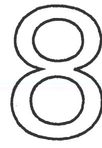

THE TWOFOLD TRUTH OF LABOR
Burawoy Meets Bourdieu

Like the gift, labour can be understood in its *objectively* twofold truth only if one performs the *second reversal* needed in order to break with the scholastic error of failing to include in the theory the "subjective" truth with which it was necessary to break, in a first para-doxal reversal, in order to construct the object of analysis. The objectification that was necessary to constitute wage labour in its objective truth has masked the fact which, as Marx himself indicates, only becomes the objective truth in certain exceptional labour situations: the investment in labour, and therefore miscognition of the objective truth of labour as exploitation, which leads people to find an extrinsic profit in labour, irreducible to simple monetary income, is part of the real conditions of the performance of labour, and of exploitation.

— BOURDIEU, *PASCALIAN MEDITATIONS*

The defining essence of the capitalist labor process is the simultaneous obscuring and securing of surplus value. How does the capitalist assure himself of surplus value when its production is invisible?

— BURAWOY, *MANUFACTURING CONSENT*

Tucked away toward the end of Bourdieu's masterpiece, *Pascalian Meditations*, are four startling pages under the heading "The Twofold Truth of Labour" (Bourdieu [1997] 2000, 202–5). They are startling, first, because they deal with the labor process, a topic Bourdieu rarely broached, and, second, because his interpretive framework follows Marxist orthodoxy, a framework he generally dismissed as anachronistic and misguided.

His argument is presented in typically intricate form in the quotation above. Let me translate. In constituting the object of knowledge—i.e., the notion of wage labor—Marx breaks with the subjective (lived) experience of workers that they are paid for a full day's work, for eight hours in an eight-hour day. In reality workers are exploited and only receive wages that are equivalent to a portion of the working day, say five hours, leaving three hours as surplus labor, which is the basis of profit. So far, this is straightforward Marx. But, says Bourdieu, it is not enough to make this first break—first reversal—with lived experience to produce the objective truth of exploitation; it is further necessary to make a second break, a second reversal, this time *against* the "objective truth" in order to reincorporate the "subjective truth"—the lived experience of workers. It is one thing to discover the objective truth of labor (i.e., exploitation); it is another to show how exploitation is sustained by workers themselves.

More concretely, how is it that workers work sufficiently hard so as to produce surplus value and thus make exploitation possible, even while it is invisible? The answer, Bourdieu claims, lies in the workers' "investment in labour," through which they find an "extrinsic profit in labour, irreducible to simple monetary income," with the result that exploitation is ensured even as it is not experienced as such. In other words, in the organization of work there is "a miscognition of the objective truth of labour as exploitation," which induces the hard work that is the foundation of exploitation. Further—and here too Bourdieu follows Marxist orthodoxy—the less autonomy a worker has, the less room for meaningful investment in labor and the more likely workers will see themselves as exploited, that is, the more likely there is a convergence of objective and subjective truths.

I find these pages startling not only for their focus on labor and their unqualified embrace of the Marxist theory of exploitation, but also for their convergence with the argument I made in *Manufacturing Consent* (1979)—an ethnography of an industrial plant in south Chicago where I worked as a machine operator for ten months in 1974 and 1975. In *Manufacturing Consent* I formulated the twofold truth of labor as follows: if surplus

labor is *obscured* (the objective truth of capitalist work, first break), then the question becomes how it is *secured* (the subjective truth of capitalist work, second break). Marx assumed it was secured through coercion, the fear of loss of the job, but under advanced capitalism, I argued, there were employment guarantees and legal constraints on managerial despotism that made the arbitrary application of coercion impossible. So management now had to persuade their employees to work hard—it had to manufacture consent. But how? The answer, I argued, was that the protection of workers not only posed a new challenge to the generation of surplus value, it also contained the solution to that challenge: the protection gave workers a certain autonomy on the shop floor that allowed them to "invest in labour" through constituting work as a "game." In my case it was a piece-rate game that we called "making out." The game compensates workers for their intrinsically boring work by giving them "extrinsic profits"—emotional satisfaction and symbolic rewards. I had taken Gramsci's ideas to the workplace to argue that consent rather than fear ruled the shop floor. Under advanced capitalism, workers are subject to what I called a hegemonic rather than a despotic regime of production.

I used the game metaphor as Bourdieu sometimes used it—as a way of understanding the reproduction of social structure and its underlying patterns of domination. Games obscure the conditions of their own playing through the very process of securing participation. Just as one cannot play chess and at the same time question its rules, so one cannot play the game of "making out" on the shop floor and at the same time question its rules—rules that are socially sanctioned by workers and shop floor management alike. This is the twofold truth of the game—the truth of the outsider studying the game and the truth of the insider playing the game. To the outsider the obsessive pursuit of the game appears ridiculous, but the sociologist as outsider can see its meaning in the way it "secures" the effort to makes capitalism possible, a truth that is "obscure" to the worker. As I worked on the shop floor I operated with the truth of the machine operator; as a sociologist I interrogated those experiences for the objective truth underlying the game of making out. My sociology, however, did not affect the way I worked on the shop floor.

How had Bourdieu arrived at a seemingly identical formulation to my own? How could I be using the language of hegemony and consent, which implies a conscious recognition of domination, to describe what, indeed, looked more like symbolic violence and misrecognition? Thus began years of fieldwork into the complex and fascinating texts of Bourdieu, leading to the conversations of this book in addition to a reassessment of my

understanding of the nature of advanced capitalism and its durability as well as the nature of state socialism and its fragility. On the one hand, it compelled a critique of Gramsci for overlooking the *mystification* that characterizes advanced capitalism. On the other hand, it led to a critique of Bourdieu for projecting *misrecognition* as universal—the result of the incorporated and embodied habitus—rather than seeing it as mystification (i.e., something socially produced and historically contingent).

The question I bring to Bourdieu is deceptively simple: How durable is domination?—which divides into three related questions. If the habitus of subjugation is universal and deep (i.e., there is misrecognition), how can domination be challenged? If, on the other hand, subjugation is historical and contingent (i.e., there is mystification), when does domination become transparent? And under what conditions, if any, does the objective truth of the sociologist converge with the subjective truth of the worker? Here I address these questions through an examination of the stability of workplace regimes in advanced capitalism and state socialism.

HOMO HABITUS VS. *HOMO LUDENS*

Bourdieu is always seeking to transcend antinomies: subject and object, micro and macro, voluntarism and determinism. All too often, however, he does not so much transcend the antinomy as combine the two opposed perspectives. Such is the case, I believe, for his conception of structure and agency, where he combines *Homo habitus* and *Homo ludens*.

Sometimes, Bourdieu starts with *Homo habitus*—with habitus, as we have seen, being the notion that the human psyche is composed of "the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations," producing "practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle" (Bourdieu [1972] 1977, 78). Here the emphasis is on doxic submission, but one that allows for improvisation within limits. We might call this a deep notion of social reproduction.

On other occasions, Bourdieu starts with *Homo ludens*—individuals whose character is given by the games they play, giving rise to a notion of social structure as rules that guide individual strategies. Human beings are players motivated by the stakes and constrained by the rules that define the game. This is a contingent notion of social reproduction that depends on the continuity of a particular game embedded in a particular institution. The only assumption it makes about human beings is that they are game players seeking control of their environment.

Bourdieu has both a contingent notion and a deep notion of social action, alternating between the two and often fusing them—*Homo ludens* and *Homo habitus*. For Bourdieu, game playing accompanies deeply inculcated, almost irremovable dispositions, which vary from individual to individual, depending on their biographies. Here, however, I want to oppose rather than merge these two notions of human action: on the one hand, *Homo habitus*, for whom social structure is internalized, and on the other hand, *Homo ludens*, for whom social structure is a set of external constraints to be negotiated. Is submission deeply engraved in the psyche or the product of institutionally ordered practices? Bourdieu wants it both ways, but the result is a notion of social structure that can never change and a pseudoscience that is unfalsifiable.

In adopting *Homo ludens* and the idea of mystification rather than *Homo habitus* and the idea of misrecognition, I show how social structures are more malleable and unstable than Bourdieu admits, although some more so than others. Thus, I argue that capitalist hegemony requires and obtains mystification as its precondition, which makes it relatively stable, whereas state socialism, unable to produce such a mystification, could not sustain hegemony and instead alternated historically between coercion and legitimation—an unstable arrangement that, in the final analysis, proved to be its undoing. The comparative analysis of advanced capitalism and state socialism shows the limits of both Bourdieu and Gramsci—the first too pessimistic about the possibilities of social change, the second too optimistic about such change.

MYSTIFICATION VS. MISRECOGNITION

My disagreement with Bourdieu turns on the crucial distinction between *mystification* and *misrecognition*. When Karl Marx writes about the mechanism through which exploitation is hidden in the form of wage labor or about commodity fetishism and the way the market obscures the human labor that goes into the commodity, he insists that this happens automatically and independently of the particular characteristics of any individual who experiences it—male or female, black or white. Thus, Marx and Engels famously write in *The German Ideology* ([1845–46] 1978, 154), "If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process." There is no psychology here—there is only the "historical life-process." Individuals are both the carriers and the effects of social relations, so if they experience things upside down, then this is the consequence of the social relations into which they enter. *Mystification* is the term we use to describe the social process that produces the gap between experience and reality *for all who enter a specific set of social relations.*

We can find examples of mystification in Bourdieu, most notably his repeated analysis of the gift economy in which the gift is experienced by givers and receivers as an act of generosity, while to the outside "scientist" it may be viewed as an act of self-interested economic behavior—an act that will reap its rewards—or as the collective creation of social bonds of interdependence. Bourdieu says that the scientists who impose their views on the agents misunderstand the nature of the gift exchange, which depends on the coexistence and separation of the subjective truth (an act of generosity) and the objective truth (building symbolic domination or social solidarity). But how are the two truths sustained? In *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu ([1972] 1977, 1–9) focuses on the separation in time of successive gift giving, so that the gift appears to be an isolated act of generosity. Thus, any attempt at immediate reciprocity is regarded as a crude violation of the basic norms. Here the structuring of exchange as a process evolving over time explains the misrecognition or, more precisely, the mystification.

When he turns to the gift exchange in *Pascalian Meditations*, however, the emphasis is more on the inculcation of perceptions and appreciations (habitus) that are shared by gift giver and receiver. This habitus of generosity is at the foundation of the gift economy, a habitus that is being replaced by the calculative disposition, making gift exchange rarer and more difficult to sustain. Insofar as the gift economy depends on the prior inculcation of a certain habitus, so we are shifting from mystification that is the product of social processes to misrecognition that is the result of an individual's internalized habitus (which in turn mediates and reflects social processes).

Reading *Pascalian Meditations*, Bourdieu's climactic theoretical work, I was struck by how much it sounded like Talcott Parsons's sealing of the social order. Individuals internalize the norms of the social order: "Incorporated cognitive structures attuned to the objective structures" secure "doxic submission to the established order" (Bourdieu [1997] 2000, 178); or, in other words, there is a mutual adjustment of position and disposition, of resources and expectations, of habitat and habitus. "The schemes applied to the world are the product of the world to which they are applied" (147), which guarantees the unknowing, unconscious adaptation to the world:

> The agent engaged in practice knows the world but with a knowledge which, as Merleau-Ponty showed, is not set up in the relation of externality of a knowing consciousness. He knows it, in a sense, too well, without objectifying distance, takes it for granted, precisely because he is caught up with it; he inhabits it like a garment [*un habit*] or a familiar habitat. He feels at home in the world because the world is also in him, in the form of habitus, a virtue made of necessity which implies a form of love of necessity, *amor fati*. (141–42)

Just as Parsons (1951) acknowledges the existence of "deviance" when role expectations are not complementary, so Bourdieu acknowledges that there can be mismatches between habitus and field—misfirings—that may or may not lead to new adaptations. But just as deviance is a residual category for Parsons, mismatches and misfirings are residual categories for Bourdieu. In both cases, the weight of the argument is to show the impossibility of contesting a social order, which means in Bourdieu's case bending the stick against Marxism, feminism, populism, and any other "ism" that celebrates transformation from below. It is not that some social orders lead to mystification and others to transparency, but that all social orders reproduce themselves through the inculcation of habitus and necessary misrecognition. We are all fish in water, unable to comprehend the environment in which we swim—except, of course, Bourdieu and his fellow sociologists.

The question we have to ask is whether social orders are held together by mystification, with the emphasis on *social relations independent of the particular individual*, or by misrecognition, constituted through a *deeply implanted habitus at least partially independent of the particular social relations into which an individual is inserted*. How can one discriminate between these alternative explanations for social order: a contingent domination dependent on social relations producing an *ideology as mystification* versus an internalized deep *symbolic violence that works through misrecognition*? Bourdieu clings to both notions, whereas I want to adjudicate between them. That requires a study that compares submission in different societies. In what follows, I undertake such a comparative analysis by reconstructing my studies of the subjectivities that arise from work organization and its regulation in advanced capitalist and state socialist workplaces. I show that mystification of domination is present in advanced capitalism but not in state socialism, explaining the durability of the one and the instability of the other. Symbolic violence based on misrecognition, however, being universal,

cannot discriminate between societies. Bourdieu falsely generalizes from his conception of contemporary France and pre-capitalist Kabyle society to all social orders. He cannot—and, indeed, makes no attempt to—explain how it is that state socialism collapses while advanced capitalism endures. That is what I attempt to do in the following pages.

THE GRAMSCIAN MOMENT: MANUFACTURING CONSENT

I begin again with Antonio Gramsci, whose originality lay in a periodization of capitalism not on the basis of the economy but on the basis of its superstructures, and in particular on the rise of the state–civil society nexus that organized consent and absorbed challenges to capitalism. This was the story of the rise of capitalist hegemony in Europe. In the United States, by contrast, without parasitic feudal residues, Gramsci writes that "hegemony was born in the factory" and not in civil society—a streamlining of domination that allows the forces of production to expand more rapidly than elsewhere, what he calls Fordism.

Manufacturing Consent (Burawoy 1979) endeavored to elaborate on what Gramsci might have meant when he spoke of hegemony being born in the factory. The study was based on participant observation in a south Chicago factory where I was a machine operator for ten months, from July 1974 to May 1975. I was a wage laborer like everyone else, although it was apparent that I was from a different background, not least because of my limited skills and my strange English accent. I made no secret of my reason for being there: to gather material for my dissertation.

Influenced by the French structuralist Marxism of the 1970s and its appropriations of Gramsci, I argued that the theories of the state developed by Althusser, Poulantzas, and Gramsci could be applied to the internal workings of the factory. In my Chicago plant, an *internal state*[1] constituted workers as industrial citizens, individuals with rights and obligations, recognized in grievance machinery and in the details of the labor contract. Here I could see in miniature Poulantzas's "national popular state." At the same time, the internal state orchestrated what Gramsci called the concrete coordination of the interests of capital and labor through collective bargaining, which provided the material basis of hegemony. Capital granted concessions that were necessary for labor's consent—concessions, as Gramsci would say, that do not touch the essential. Finally, following Gramsci, but also Poulantzas's analysis of the dominant classes and their relation to the state, I saw factory management as a power bloc, made up of different divisions (fractions) under the hegemony of its manufacturing division.

As well as an internal state, there was also an *internal labor market* that reinforced the individualizing effects of the internal state. It gave workers the opportunity to bid on other jobs within the factory, which were then allocated on the basis of seniority and experience. This internal labor market gave individual workers power and leverage against management. If workers did not like their job or their supervisor, they could bid on and then move to an alternative job. Workers who somehow made themselves indispensable to their foremen could wield considerable power. Like the internal state, the internal labor market constituted workers as individuals and, through rewards based on seniority, tied their interest to capital. If it gave workers some power on the shop floor, it also cultivated their loyalty, since moving to another firm would put them at the bottom of the seniority ladder. Workers had another interest, therefore, in the success—profitability—of their enterprise, even at their own expense, as happened in the 1980s, when many US workers had to enter into concession bargaining just to keep their jobs.

The internal state and internal labor market were the conditions for a third source of consent, the constitution of *work as a game*—in my case, the game of making out, whose rules were understood and accepted by operators, auxiliary workers, and shop floor supervisors alike. It was a piecework game and the goal was to "make out" (i.e., make an acceptable percentage output, one that was not higher than 140 percent and not lower than 125 percent). The details need not detain us here; suffice it to say that constituting work as a game is common in many workplaces because it counters ennui and arduousness, and it makes time pass quickly, enabling workers to endure otherwise meaningless work. There were good psychological reasons to participate in such a game, but, just as important, the social order pressured everyone into playing the same game with more or less the same rules. We continually evaluated each other as to how well we were playing the game. It was also difficult to opt out without being ostracized.

Playing the game had two important consequences. First, the game certainly limited output through goldbricking (going slow when piece rates were difficult or impossible to make in the hope that the rates would be loosened) and quota restriction (limiting output to 140 percent so as to avoid rate increases), but it also got operators to work much harder, and often with ingenious improvisation. It was a game that favored the application of effort and thus increased profits for management, and with only small monetary concessions. Second, it contributed not only to profit but also to hegemony. The very act of playing the game simultaneously produced consent to its rules. As we've seen, you can't be serious about playing a game—and this was a very serious game for those who played it—if at the same time you question its rules and goals.[2]

If the organization of work as a game was the third prong of hegemony, it was effective in generating consent only because it was protected from the *arbitrary* application of coercion (punitive sanctions that ranged from disciplinary procedures to firing)—a protection that was made possible by the constraints imposed on management by the internal labor market and internal state. This three-pronged hegemony was a distinctive feature of advanced capitalism in which management could simply no longer hire and fire at will. No longer able to rely on the arbitrary rule of the despotic regime of production of early capitalism, management had to *persuade* workers to deliver surplus; in other words, management had to manufacture consent. Thus, the internal state and the internal labor market were the apparatuses of hegemony, constituting workers as individuals and coordinating their interests with those of management, applying coercion only under well-defined and restricted conditions. Management could not arbitrarily close down the game or violate its rules—at least, not if it wanted to uphold its hegemony.

A game has to have sufficient uncertainty to draw in players, but it also has to provide players with sufficient control over outcomes. A despotic regime, in which management applies sanctions in an arbitrary fashion, creates too much uncertainty for a game to produce consent. In short, the hegemonic regime creates a relatively autonomous arena of work with an optimal balance of certainty and uncertainty, so that a game can be constituted and consent produced. In a hegemonic regime, the application of force (ultimately being fired), whether it occurs as a result of a worker's violation of the rules or as a result of the demise of the enterprise, must itself be the object of consent. Thus, we have Gramsci's "hegemony protected by the armour of coercion" (1971, 263).

In short, the *economic* process of producing things constituted as a game is simultaneously a *political* process of reproducing social relations and an *ideological* process of producing consent to these relations, made possible by the relatively autonomous internal state and internal labor market. I advanced Gramsci's analysis by taking his account of the state and civil society into the factory, applying it to the micro-physics of power, and, further, adding a new dimension to organizing consent—the idea of social structure as a game.[3]

THE BOURDIEUSIAN MOMENT: THE TWOFOLD TRUTH OF LABOR

The preceding account of manufacturing consent derives from Gramsci's theory of hegemony, but it overlooks the fundamental dilemma capitalists face: to secure surplus (unpaid) labor at the same time as its existence is obscured. The organization of consent is concerned only with the securing of surplus, but it coexists with the mystification of exploitation. This is none other than Bourdieu's twofold truth of labor: (1) the objective existence of exploitation, and (2) the subjective conditions of its simultaneous concealment and realization. It took my engagement with Bourdieu to realize that mystification is simply not part of Gramsci's theoretical toolkit. His idea of hegemony is not about mystification or misrecognition but largely about the rational and conscious basis of consent. At most, it is an account of the naturalization of domination, not the concealment of exploitation.

A Bourdieusian moment, therefore, is powerfully at work in my analysis of games. The peculiarities of the game of making out—and, indeed, all workplace games—lie in the way playing the game enlists workers not only in legitimating its rules and thereby producing surplus but also in mystifying the conditions of its existence (i.e., the relations of production between capital and labor). This is how Bourdieu presents the same point:

> Social games are in any case very difficult to describe in their twofold truth. Those who are caught up in them have little interest in seeing the game objectified, and those who are not are often ill-placed to experience and feel everything that can only be learned and understood when one takes part in the game—so that their descriptions, which fail to evoke the enchanted experience of the believer, are likely to strike the participants as both trivial and sacrilegious. The "half-learned," eager to demystify and denounce, do not realize that those they seek to disabuse, or unmask, both know and resist the truth they claim to reveal. They cannot understand, or take into account, the games of self-deception which make it possible to perpetuate an illusion for oneself and to safeguard a bearable form of "subjective truth" in the face of calls to reality and to realism, and often with the complicity of the institution (the latter—the university, for example, for all its love of classifications and hierarchies—always offers compensatory satisfactions and consolation prizes that tend to blur the perception and evaluation of self and others). ([1997] 2000, 189–90)

In "making out," workers secure "compensatory satisfactions and consolation prizes," winning freedoms at the margin that become the center of their lives on the shop floor. To the outsider, "making out" appears absurd; to the insider, it is what gives meaning to life. Through their small gains and the relative satisfactions these gains bring—"I'm so excited; today I made 129 percent on that lousy drilling job"—not only does alienating work become enchanting, but workers think they are outwitting management even as they are unwittingly contributing to their own exploitation. Management succeeds in securing surplus labor through the rebellion of workers against management. Bourdieu follows suit: "Workers may contribute to their own exploitation through the very effort they make to appropriate their work, which binds them to it through the freedoms—often minute and almost always 'functional'—that are left to them" ([1997] 2000, 203).

If both Bourdieu and I emphasize the concealing of the underlying social relations—and here we are continuous with the Marxist tradition from Marx through Lukács and the Frankfurt School, although, unlike them, Bourdieu considers the mystification to involve an almost unassailable misrecognition—how is it that it plays virtually no role in Gramsci, who instead develops a theory of rational consent to domination? The most general answer must be that he participated in revolutionary struggles at a time when socialist transformation was on the political agenda, when capitalism did appear to be in some deep organic crisis—although, in the end, it gave rise to fascism rather than to socialism. Capitalism was thus not the stable and enduring order it appeared to Bourdieu. For Gramsci, we can say, capitalism was more durable than it appeared to classical Marxism, but it appeared less durable than it appears to us today in our post-socialist pathos.

A more specific answer has to do with Gramsci's participation in the factory council movement and the occupation of the factories in Turin in 1919–20. As skilled workers, many of them craft workers, those involved experienced deskilling and separation from the means of production much more directly than the unskilled workers of today, who take for granted wage labor and the private ownership of the means of production. Moreover, the occupation of their factories and the collective self-organization of production through their councils meant that they understood only too well the meaning of capitalist exploitation. For Gramsci, whose experience of the working class was through the factory council movement, exploitation was hardly hidden and, on this occasion, the working class really did exhibit a good sense within the common sense. In Gramsci's eyes, the factory occupations failed because working-class *organs*—trade unions and

the Socialist Party—were wedded to capitalism, that is, their interests were ultimately coordinated with those of capital. For Gramsci, this "betrayal" would have to be rectified by the development of a "Modern Prince"—the Communist Party—that understood and challenged capitalist hegemony. There was nothing hidden or unconscious about the consent of parties and trade unions to capitalism.[4]

Bourdieu makes the opposite argument, namely that craft workers are not the most likely but instead the least likely to see through their subjective experience to the objective truth of exploitation: "It can be assumed that the subjective truth is that much further removed from the objective truth when the worker has greater control over his own labour" ([1997] 2000, 203). Curiously, Bourdieu is at his most Marxist here in arguing that subjective truth converges with objective truth and exploitation becomes transparent as labor is deskilled. As barriers to labor mobility are swept away, workers lose any attachment to their work and can no longer win for themselves the freedoms that bind them to work. Fearing such stripped and homogenized labor, modern management tries to re-create those freedoms through participatory management: "It is on this principle that modern management theory, while taking care to keep control of the instruments of profit, leaves workers the freedom to organize their own work, thus helping to increase their well-being but also to displace their interest from the external profit of labour (the wage) to the intrinsic profit" (204–5)—i.e., the profits from partial control over work.

While Bourdieu seems to be following my argument about the mystification of social relations through compensatory game playing, he is actually saying something quite different. For him, the power of misrecognition is linked to the level of skill, whereas I argue it has to do with the political and ideological apparatuses of production. Thus, in my case, the internal labor market and internal state create attachments to the employer and restrictions on employer interventions, so workers will be able to carve out those workplace games that give them their subjective sense of freedom. That is to say, hegemonic regimes are the necessary and sufficient condition for the mystification of exploitation, no matter how unskilled the work may be. Indeed, the more labor is unskilled, the more important become the games of work as compensation for arduousness and estrangement.

In short, for Bourdieu the convergence of the objective truth (exploitation) and the worker's subjective experience of work *increases* with the degradation of work, whereas I argue the opposite. The craft worker of the nineteenth century, as described by E. P. Thompson (1963), exhibits

deeper class awareness of exploitation than the autoworker of the twentieth century. Behind our differences lies a very different analysis of the basis of domination and subjugation.

CONDITIONS OF DOMINATION: INSTITUTIONS OR DISPOSITIONS

Instead of exploring the *institutional conditions* of mystification—the political and ideological apparatuses of the enterprise—Bourdieu turns to the *dispositional conditions* of misrecognition—"the effect of these structural factors obviously depends on workers' dispositions" ([1997] 2000, 203). In an earlier piece, he is most explicit:

> Differences in dispositions, like differences in position (to which they are often linked), engender real differences in perception and appreciation. Thus the recent changes in factory work, toward the limit predicted by Marx, with the disappearance of "job satisfaction," "responsibility" and "skill" (and all the corresponding hierarchies), are appreciated and accepted very differently by different groups of workers. Those whose roots are in the industrial working class, who possess skills and relative "privileges," are inclined to defend past gains, i.e. job satisfaction, skills and hierarchies and therefore a form of established order; those who have nothing to lose because they have no skills, who are in a sense a working-class embodiment of the populist chimera, such as young people who have stayed at school longer than their elders, are more inclined to radicalize their struggles and challenge the whole system; other, equally disadvantaged workers, such as first-generation industrial workers, women, and especially immigrants, have a tolerance of exploitation which seems to belong to another age. (Bourdieu 1981, 315)

The propensity to submission is not invariant but depends on the inculcated habitus. Those who have been socialized to industrial work or who come from oppressed conditions accommodate to it; those young people who have few skills but extended education and nothing to lose are likely to "radicalize their struggles and challenge the whole system," while immigrants and women are supposedly submissive beyond the pale. What sort of folk sociology is this, dependent on conventional wisdom and belied by history? We know that immigrants and women are quite capable of being

militant and of organizing themselves into strong trade unions, whether this be in South Africa, China, Brazil, or the United States. Since we have no way of measuring "disposition" or "habitus" independent of behavior, the argument is simply tautological—immigrants and women are submissive because of their submissive habitus as demonstrated by their submissiveness.

The argument of *Manufacturing Consent* was directly opposed to this commonsense or "spontaneous" sociology. I tried to bend the stick in the other direction, showing that externally derived dispositions made no difference to the way people responded to production or to the intensity with which they were drawn into the game of making out. Our experience on the shop floor was more or less the same, irrespective of our "habitus." Thus, I was struck by my own absorption into the game that I knew to be furthering my exploitation. I was not coerced into hard work. As my day man told me on my first shift, "no one pushes you around here," and he was right. Nor could the extra money explain my devotion to hard work. Rather, it was the symbolic rewards and emotional satisfaction of making out that drove the rhythm of work.

Using quantitative and qualitative data, I showed that race, age, marital status, and education had little to do with performance at work, whereas the workplace attributes of seniority and experience made a significant difference (Burawoy 1979, chap. 9). Observing interactions on the shop floor, I argued that joking relations established between races underscored that differences in background and racial prejudices were not relevant within the workplace, even as they were relevant with regard to the institutional racism beyond the workplace. I contrasted the situation in a Chicago factory with the mining industry in Zambia, where racism was, indeed, institutionalized *within* the workplace in the form of the color bar, differential pay scales, and differential legal codes. I described that system as one of colonial despotism, many of whose elements continued into the postcolonial era, despite the democratization of the political sphere. Here racism was no joking matter, so to speak. While there is no denying that racial mindsets continue to exist, their significance at the point of production depends on the racial form of the political regime of production.[5]

So we arrive at my crucial difference with Bourdieu. In contrast to Gramsci, both of us recognize a fundamental gap between the objective and subjective truth of labor, but for Bourdieu this is achieved through *misrecognition* rooted in the individual's habitus, whereas I claim it is achieved through *mystification* rooted in the social relations into which men and women enter—a mystification that operates on all individuals, independent

of their inherited dispositions. Symbolic violence through misrecognition rests on the bodily inculcation of social structure and the formation of a deep, unconscious habitus. There is no need for any concept of hegemony, because we are programmed to act out the social structure. Mystification, on the other hand, rests on individuals being inserted into specific social relations. Mystification is the necessary condition for a stable hegemony (i.e., for the organization of consent to domination).

If this is the difference that separates us, then examining consent/submission under different institutional complexes could corroborate or disconfirm our different theories. Thus, state socialism becomes a laboratory for the adjudication of our two theories. I will try to show that intensive inculcation from the party state and its institutions does not produce misrecognition, because these self-same institutions generate a transparency in their functioning. Without mystification, hegemony is not sustainable. In other words, as I will now show, the contradictions sowed by its institutions prove stronger than the incorporation of habitus.

THE PRECARIOUS HEGEMONY OF STATE SOCIALISM

I went in search of factory work in Hungary for two reasons. The first is that I missed the boat with the Polish Solidarity movement, 1980–81, which had absorbed my attention as an extraordinary working-class movement. When General Wojciech Jaruzelski declared martial law before I had even packed my bags, I did the next best thing—took up jobs in Hungary and asked why the Solidarity movement took place in Poland rather than Hungary and, more broadly, why in state socialism rather than advanced capitalism. What were the possibilities for a democratic socialism to emerge from such struggles against state socialism? The second reason drawing me to the socialist world was the specificity of my Chicago experience—was it the product of capitalism or of industrialism? Would I find the same work organization, factory regime, and working-class consciousness in the industries of state socialism?

Between 1982 and 1989 I spent my summers and three sabbatical semesters studying and working in Hungarian factories (Burawoy and Lukács 1992). I began in a champagne factory on a collective farm and moved to a textile factory on an agricultural cooperative, before graduating to industrial work in a machine shop very similar to the Chicago plant. Finally, I spent about eleven months in three separate stints working as a furnace man in the Lenin Steel Works of Miskolc. Based on this research, I concluded that the workplace regimes of advanced capitalism and state socialism were

indeed very different: if the former produced consent, the latter produced dissent, which was the disposition that fired the Polish Solidarity movement but also the collective mobilization in East Germany in 1953, in Poland and Hungary in 1956, and even in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The argument was a simple one: unlike capitalism, the appropriation of surplus under state socialism is a transparent process, recognized as such by all. The party, the trade union, and management are all extensions of the state to the point of production—extensions designed to maximize the appropriation of surplus for the fulfillment of plans. Being transparent, exploitation is *justified* as being in the interests of all. Like any process of legitimation, it is susceptible to being challenged on its own terms—the party state is vulnerable to the accusation that it is not delivering on its promises to serve the general interest. Whereas under capitalism legitimation is secondary, because exploitation is hidden, under state socialism it is primary, necessary to justify the open exploitation of state socialism, but it also becomes the latter's undoing.

Thus, the party state organizes rituals on the shop floor (what I called painting socialism) that celebrate its virtues—efficiency, justice, equality—yet all around workers see inefficiency, injustice, and inequality. Workers turn the ruling ideology against the rulers, demanding that they realize the claims of their socialist propaganda. The state socialist bureaucratic regime of production sows the seeds of dissent rather than consent. As regards the organization of work itself, the key games that dominate work are those involving the negotiation with management over the fulfillment of plan targets, so that the relations of exploitation are not obscured but define the relations among the players. Furthermore, given the shortage economy—shortages of materials, their poor quality, the breakdown of machinery, and so forth, all of which stem from the central administration of the economy—the games at work aim to cope with those shortages, demonstrating the hollowness of official claims about the efficiency of state socialism. Moreover, this adaptation to shortages requires far more autonomy than the bureaucratic apparatus regulating production will allow. Work games are transposed into games directed at the system of planning, bringing the shop floor into opposition to the production regime and the party state.

Far from social structure indelibly imprinting itself on the habitus of the worker and thus inducing doxic submission, the state socialist regime systematically produces the opposite—dissent rather than consent, even alternative organization to despotic controls. Indeed, more broadly, state socialism generated its own counter-socialisms from below—the cooperative movement in Hungary, Solidarity in Poland, and the civics in *perestroika* Russia. From the beginning, state socialism was a far more unstable order, not because its socializing agencies were weaker—far from it—but because of the contradictions generated by the institutions themselves. State socialism was held together by a precarious hegemony that was always in danger of slipping back into a despotism that relied on secret police, tanks, prisons, and show trials. In other words, where advanced capitalism organized simultaneously the mystification of exploitation and the consent to domination, now we see how the hegemony of state socialism—the attempt to present the interests of the party state as the interests of all—is a fragile edifice that was always threatened by the transparency of exploitation.

Bourdieu's notion of symbolic violence ensured through a deeply inscribed misrecognition cannot explain the instability of state socialism. Within Bourdieu's framework of internalization, there is no reason to believe that symbolic violence through misrecognition is any shallower or weaker in state socialism than in advanced capitalism. Quite the contrary: the coordination among fields—economic, educational, political, and cultural—should have led to a far more coherent and submissive habitus than under capitalism, where such fields have far greater autonomy and are more contradictory in their effects. An analysis of the logic of institutions and their immediate effects on the individual and on collective experience goes much further in explaining the fragility of state socialism.

FOLLOWING BOURDIEU: THE POWER OF FIELDS

Bourdieu never paid much theoretical attention to one of the signal events of his time—the collapse of the Soviet Union. I have found only one sociological writing by Bourdieu on state socialism—the four-page text of an address he gave in East Berlin on October 25, 1989, just two weeks before the fall of the Berlin Wall, amid massive demonstrations. Curiously, according to the published article, Bourdieu invoked the concepts of political and cultural capital to describe the tensions among the communist elites (Bourdieu [1989] 1998). Still, his notion of field can help us explain the dramatic demise of communism, so long as we drop the notion of habitus.[6]

Recall that Bourdieu's theory of social change rests on the discrepancy between position and disposition, between opportunities and expectations within a given field.[7] This is precisely what I described above for Hungarian workers—they were led to expect the wonders of socialism, yet they found themselves in a world of its inversions. Neither they nor the dominant class,

trying as it might with reform after reform, could bring reality into conformity with its ideology. The discrepancy was not due to some psychic lag between an inherited habitus and a rigid field ("hysteresis," as Bourdieu would call it) but was generated by the field itself. State socialism created expectations it could not fulfill. As the gap between official ideology and reality widened, and as attempts to reduce the gap violated that official ideology (as in market reforms), so the ruling class lost confidence in its capacity to rule and the enactment of socialist ideology became a meaningless ritual. Without capacity or belief, the dominant class's hegemony collapsed. Again, there is no need to resort to the existence of a deep-seated habitus that resists change.

This line of argument can also be used to shed light on the timing of the collapse. To understand the dynamics of 1989 we have to look at the Soviet bloc as a transnational political field dominated by the Soviet Union, which defined the terms of competition among the dependent states—much as the state defines the terms of competition among elites. This certainly captures the way in which state socialism dissolves. The Soviet Union changed the rules of the game and then the national governments (themselves divided) acted in anticipation of the reaction of the others. Thus, the Hungarian government of Németh, being the first to discover how the rules had changed, opened its border with Austria, allowing East German tourists to flood into the West. At this point Honecker's East German government miscalculated. Faced with throngs of East Germans who had arrived in Prague to claim refugee status, Honecker got the hard-line Czechoslovakian government to bottle up the East Germans in sealed trains that went across Germany to the West. Honecker sought to humiliate these "traitors" going to the West, but the strategy backfired; it only intensified the exodus. Influenced by the Solidarity sweep of the Polish elections and the movements in Hungary, as well as huge demonstrations against the party state, Egon Krenz realized that Honecker had to go, but in so doing he laid the basis of his own burial in the rubble of the Berlin Wall. All this inspired the Czechoslovakian people to assemble in Wenceslas Square in the hundreds of thousands to listen to Václav Havel and other dissidents. After the Czechoslovakian party wilted, only Romania's Ceauşescu remained obdurate, putting down protest with violence and ultimately succumbing to a palace coup that put an end to him and his dictatorship. This thumbnail sketch of the events of 1989 shows how national actors acted strategically in a common transnational field. Strategy, as Bourdieu insists, only becomes conscious in exceptional crisis times when rules are in flux.

This would require much further elaboration, but it indicates the importance of studying the *interaction* of fields—something Bourdieu never addresses systematically—in this case the field of transnational relations within the Soviet bloc (itself nested in a larger field of international relations) and the political field within each nation.[8] Underlying these interfield dynamics, however, is the underlying instability of the state socialist order, unable to create a stable hegemony due to the palpable transparency of exploitation and domination.

FOLLOWING GRAMSCI: THE GOOD SENSE OF SOCIALIST WORKERS

Just as Bourdieu's field analysis can be usefully reconstructed to shed light on the unfolding crisis of the Soviet order, so reconstructing Gramsci also illuminates what transpired in 1989. Let me return to the shop floor and to the methodological issues raised by Bourdieu in the epigraph that opened this conversation. There, Bourdieu writes of the double truth of labor and that it was not enough to construct the objective truth by breaking with common sense (first reversal); it was also necessary to break with this objective truth to understand how common sense both produced and concealed the objective truth (second reversal). That was how I approached the Chicago factory, first recognizing the underlying truth of surplus labor and then trying to understand how that surplus labor was experienced subjectively in a way that explained how it was produced. Unpaid labor was simultaneously obscured and secured through constituting work as a game, itself made possible by the internal labor market and internal state.

Like Bourdieu, I did not believe that my fellow workers grasped the conditions of their subordination in the way a sociologist might, but even if they did, it would have made little difference. In other words, I did not find any Gramscian good sense within the common sense of workers, so instead of trying to convince my fellow workers of my Marxist theory—a daunting project indeed—I sought to persuade my fellow academics of the superiority of my theory of the labor process and of manufacturing consent. This was so very different from my experience in Hungary, where my fellow workers—no less hostile to Marxism—nonetheless were possessed of "good sense," not because they were superior beings but because the institutions created the basis of good sense. Therefore, I did not have to make a *break* with common sense, but instead I *elaborated* its kernel of good sense, including the immanent critique of state socialism, through dialogue with

my fellow operators, contextualizing it in terms of the political economy of state socialism.

Here in Hungary, Bourdieu's strict opposition of science and common sense was replaced by Gramsci's (1971, 333) account of dual consciousness—i.e., a practical consciousness stemming from production and an ideological consciousness superimposed by the party state or inherited from the past. I was riveted to the practical consciousness of my fellow workers "implicit" in their activity, which united them "in the practical transformation of the real world." I paid less attention to the ideologies, "superficially explicit or verbal . . . inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed," which included racist, sexist, religious, and local sentiments. Yet it is true that these latter sentiments formed powerful bonds among workers, often overwhelming their incipient class consciousness.

Together with my collaborator, János Lukács, we focused on the capacity and necessity of workers to autonomously and flexibly organize production in the face of shortages. We defended this practice against managers who strove to appropriate control from the direct producers through bureaucratic procedures. Incensed by our claims, these managers insisted that we redo our study. This was not a Gramscian tension within the consciousness of workers but a struggle between workers and management, and once again it would be the "explicit and verbal consciousness" perpetrated and perpetuated by management that ultimately prevailed. By the time Hungarian socialism entered its final years, bombarded by bureaucratic managers, workers had lost any confidence in the very idea of socialism and certainly had little imagination of an alternative democratic socialism, even though some such imagination had been implicit in the logic of their own practice. Inspired by the "good sense" of workers and what he saw as a great potential for some sort of worker-owned enterprises, in the immediate years after the collapse of state socialism, Lukács worked with labor collectives to create the foundations of an alternative to capitalism, but this withered on the vine as capitalist ideology gained the upper hand.

In short, the analysis of state socialism—how it generated dissent and ultimately collapsed—does not call for a theory of deep-seated habitus but can remain at the level of social relations of production. State socialism could not sustain its precarious hegemony, and the attempts to shore up such a hegemony only hastened its demise. Equally, as we saw earlier, the reproduction of durable domination under capitalism does not require the *inculcation* of social structure. Such submission that exists can be explained by the configuration of institutions that elicit consent to domination based on

the mystification of exploitation. *Homo habitus* is not necessary to explain submission and resistance; *Homo ludens* is sufficient.

THE LOGIC OF PRACTICE: BEYOND GRAMSCI AND BOURDIEU

My argument can be summarized by referring back to the notion of *false consciousness*. For Gramsci, the problem with false consciousness lies not with consciousness but with its falseness. That is to say, Gramsci believed that workers actively, deliberately, and consciously collaborate in the reproduction of capitalism and consent to domination. They understand what they are doing; they simply have difficulty appreciating that there could be anything beyond capitalism. Yet at the same time, by virtue of their position in production, workers also possessed a critical perspective on capitalism and an embryonic sense of an alternative—one that could be jointly elaborated in dialogue with intellectuals. They have a *dual* consciousness rather than a *false* consciousness.

If for Gramsci the questionable part of false consciousness was its "falseness," for Bourdieu the problem lies not with "falseness" but with "consciousness" that denies the depth of symbolic violence—a domination that settles within the unconscious through the accumulated sedimentations of social structure.

> In the notion of "false consciousness" which some Marxists invoke to explain the effect of symbolic domination, it is the word "consciousness" which is excessive; and to speak of "ideology" is to place in the order of *representations*, capable of being transformed by the intellectual conversion that is called the "awakening of consciousness," what belongs to the order of *beliefs*, that is, at the deepest level of bodily dispositions. (Bourdieu [1997] 2000, 177)

So, for Bourdieu, consent is far too thin a notion to express submission to domination and must be replaced by the idea of misrecognition, which is embedded within the habitus.[9] Because the dominated internalize the social structure in which they exist, they do not recognize it as such. They have, in Gramscian terms, only bad sense. Only the dominators—and then only privileged intellectuals—can distance themselves from, and thus objectivize, their relation to social structure. Only they can have access to its secrets. And not all intellectuals, to be sure—only those who are reflexive about their privileged place in the world and who use that reflexivity to examine the lives of others.

In adjudicating between these positions, I have argued that both are problematic. Gramsci does not recognize the mystification of exploitation upon which hegemony—i.e., consent to domination—rests. In other words, capitalist workers do suffer from "false consciousness," but this falseness emanates from the social structure itself, which is where I depart from Bourdieu. Insofar as we participate in capitalist relations of production, we all experience the obscuring of surplus labor, independent of our habitus. Mystification is a product of the social structure itself and is not so deeply implanted within the individual that it cannot be undone, whereas Bourdieu's misrecognition is lodged deep within the individual psyche, tending to harmonize habitus and field.

Accordingly, Bourdieu cannot explain why symbolic violence is effective in some societies but not in others. Thus, why did state socialism, where one would have expected submission to be most deeply embedded, systematically produce dissent? For Bourdieu, social change, if it occurs at all, springs from the mismatch of habitus and field, but there is no systematic account of how this mismatch is produced, whether it is produced *situationally* through a cultural lag (hysteresis)—i.e., through habitus cultivated in one field clashing with the logic of another field—or *processually* through the very dynamics of social structure. Nor is there an analysis of the consequences of that mismatch in terms of whether it produces accommodation or rebellion. In other words, Bourdieu points to the *possibility* of social change but has no *theory* of social change. We will examine this question in the next and final conversation of Bourdieu with Bourdieu.

In the end, habitus is an intuitively appealing concept that can explain any behavior, precisely because it is unknowable and unverifiable. Bourdieu never gives us the tools to examine what a given individual's habitus might be. It's a black box. We infer the habitus from behavior—a shoplifter is a shoplifter because he/she has the habitus of a shoplifter. We only know the habitus from its effects; there is no theory of its components or how they are formed as in psychoanalytical theory. In short, habitus is not a scientific concept but a folk concept with a fancy name—a concept without content that might equally well be translated as character or personality.

Far more than Bourdieu, Gramsci is concerned with social transformation. He sees this as taking place through the breakdown of hegemony and the creation of a new subaltern hegemony, whether this comes through organic crises (balance of class forces) or through the war of position mounted from below on the basis of the kernel of good sense, or, what is more likely, a combination of the two. What my research suggests is that there is more to hegemony than the concrete coordination of interests or the ties linking state and civil society—there is more to hegemony than consent. There are non-hegemonic foundations of hegemony, namely the mystification of exploitation, which is why hegemony is so effective in advanced capitalism and so precarious in state socialism.

Because exploitation was so transparent in state socialism, it gave more scope for intellectuals to engage with workers in the elaboration of alternative "hegemonies" from below—the Hungarian worker councils in 1956, the Prague Spring of 1968, the Polish Solidarity movement of 1980–81, the market socialism of Hungary's reform period of the 1980s, the effervescence of civil society under Soviet *perestroika*. These alternative hegemonies were formed by different configurations of the relations between intellectuals and workers. They were eventually swept away, but they did provide the embryos of alternative socialist social orders. Intellectuals had more scope to join with workers to be sure but, by the same token, they posed a bigger threat to the regime and thus became the target of repression.

We live in depressing times of capitalist entrenchment when the failure of actually existing socialism has buttressed dominant capitalist ideologies. We should not compound the forcefulness and eternalization of the present by subscribing to unsubstantiated claims about the deep internalization of social structure, reminiscent of the structural functionalism of the 1950s and its "oversocialized man." Remember, those theories were overthrown by a critical collective effervescence that structural functionalism did not, but also could not, anticipate.