" that also suggests a fresh definition of the role of intellectuals, since it finally dispenses with the traditional alternative of "ivory tower" detachment and the involvement of a fully politicized culture.

The classical dilemma of Reason and Power is no longer "resolved" by subordinating or reducing one of its constituent terms to the other, but by their simultaneous fusion and separation in an interplay of politicization and depoliticization, osmosis and differentiation. On the one hand, science, art, and culture in general are redescribed as forms of politics "continued by other means," which engenders a metaphorical extension of the concept of the political. On the other hand, the autonomy of these "other means" and the specificity of the professional production of culture is guarded in such a manner as to maintain a clear line of demarcation between cultural politics and "big" politics. Recognition that science and culture are social and political through and through does not erase the boundaries between culture and politics as functionally differentiated subsystems in the social division of labor. The *epistemological* fusion between knowledge and power can go together well with a *social-institutional* separation between science and society.

In traditional conceptions of the Reason-Power relationship, the two extreme options of principled detachment and principled involvement share an important characteristic. They embody two forms of "knowing better": two forms of elitist self-understanding on the part of the academically educated.[45] Both the idea of an "ivory tower" and the drive for full politicization support a notion about the supremacy of the rational mind that invites the intellectual to look down in condescension upon the low life of politics and politicians. In the first case, intellectuals derive their superiority from their privileged husbandry of universal values and truths, and castigate any colleague who descends into the political marketplace as a traitor to the Spirit. In the reverse case of politicization, intellectuals likewise claim to know better than politicians. This time, however, they eagerly invade the agora in order to *take the place* of their dilettante rivals – dreaming the historical dream that connects Plato to Hegel and Marx, and Marx to both Sartre and Heidegger. The project of legislative reason, which in the former case

leads toward renunciation of the world, turns political, and the accusation of intellectual treason is now reversed upon the uncommitted and the inactive.[46]

The recent disenchantment of reason, however, has sharply transformed these terms of debate. The reduction of intellectual work to "ordinary" proportions has enabled intellectual workers to defend their autonomy in a more realistic and pragmatic way, i.e., without calling upon traditional epistemic values such as the "love of truth" or "value-freedom," or wielding traditional dualisms such as truth versus interest or knowledge versus power. In this constellation, detachment and involvement are no longer contrary concepts, or poles that spread a force field between them, but rather constitute two sides of the same knowledge-political coin. Distanciation as social-institutional precondition for the successful performance of science and culture no longer requires the legitimating support of the classical ethos of value-freedom. The relative autonomy of culture can (and should) be maintained against politics with political means.

This idea of an "anti-political politics" thus effectively dodges the traditional dilemma that opposes the detachment of Reason to the involvement of Power. Indeed, in Konrád's characterization, it is the political engagement or obtrusiveness of those who *refuse to become* politicians and, at the end of the day, prefer to leave the routine exercise of power to other professionals than themselves. Crucial to this view is a (performative) awareness that doing politics is *different from* the display of cultural creativity; that the work of "organizing ideas" does not and should not coincide with the work of "organizing people and things," but is (and should be) subjected to a distinct logic of its own. Konrád therefore likens the relation between professional politics and cultural anti-politics to that between two mountains: neither of them is interested in taking the place of the other; neither is able to eliminate or substitute for the other.[47] It is this very separation of tasks and interests, which "neutralizes" the knowledge-political marriage between culture and politics by means of their anti-political divorce, which defines the promise of a culture of democratic differences.[48]

In Bourdieu's "corporatism of the universal," however, the *Realpolitik* of intellectual autonomy is still to some extent euphemized by means of a residual, and curiously roundabout, notion of intellectual transcendence. His is no longer the straightforward universalism of the ethic of professional disinterestedness; nor does he espouse the more intri-

cate varieties implied in Gouldner's idea of a culture of critical discourse or in Habermas's project of a linguistically certified communicative symmetry. His darker "Smithian" calculation of the transformation of private vices into public benefits, nevertheless, by deploying partial interests as providential mainsprings of the universal, still tends to contribute to an overly reverential and sublimated (self)image of the professionals of culture, by underwriting something like their agonistically constituted, but collectively ensured guardianship of "truth" and "rationality."[49]

In a more thoroughly "dualistic" approach to the problem of autonomy, there is no longer any single profession or corporation that may claim privileged access to a universalistic cultural grounding. All professions are equally "suspect" in their claims to represent the general interest, and must balance the modest recognition of their own capacities by a recognition of the distinct rationality and autonomy of others. In this perspective, intellectuals and politicians are embroiled in something like a generalized, "societal" version of the agonistic logic that Bourdieu considers a characteristic and beneficial feature of the development of science and other restricted fields. While inside the scientific field a critical game of competition ranges scientific rivals against one another, so likewise in the broader societal field checks and balances are installed between professional powers that have a vested interest in keeping a sharp eye upon each others' every movement.

In this manner, the corporatism of the intellectuals is matched by the corporatism of the politicians. Through this institutionalized rivalry, their mutual obtrusiveness is checked and balanced by systematic mutual distrust. They mutually respect one another's professional jurisdiction, but are also increasingly conscious of the natural proximity between their good and evil sides, their utility and disutility, their functions and dysfunctions. Politicians and intellectuals are as useful as they are dangerous. More precisely: they are dangerous as a result of the same autonomy that conditions their utility. Nothing special. But surely "something different."

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Notes

1. Old thoughts, however, never die but slowly fade away. Cf. Alan Montefiore's conception of the intellectual as "anyone who takes a committed interest in the validity and truth of ideas for their own sake." ("The political responsibility of intellectuals," *The Political Responsibility of Intellectuals*, ed. Ian MacLean, Alan Montefiore, and Peter Winch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 201. Russell Jacoby's widely influential *The Last Intellectuals* (New York: Basic Books, 1987) likewise contains large shots of nostalgia about the demise of the traditional "general" intellectual. This left-wing nostalgia is shared by the right, judging from the work of, e.g., Hofstadter, D'Souza, and Bloom. The elitist quality of such defenses of Culture against academic professionalism is convincingly exposed by Robbins in "Othering the academy," *Social Research* 58/2 (1991): 355–372, and more fully in his *Secular Vocations: Intellectuals, Professionalism, Culture* (London: Verso, 1993).
2. Paul Feyerabend, "Experts in a free society," *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 3/4 (1977): 389–405, and *Science in a Free Society* (London: New Left Books, 1978), 73; Thomas Gieryn, "Boundary-work and the demarcation of science from non-science: Strains and interests in professional ideologies of scientists," *American Sociological Review*, 48 (1983): 781–795; Michael Mulkay, "Norms and ideology in science," *Social Science Information* 15 (1979): 637–656; Bruno Latour, "Is it possible to reconstruct the research process?: Sociology of a brain peptide," *The Social Process of Scientific Investigation*, ed. Karin Knorr, Roger Krohn, and Richard Whitley (Dordrecht/Boston: Reidel, 1980), 53–73, and *Science in Action* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1987); Steve Woolgar, *Science: The Very Idea* (London: Tavistock, 1988).
3. Paul Feyerabend, *Science in a Free Society*, 85–86, 96–98; Michel Foucault, *Ervaring en waarheid* (Nijmegen: Te Elfder Ure, 1985): 81–82; Pierre Bourdieu, *Questions de sociologie* (Paris: Minuit, 1980): 17–18.
4. Feyerabend, "Experts," 97; Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980): 126ff.; Pierre Bourdieu, "The corporatism of the universal: The role of intellectuals in the modern world," *Telos* 81 (1989): 99–110.
5. Feyerabend himself specifies that "anything goes" should in fact be read as "any *method* goes": not the *only legitimate* method, but *every random method* offers reasonable chances of success ("Experts," 400). Without further ado, such a minimal demarcation is incapable of distinguishing science sharply from methodically conducted disciplines such as Christian or Islamic theology, astrology, homeopathy, Marxism, or psychoanalysis. However, it does serve to demarcate science from other professionally conducted practices and from everyday knowledge use. Feyerabend's relativism can neither be sustained against other autonomous professions nor against the dilettantism of common sense. The additional criterion of scientificity that we need next to *autonomy* is of course *organized competition.*
6. Cf. Gabriel Gyarmati, "The doctrine of the professions: Basis of a power structure," *International Social Science Journal* 27/4 (1975): 629–654; Elliot Freidson, *Professional Powers: A Study of the Institutionalization of Formal Knowledge* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986); Charles Derber, William A. Schwartz, and Yale Magrass, *Power in the Highest Degree: Professionals and the Rise of a New Mandarin Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
7. Magali Sarfatti-Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis*

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Dietrich Ruschemeyer, "Professional autonomy and the social control of expertise," *The Sociology of Professions*, ed. Robert Dingwall and Philip Lewis (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983): 38–55.

8. Cf. Dick Pels, "Kennispolitiek: Een gebruiksaanwijzing voor Foucault," *Kennis & Methode* 16/1 (1992): 39–62. On the Janus head of the professions, see also Terence Johnson, *Professions and Power* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1977), 17. Talcott Parsons likewise speaks about "rosy and less rosy aspects," but continues to emphasize the "positive side of the case" ("Professions," *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, 1968, 372). Suzan Cozzens rather reads the traditional autonomy claim of science as a manifestation of the professional exercise of power: "Autonomy and power in science," *Theories of Science in Society*, ed. Suzan Cozzens and Thomas Gieryn (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 165. On the fundamental ambiguity of professionalism cf. also extensively Robbins, *Secular Vocations*.
9. Zygmunt Bauman speaks about a *simultaneity* of detachment and involvement (*Intimations of Postmodernity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 90). The enterprise of sociology is characterized by him as incurably two-faced, both critical and dominatory, so that you cannot have the one without always incurring the danger of the other (ibid., 212). The dual nature of expertise is discussed more directly in his "Life-world and expertise: Social production of dependency," *The Culture and Power of Knowledge*, ed. Nico Stehr and Richard V. Ericson (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1992): 91–99.
10. Pierre Bourdieu, "Animadversiones in Mertonem," *Robert K. Merton: Consensus and Controversy*, ed. Jon Clark, Celia Modgil, and Shohan Modgil (London and New York: The Falmer Press, 1990), 298. Cf. for his approach to the artistic field and cultural fields more generally *Les règles de l'art* (Paris: Seuil, 1992) and *The Field of Cultural Production* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993). Useful introductions to Bourdieu's work are provided by David Swartz, "Pierre Bourdieu: The cultural transmission of social inequality," *Harvard Educational Review* 47 (1977): 545–554; Paul Di Maggio, "Review essay: On Pierre Bourdieu," *American Journal of Sociology* 84/6 (1979): 1460–1474; and Rogers Brubaker, "Rethinking classical sociology: The sociological vision of Pierre Bourdieu," *Theory and Society* 14/6 (1985): 745–775.
11. Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 2, 8, 172–177; *Intimations of Postmodernity*, 1–25; "The state and the intellectuals, and the state of the intellectuals," *Thesis Eleven* 31 (1992): 81–104. Pierre Bourdieu is highly critical of the very concept of a "profession," and argues against all a priori or "operational" definitions of intellectuals, artists, and scientists, because there is always struggle within the field itself over who is part of the game, who is admitted to the game as a legitimate player, who deserves the title of writer, intellectual, scientist, etc. (Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 100, 242–245).
12. Hence I also take exception to Gouldner's "Kuhnian" demarcation between "critical" (or "revolutionary") intellectuals and the "technical" (or "normal") intelligentsia, which preserves a residual universalism which I take as ungrounded and ungroundable. Cf. for a more extended critique my "Towards a non-Hegelian conception of the new class," *Dimensions of the Historical Process*, ed. Leszek Nowak (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1989), 201–216.
13. Pierre Bourdieu, "The specificity of the scientific field," *French Sociology: Rupture*

and Renewal Since 1968, ed. Charles C. Lemert (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 257–292; and "The peculiar history of scientific reason," *Sociological Forum* 6: 1 (1991): 3–26.

14. One of the sources of this rehabilitation is Nietzsche's recalcitrant conviction that the more affects and interests one is able to muster and let speak about a particular object, the better we are able to see it, the larger our "objectivity" (*Zur Genealogie der Moral* (Frankfurt a.M. und Leipzig: Insel Verlag, [1887] 1991), 114, 146.
15. The "scholastic fallacy" consists in picturing social agents in the image of scientists, and of conceiving the projected scientific constructions as actual causes of everyday practices. Cf. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990); "The scholastic point of view," *Cultural Anthropology* 5/4 (1990): 380–391; *Invitation*, 69–71; *Homo Academicus* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), xiii–xiv.
16. Bourdieu, "Specificity," 263, 269–272.
17. Bourdieu, "Animadversiones in Mertonem," 300; *Invitation*, 115–116, 178.
18. E.g., Pierre Bourdieu, "The production of belief: Contribution to an economy of symbolic goods," *The Field of Cultural Production*, 74; "Specificity," 260; *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 180–183, 197.
19. Cf. Dick Pels, "Rivaliteit en relativisme: Een kritische beschouwing over Pierre Bourdieu's kennissociologie," *Kennis & Methode* 9/2 (1985): 121–140. Cf. also Richard Jenkins, *Pierre Bourdieu* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 91–99. Recall here Nietzsche's singular phrase: "Alle Ideale sind gefährlich, weil sie das Tatsächliche erniedrigen und brandmarken" (*Der Wille zur Macht* (Stuttgart: Kröner, [1906] 1980), 159).
20. Dick Pels, "De natuurlijke saamhorigheid van feiten en waarden," *Kennis & Methode* 14/1 (1990): 14–43; "The natural proximity of facts and values," in Steve Fuller and Aant Elzinga, *Towards a Social Theory of Knowledge* (SUNY Press, forthcoming); "Values, facts, and the social theory of knowledge," *Kennis & Methode* 15/3 (1991): 274–284.
21. *Invitation*, 171–172. Sociology, Bourdieu states, must first assert its autonomy; only then is it capable of developing rigorous instruments that may lend it political relevance and potency. Whatever political potency it may have will be due to its properly scientific authority, that is, to its autonomy (ibid., 187; cf. also *Homo Academicus*, xvi). This is the basic thrust of what Bourdieu calls his "sociological" or "rational" utopianism: "a rational and politically conscious use of the limits of freedom afforded by a true knowledge of social laws and especially of their *historical* conditions of validity" (*Invitation*, 196; also "For a socio-analysis of intellectuals: On *Homo Academicus*" (interview Loïc Wacquant), *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 34 (1990): 15, 22, 24–25).
22. Bourdieu, "Specificity," 266. Ordinary discourse about the social world does not have as its primary goal to state what the social realities *are* but what they *are worth*, and hence to propose value judgments (Bourdieu, *Invitation*, 84). This (classically) suggests that science primarily confines itself to empirical propositions. Cf. also *Les règles de l'art*, 15: "C'est tout simplement regarder les choses en face et les voir comme elles sont." In my contrary view, scientific interpretations do not differ in this respect from everyday interpretations: on both levels one encounters a "natural proximity" of empirical and normative propositions (Pels, "Natuurlijke saamhorigheid," 40).
23. "The most 'dysfunctional' tendencies (...) are inherent in the very same functions which generate the most 'functional' dispositions" ("Specificity," 275).
24. Cf. *Invitation*, 178–179, 188–189. Elsewhere Bourdieu emphasizes that science

must emancipate itself from forms of domination that *distort* scientific competition ("For a socio-analysis of intellectuals," 16).

25. "Specificity," 264.
26. Not the least of the advantages incurred by such a minimally normative amendment of the principle of "knowledge politics" is that it averts a predictable Habermasian critique of the "crypto-normative" structure of Bourdieu's sociology, without having to revert to an aprioristic separation between communicative and strategic action that once again separates the two hemispheres of the knowledge-political globe. The principle of "knowledge politics" is neither a metaphysical essentialism nor a purely empirical generalization, but a mixed normative-empirical hypothesis that does not issue in relativism but advances its own criterion of truth. Its epistemological superiority derives from the fact that, over against Habermas's transcendental dualism, it is able to retain the "natural proximity" of communicative and strategic action without falling prey to reductionism. Cf. for a more extensive treatment in the context of Foucault's *pouvoir/savoir* and Habermas's criticism of this notion: Dick Pels, "Kennispolitiek." Bourdieu explicitly rejects the distinction between instrumental and communicative action (*Invitation*, 113).
27. Cf. his *Language and Symbolic Power*, passim; *In Other Words* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), passim.
28. "Specificity," 283; *Invitation*, 259–260; *Homo Academicus* xvi, 47–48.
29. *Language and Symbolic Power*, 243.
30. Cf. Bruno Latour, "The powers of association," *Power, Action and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?*, ed. John Law (London: Routledge, 1986); Barry Barnes, *The Nature of Power*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988): 52–54. If actors and groups are "defined" by their relative positions within objective social spaces in which each "possess" their own logic, their own principles of differentiation, and their own hierarchy, who does the defining? Who attributes this particular logic? When objective relations and positions have primacy above the individuals and their position-takings, who has accorded them this primacy? Who actually says that "there are *general laws of fields*...?" Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984, 113).
31. Cf. the rather opportunistic manner in which Bourdieu draws the distinction between "true" and "false" autonomy in order to demarcate pseudo-science (which remains dependent under the guise of being independent) from "real" science ("Specificity," 275ff).
32. "Specificity," 273–274.
33. Cf. the opposition Bourdieu records between university departments that are directly dependent from wordly powers and derive their authority from a kind of "social delegation," and departments whose authority rests upon scientificity and who supply their own foundation. The general opposition between "university capital," which is allied to power over the reproduction mechanisms of the academic field, and capital that is founded upon scientific reputation is likewise informed by normative-political considerations (*Homo Academicus*, ch. 2; *Invitation*, 78, 177).
34. Cf. Bourdieu's rather tautological definition of a field as a space in which a field effect manifests itself; or of the limits of a field as the point where field effects cease to exercise their influence (*Invitation*, 100, 232).
35. "Specificity," 276; "Animadversiones in Mertonem," 299; *Invitation*, 72; "Concluding remarks: For a sociogenetic understanding of intellectual works," *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*, ed. Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma, and Moishe Postone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 263–264; "Narzisstische Reflexivität und wissen-

schaftliche Reflexivität," *Kultur, Praxis, Text*, ed. Eberhard Berg and Martin Fuchs (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1993), 365–374.

36. Pierre Bourdieu, *Choses dites* (Paris: Minuit, 1987), 44; "Corporatism," passim; *Invitation*, 175ff.
37. Bourdieu, "Corporatism," 99–101; *Les règles de l'art*, 185–188, 461–472; Loïc J. D. Wacquant, "From ruling class to field of power: An interview with Pierre Bourdieu on *La noblesse d'État*," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 10/3 (1993): 38–39.
38. "To claim the *title* of intellectual, cultural producers *must fulfil* two conditions: on the one hand, they *must* belong to an intellectually autonomous field, one independent of religious, political, economic, or other powers, and they *must* respect that field's particular laws; on the other, they *must* deploy their specific expertise and authority in their particular intellectual domain in a political activity outside it. They *must* remain full-time cultural producers without becoming politicians" ("Corporatism," 99, my italics).
39. E.g., "For a socio-analysis of intellectuals," 4–6; *Invitation*, 100.
40. "Corporatism," 103; "I am a resolute, stubborn, absolutist advocate of scientific autonomy.... I think that *sociology ought to define its social demands and functions on its own*" (*Invitation*, 187). Compare this with Alvin Gouldner's plea that it is sociology's first task "to establish the conditions of its own existence as a practical rational discourse," and that these conditions are of "universalistic relevance." Gouldner's politics of establishing autonomous "theoretical collectives" that are committed to "true speaking" retains a normative theory of rationality and a divorce between truth and interest that edges closer to Habermas than to Bourdieu ("The politics of the mind," *For Sociology* (London: Allen Lane, 1973), 97–100.
41. Bourdieu, "Corporatism," 103–104.
42. Once again, it may be useful to compare Bourdieu's drive for transcendence with Gouldner's. In different ways, they both tie their residual rationalism dialectically to a theory of "guild" interests. Whereas Gouldner's "flawed universal class" remains driven by the underlying teleology of the Culture of Critical Discourse, Bourdieu's universalism emerges more directly from the workings of particularist competition itself. In my conception, however, universalism represents an interested, partisan claim in *all* contexts. In distinction to both Gouldner and Bourdieu (and Habermas), I argue that a theory of knowledge-political duality should renounce all hopes for the attainment of universalistic truth ("Towards a non-Hegelian conception of the new class," 207ff).
43. "A genuine scientific field is a space where researchers agree on the grounds of disagreement and on the instruments with which to resolve these disagreements and on nothing else" (*Invitation*, 176). Even though the need for consensus is thus minimized, Bourdieu still demands more collective agreement than is palatable for a true pluralist. In my view, scientists need only agree on a collective defense of their institutional autonomy and of the social conditions of unobstructed intellectual competition, even while recognizing that the field limits, like the structure of competition, both remain at stake in struggles within the field itself.
44. Jürgen Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*. I&II (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1981): 481ff; "Die Philosophie als Platzhalter und Interpret," *Moralbewusstsein und kommunikatives Handeln* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1983).
45. Cf. also Jürgen Habermas, "Heinrich Heine and the role of the intellectual in Germany," *The New Conservatism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), 80, 86–88.
46. Cf. more extensively Dick Pels, "Treason of the intellectuals: Paul de Man and Hendrik de Man," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 8/1 (1991): 21–56.

47. George Konrád, *Anti-Politics* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984), 230–231; cf. also Vaclav Havel, "Anti-political politics," in John Keane, editor, *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives* (London: Verso, 1988), 381–398.
48. Cf. more extensively Dick Pels, *Het democratisch verschil: Jacques de Kadt en de nieuwe elite* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1993).
49. Cf. Pierre Bourdieu, *Les règles de l'art*, 15, about the logic of social universes "which succeed, through the social alchemy of their historical laws of functioning, in extracting the sublimated essence of the universal from the often pitiless clash of passions and private interests." Also Pierre Bourdieu, "L'intellectuel dans la cité," (interview with Florence Dutheil) *Le Monde*, 5 November 1993.