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Gazing at the colonial gaze: photographic observation and observations on photography based on a comparison between aspects of the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron.*

Abstract.

The paper was provoked by viewing the photos taken by Bourdieu in Algeria which have been published in *Images d'Algérie* (Bourdieu, 2003) as they were exhibited on three separate occasions – at the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris in 2003, the Photographers' Gallery, London in 2004, and Goldsmiths' College, London in 2006/7. The paper is divided into two parts. The first part considers three stages in the production and consumption of Bourdieu's photos. Discussion of the first stage considers the way in which the contextualisation of the publication of a selection of the many photos taken by Bourdieu as included in *Travail et travailleurs en algérie* (1963) is indicative of Bourdieu's use of photography both as an instrument in the logic of research enquiry and as an instrument in the rhetoric of the communication of findings. Cross-reference to the contextualisation of these same photos in *Images de l'Algérie* raises the question whether the original photos can be said to have possessed autonomous visual meaning and whether the historical changes in the verbally imposed contextualisations are constitutive of changed visual significances. This question is pursued in discussion of the second stage of production of text and photos in *Images de l'Algérie*. Is the problem of the universality of sociological explanation categorally the same as the problem of the universality of visual images? The third stage of production/consumption is historically the post mortem stage in which Bourdieu no longer controls his 'griffe' (label or brand). The exhibition of Bourdieu's photos in galleries embodies the culmination of the process which he and his collaborators analysed in *Un Art Moyen* – the progressive aestheticisation of socially functional practice. Anticipating the more extended argument offered in *La distinction*, the contention of *Un Art Moyen* was that this process of aestheticisation was a vehicle for social aspiration and the upward social mobility of aspirants.

The possibility that the gallery display of Bourdieu's photos in the present might be a betrayal of the sociology of photography and of art galleries that Bourdieu attempted in the 1960s leads to the discussion of the second part of the paper. Part 2 first contextualises the work on photography undertaken within the Centre de Sociologie Européenne in the early 1960s and then, secondly, discusses the emergence of divergent sociologies of photography in the work of Bourdieu and Passeron. Part 2 suggests that the research agenda of Bourdieu and Passeron was originally framed by Raymond Aron's interest in understanding sociologically the processes of technological modernisation, of which the popularisation of photography was an exemplar. Bourdieu's inclination to emphasize the social and affective functions of photography was intrinsically Durkheimian and, therefore, at odds with Aron's project. Passeron shared Aron's commitment to a Weberian interest in the development of rationality, bureaucracy and

* For some of the arguments advanced in this article, I am grateful for research funding in 2007/8 from the ESRC for a project on the work of Jean-Claude Passeron as well as for the earlier stimulus provided by the ESRC Seminar Series organised collaboratively in 2006/7 by University College, London; Goldsmiths' College, London; and the University of East London..

technology. Whereas Bourdieu explored the social function of photographic activity, Passeron was more interested in analysing sociologically the emergence of critical or evaluative discourse about photos. The purpose of the discussion is to ask which of the theories of photography which developed in association with Bourdieu's photographic activity now enables us better to respond to Bourdieu's photographic products. Do we need to examine contemporary responses sociologically in terms of interest groups or rather, at one remove sociologically, analyse the social construction of a discourse which now anachronistically reads in terms of 'post-colonial theory' images which were never produced nor consumed in this terminological framework.?

Introduction.

One time in 1993 I asked Pierre Bourdieu for his permission to translate his introduction to Part I of *Travail et travailleurs en algérie* (the essay entitled "Statistiques et Sociologie") into English. He readily agreed¹ but commented rather ruefully and self-deprecatingly that, however, the photographs were the 'best thing' about that old text. He was, of course, only semi-serious, but the purpose of this paper is to try to bring together some thoughts on the function of Bourdieu's photographic activity in Algeria and its relation to the display or exhibition of those photographs in the present – all by reference to the systematic analyses made of the production and consumption of photographs undertaken differently by Bourdieu and Passeron and others within the Centre de Sociologie Européenne in Paris in the 1960s.

Part One.

Four stages in the production and consumption of Bourdieu's photographs.

1.

The original publication of *Travail et travailleurs en algérie* (Bourdieu, 1963) of 1963 contained seven photographs which were acknowledged on the last page of the book (p. 567). Of these, three (I, II, and VI) were taken by Pierre Bourdieu, and the others were attributed to the Ministère de l'Information d'Algérie (the Algerian Ministry of Information). All were given a title as follows:

- I. Le labour des figuiers en Kabylie. (Ploughing the fig-trees in Kabylia).
- II. Paysans sans terre. (Peasants without land).
- III. Ouvrier dans une aciérie d'Oran. (Workman in an Oran steel factory).
- IV. Marchand d'épices. (Spice merchant).
- V. La pelle et la pioche. (Mechanical digger and pick-axe).
- VI. Mendiant. (Beggar)
- VII. Cordonnier de la Casbah d'Alger. (Cobbler in the Casbah in Algiers)

Photos I, II, and III were clustered together at the beginning of the Foreword, written by Bourdieu, to Part II of the book – Etude Sociologique (Sociological Study) – of which Bourdieu was the single author. Photos IV, V, VI and VII were interposed in the text at the beginning of the first chapter of Part II, entitled "Nécessité économique et modèles culturels" (Economic necessity and cultural models). Photo I is reproduced in *Images d'Algérie. Une affinité élective*

(Bourdieu, 2003) at the beginning of a section entitled “Paysans déracinés” (uprooted peasants) on page 120 opposite the reproduction of a poem which Bourdieu had placed at the head of Chapter VII (“Citadins sans cité (Citizens without a city)) of *Le Déracinement* (Bourdieu, 1964a), for which his acknowledged source was “Hanoteau’s Poésies populaires de la Kabylie du Djurdjura, 1862” (Bourdieu, 1964a, 117). Photo II is not reproduced in *Images d’Algérie*. Photo VI is offered in *Travail et travailleurs* as a detail, isolating the beggar and his outstretched hand whereas the full photo is reproduced in *Images d’Algérie* on p.169 showing the beggar in full in a street market surrounded by white male shoppers, one carrying a bulging plastic bag. The section of *Images d’Algérie* is entitled “Economie de la misère” (The poor economy) and the photo of the beggar is placed opposite an extract from “Paysans déracinés” (Bourdieu, 1964b, 87) which discusses the culturally disorienting consequences of displacement and part of an extract from *Le déracinement* in which the ‘choices’ of action available to the peasants who have no hope of harvesting anything other than food necessary for survival are considered. (Bourdieu, 1964a, 20-21). In *Le Déracinement*, this passage appears in the first chapter entitled “Les regroupements de populations et la logique du colonialisme” (The regrouping of populations and the logic of colonialism), in a sub-section entitled ‘Le traditionalisme du désespoir’ (Despairing traditionalism).

It should be noted that the original edition of *Le Déracinement* contained no photographs although, as Christine Frisinghelli points out in *Images d’Algérie* (Bourdieu, 2003, 207) the covers of the first editions of *Le Déracinement* (Bourdieu, 1964a), *Travail et travailleurs en algérie* (Bourdieu, 1963), *Algérie 60* (Bourdieu, 1977), and *Le sens pratique* (Bourdieu, 1980) were photographs taken by Bourdieu and some of the articles which he published about Algeria also carried some photographs. I am not wanting to embark on a detailed examination of Bourdieu’s deployment of his photographs in his texts, but I have gone into this amount of detail in order to raise the questions which I want to pursue. We are clearly dealing with different stages of production and consumption of Bourdieu’s photographs of Algeria and with different categories of meaning. I have recently argued elsewhere² that it was Bourdieu’s experience in undertaking research in Algeria which caused him to want to find a way of situating his perceptions so as to counteract the tendency latent in colonial anthropology to be unconsciously conceptually imperialist. I suggested that Bourdieu was meticulous in providing details of the procedures adopted in his researches so that the legitimacy of his findings or generalisations could be tested by readers in relation to the legitimacy of his methodology. Indeed, the discussion of “Statistiques et Sociologie”, placed at the beginning of Part I of *Travail et travailleurs*, is an explicit attempt to assess the truth value of the statistical information provided in Part I in relation to the truth value of the ‘ethnography’ - transcripts and commentary - provided in Part II. I suggested that Bourdieu was tempted to see his photographs as a third way of seeing phenomena, independent of the contaminated representations provided by general statistics or particular case-studies. In his epistemological terminology, he hoped that photography might offer *apprehension* rather than *comprehension* or *perception* rather than *conception*. Steeped as he was at the time in the work of Husserl, particularly Husserl on time, Bourdieu was tempted to suppose that photography might register phenomena automatically rather in the way in which the surrealists emphasized the function of dreams in offering a form of automatic writing. The inclination was to use photography to observe phenomena without imposing intentional meaning. This, perhaps, was the aspiration in Bourdieu’s instrumental use of photography. There is close work to be done to attempt to retrieve an understanding of Bourdieu’s science in action - by correlating the previously unpublished photos with his research notes and diagrams, for instance - but I am working here only with those photos which became, at an early stage, a dimension of Bourdieu’s communication of his research findings.

If the publication of *Travail et travailleurs* in two parts was intended methodologically to offer a counterpoint between statistics and sociology, in a small way the photographs offered in that book provide a further dimension of meaning, but one which is similarly counterpointed. The photographs offer a visual gloss on the text but it is not clear what the meaning of this gloss might be or whether it is uniform. The four photos attributed to the Algerian Ministry of Information could be taken to be the photographic equivalents to the statistical Part of the book in that they could be said to be ‘documentary’ photos whereas Bourdieu’s photos could be said to be ‘affective’. All of the photos represent ‘work’ including the ostentatious non-work of II and, to that extent, they were chosen to correlate with the theme of the book as indicated in the title – Work and Workers – but they operate differently. The Ministry photos can be thought either to be generating an archive of traditional skills and crafts (IV and VII) or to be emphasizing the industrial potential of the country (III) or the ambivalence of the traditional in juxtaposition with the modern as evidenced by the simultaneous use of pneumatic drills and hand tools on a construction site. Bourdieu’s photos offer images of an idyllic, traditional scene with a lone farmer guiding two oxen as they till the soil under the fig trees (I), three seated, unemployed men (II) – do we know *visually* that they are peasants? – and a focus on the face of the beggar. The contribution of the photos to the argument of the text is problematic even though their meanings are mediated verbally by the imposition of titles which deliberately relate the visual effects to an implicit occupational sociology³.

2.

The second stage is the transmutation of meaning achieved by the collection of photos alongside text in *Images d’Algérie*. Bourdieu has often been criticised for re-using old empirical data in his research even though he was insistent that his interpretations or theories should not be de-temporalised. The bulk of the research on which *Homo Academicus* (1984) was based, for instance, was carried out in 1968, and, similarly, the enquiries on which the analyses of *La Noblesse d’Etat* (1989) rest were undertaken in 1966, 1967, and 1968. He tackled the problem head on at the beginning of *La Noblesse d’Etat*. Having specified the nature of the originating empirical work, he commented at once:

“These data are all *dated*. Does this mean, as is usually implied, that they are obsolete or *outdated*?” (Bourdieu, 1989, 20; 1996, 9)

He insisted that this was not the case and proceeded to articulate an anti-historical theory of social scientific explanation:

“Without going so far as to treat the concrete, contextualised, dated object as a simple opportunity, or pre-text, the sociologist is not interested in this object in its contingent or, if you will, *historical* aspects (in the naïve sense of the word). She does not aim to tell a story, but rather to analyze a state or an event in the social world ... in order to derive principles of understanding or explanation that will be applicable to other historical objects. This kind of theoretical induction aims to derive, from a historical case treated as ‘a particular case of the possible’ (Bachelard), a set of principles or hypotheses likely to become increasingly general with each subsequent application.” (Bourdieu, 1989, 20-1; 1996, 10.)

The seminars held in Chicago which Bourdieu attended and which led to the publication of *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives* in 1993 (Calhoun, LiPuma, & Postone, 1993) originally took place in March/April, 1989. I don’t know at what point in the period between 1989 and 1993 that Bourdieu wrote the response to his critics which was published as the conclusion to the book as “For a Sociogenetic Understanding of Intellectual Works”, but it was obviously in the

same time frame as the publication of *La Noblesse d'Etat*. In "For a Sociogenetic Understanding" Bourdieu complained:

"Some of my readers 'synchronize,' in a way, different moments of my work ... They thus uncover apparent contradictions that would vanish if they replaced each of the theses or hypotheses in question back in the movement, or even better, in the progress of my work; if, more precisely, they strove to reproduce the evolution (or the chain) of thought that led me to change progressively without that for ever effecting a resounding 'self-critique' ..." (Calhoun, LiPuma, Postone, 1993, 264).

Bourdieu wanted to argue that his works should be understood historically as contingent interpretations of social reality but, in the same concluding remarks, he reiterated the view, expressed in *La Noblesse d'Etat*, that historical specificity should not be an end in itself. What started as self-defence moved into a statement of principle in the passage below:

"... I blame most of my readers for having considered as theoretical treatises, meant solely to be read or commented upon, works that, like gymnastics handbooks, were intended for exercise, or even better, for being put into practice; that is, as books that put forth so many programs for work, observation, and experimentation. This way of conceiving scientific work ... was in perfect agreement with the conviction – which, from the very beginning, inspired my research strategies – that one cannot grasp the most profound logic of the social world unless one becomes immersed in the specificity of an empirical reality, historically situated and dated, but only in order to construct it as an instance (*cas de figure*) in a finite universe of possible configurations." (Calhoun, LiPuma, Postone, 1993, 271-2).

In other words, it was as if Bourdieu wanted to reconcile the pursuits of particular accuracy and universal truth, to square this apparently contradictory circle, by implying that we must immerse ourselves historically in the contexts in which he (and all other social researchers) have tried to deduce explanations which might have universal validity so that, cumulatively, past and present research combines to enlarge our data bank of instances and to refine our understanding of possible configurations. Theorising practice must encounter theorising practice which, for Bourdieu, was not at all the same as the prevailing tendency, then and now, to respond theoretically to theories.

The question for us is how far the same argument can or should be applied to the recuperation of visual images. Bourdieu often reviewed the analyses of Algerian society which he had presented at the end of the 1950s and early 1960s. *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* (Bourdieu, 1972) offered a reconceptualisation, consolidated in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Bourdieu, 1977b), of some of the 'structuralist' presentations of his fieldwork which had been written under the influence of Lévi-Strauss. *Algérie 60, structures économiques et structures temporelles* (Bourdieu, 1977a) re-visited the earlier work on labour and economic development in the light of new contemporary work in Development Studies, particularly that of Daniel Lerner. *Le Sens Pratique* (1980) joined the early research findings with the methodological orientation sketched in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* to begin the process of assimilating the traditional estimation of 'practice' to social life in modern, western society. During these years, Bourdieu's photos remained undisclosed. It was only whilst working with Franz Schultheis in 1999 on the publication of a German translation of *Algérie 60* that, as Schultheis puts it, Bourdieu

“...finally showed me some hundreds of them – the others, about a thousand by his estimate, having been misplaced during various changes of address.” (Bourdieu, 2003, 15, my translation)

3.

It was a proportion of these which were exhibited first in an exhibition at the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, in January, 2003, in association with a conference held to mark the anniversary of Bourdieu's death. Slightly different selections have been exhibited throughout the world – in The Photographers' Gallery, London, in November, 2004 and at Goldsmiths' College, London in 2006/7. These exhibitions, therefore, represent a third stage in the production/consumption process. Between 1999 and 2001, Bourdieu was partly associated with the project which led to the visual and textual combination which is the book: *Images d'Algérie*. Franz Schultheis and Christine Frisinghelli are closely involved with the curating of the exhibitions and the information boards attempt in brief to reproduce the contextual meaning offered in the text of the book, but it is inevitably the case that, on display, the photographs now inhabit the world of the art gallery rather than the world of the book. In a tangible way, the exhibition of Bourdieu's photographs has operationalised many of the insights which arose out of the two parallel research projects which were undertaken by Bourdieu and his colleagues in the Centre de Sociologie Européenne, the one leading to the publication of *Un Art Moyen* (Bourdieu, Boltanski, Castel, & Chamboredon, 1965) and the other to *L'Amour de l'Art* (Bourdieu, Darbel, & Schnapper, 1966) - the one based on research on photography as a 'middle-brow' cultural practice and the other on an analysis of visitors to French and European museums and art galleries. Bourdieu never re-visualised Algeria. What the exhibitions retrieve are historical visualisations. Does Bourdieu's view of the subordinate function of historical, conceptual retrieval hold in relation to his photographs? By analogy, his expectation would be that we should appreciate his images historically in conjunction with an assimilation of ongoing visions of comparable phenomena in order to generate further images of the socially possible, but does the analogy work? Is there, perhaps, instead, a logic of visual creation and response which is categorally different from conceptual production and consumption. Are artifacts, including photographs, autonomously universal and irreducible to the social conditions of production and consumption, in a way which, perhaps, is not the case in respect of 'thought' or 'science'?

What is at stake here is Bourdieu's philosophy of knowledge and his philosophy of aesthetics, and what is in question is also, partly, his general assumption that autonomous intellectual or artistic products are not intrinsically, absolutely, or categorally autonomous but, instead, only relatively autonomous depending on the differences in social conditions which produce the 'fields' in which they exist. As observers of Bourdieu's exhibited photos, we need to situate ourselves intellectually in relation to the argument that he advanced in his "Eléments d'une théorie sociologique de la perception artistique" (Bourdieu, 1968) so as to ask ourselves whether our reading of his images is a function of the embedded meanings which he intended or of our culturally conditioned, plural dispositions. Do his photos indicate a 'colonial' gaze or is it that it is our 'post-colonial' disposition to read as 'colonial' images which were reflecting or conveying ambivalence?

To answer these questions would involve intense scrutiny of Bourdieu's analysis of photography and photographers during the 1960s, bearing in mind throughout that Bourdieu was both a photographic and a sociological practitioner. Within the confines of this article, however, I want to try to make some comments which arise from a comparison between the early work undertaken by Bourdieu and that undertaken by Jean-Claude Passeron. Although Bourdieu and Passeron collaborated throughout the 1960s until 1972, most famously in writing together *Les Héritiers* (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1964) and *La Reproduction* (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970),

Passeron's contribution to the Centre de Sociologie Européenne's research programme on photography was not used in *Un Art Moyen* and disagreements between the two men about the epistemology of the social sciences meant that the projected second volume of *Le métier de sociologue* (Bourdieu, Chamboredon & Passeron, 1968) was never published. My intention is that some exploration of the basis of their differences might not only help us in gazing at Bourdieu's gaze but also to articulate problems generally in the philosophy of social science.

Part Two.

The early context of the work of Bourdieu and Passeron.

Jean-Claude Passeron had been teaching at a lycée in Marseille since 1958 when, in 1961, he received a phone call from Raymond Aron inviting him to become his research assistant at the Sorbonne. Passeron had been born in a mountain village in the Alpes-Maritimes in 1930 and received his secondary education at the lycée in Nice before gaining entry to the Lycée Henri IV in Paris prior to entry to the Ecole Normale Supérieure in 1950. At the Ecole, he gained a licence de philosophie, certificat de psycho-physiologie. He was particularly friendly with Foucault and Althusser and was associated with the communist cell organised at the Ecole by Le Goff. He gained a diplôme d'études with a thesis entitled "L'image spéculaire" (the mirror image) written under the supervision of Daniel Lagache who was appointed Professor of Psychology at the Sorbonne in 1951 and who also created a Laboratoire de psychologie sociale at the Sorbonne a year later. Foucault's *Maladie mentale et personnalité* was published in 1954 and it is reasonable to suppose that Passeron's early interest, influenced by social psychology, was related to the consideration of the social history of Western rationality which was to lead to Foucault's *Folie et Dérison. Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, published in 1960. Passeron had remained at the Ecole until 1955 when he was conscripted to serve in the army in Algeria. He had remained there until 1958 before returning to France to take up his teaching post at Marseille.

Pierre Bourdieu had been a maître de conférences at the University of Lille for two years when he was invited by Aron to become the secretary to the Centre de sociologie européenne in Paris. It appears that the paths of the two men (Bourdieu and Passeron) had not crossed significantly either at the Ecole Normale or in Algeria, but their social backgrounds and trajectories were remarkably similar. Bourdieu had been born in 1930 in the Béarn and had moved early on to a mountain village in the Hautes-Pyrénées. From the age of 7 he was a boarder at the lycée at Pau before gaining entry to the other main Parisian lycée preparing students for entry to the Ecole Normale Supérieure – the Lycée Louis-le-Grand. Bourdieu entered the Ecole in 1950. He left in 1954, having acquired his licence and having gained his diplôme d'études supérieures with a dissertation under the supervision of Henri Gouhier which involved making a translation of, and a commentary on, Leibniz's *Animadversiones in partem generalem Principiorum cartesianorum*. Gouhier was an historian of philosophy, then 56 years old, who had been appointed professor at the Sorbonne in 1941. Most notably, he had published *La jeunesse d'Auguste Comte et la formation du positivisme* in two volumes (1933 and 1936) and twin theoretical texts entitled *La Philosophie et son histoire* (1943) and *L'Histoire et sa philosophie* (1952). Bourdieu had taught at the lycée in Moulins for two years before he too was conscripted to serve in the army in Algeria. Whilst at Moulins he registered to undertake doctoral research to be supervised by Georges Canguilhem on "Les structures temporelles de la vie affective" (the temporal structures of affective life) but this never commenced. Bourdieu appears to have been interested in affective social relations from a phenomenological perspective which would suggest that he shared the anti-psychologism of Husserl's *Logical Investigations* whilst, like

Merleau-Ponty and Canguilhem, he was interested in knowledge as an instrument of biological adaptation. He was also specifically interested in the history and philosophy of science rather more than in the social history of Western rationality. Bourdieu had managed to get himself a post in military intelligence in Algeria which enabled him to become associated with official statistical collection. He was appointed to a post at the University of Algiers in 1958 when he published his first book: *Sociologie de l'Algérie*. By the time that Aron invited Bourdieu to become secretary to his Research Group, the second edition of *Sociologie de l'Algérie* had been published (1961) and this was followed by the English translation which was published by Beacon books, Boston in 1962 as *The Algerians*, with a Preface by Aron⁴. The differences between the 1st edition (1958, trimestre 3) and the 2nd edition (1961, trimestre 1) show the influence of Lévi-Strauss whose seminars Bourdieu attended in 1960. There was a shift towards structuralist anthropology and Bourdieu also added a chapter to the English text which confronted the political context of his research. This had been separately published as “Révolution dans la révolution” in *Esprit* in January, 1961, (where it had contained acknowledgements – removed in the translation - of the influence of lectures given by Aron at the Sorbonne in 1958). There had been other articles arising from the researches which Bourdieu had undertaken in Algeria. In the spring of 1960, he had published “Guerre et mutation sociale en Algérie” in *Etudes méditerranéennes*. It was between June and September, 1960, that Bourdieu carried out the fieldwork which was to lead to the publication of his main Algerian research reports: *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* and *Le Déracinement*. Some time in 1959/60, Bourdieu had also carried out research in his own region of the Béarn. Back in France in the early 1960s, Bourdieu must have been particularly busy in writing up these researches and in seeing spin-off articles through the press into journals. He contributed a chapter entitled “De la guerre révolutionnaire à la révolution” (from revolutionary war to revolution) in *L'Algérie de demain* (1962) edited by F. Perroux. He contributed two articles to the journal edited by Sartre – *Les temps modernes*. The first, published in August, 1962, arose out of his Béarn research: “Les relations entre les sexes dans la société paysanne” (relations between the sexes in peasant society), and the second, published in December, 1962, as “Les sous-prolétaires algériens” (the Algerian sub-proletariat), considered the validity of a Marxist interpretation of political events in Algeria. He also made contributions to the newly established sociological journals. The full account of his Béarn research appeared in *Etudes rurales*, April-September, 1962, as “Célibat et condition paysanne” (celibacy and the peasant condition), while “La hantise du chômage chez l'ouvrier algérien. Proletariat et système colonial” (the Algerian worker's sense of unemployment. Proletariat and colonial system) appeared in *Sociologie du Travail*, 4, 1962.

I have already discussed aspects of *Travail et Travailleurs en Algérie* which was published in two volumes in 1963 by Mouton & Co., Paris and The Hague. Additionally, early in 1963 Bourdieu published “La société traditionnelle. Attitude à l'égard du temps et conduite économique” (traditional society. The attitude towards time and economic behaviour) in *Sociologie du travail*, an article which suggested the ways in which he was seeking to bring together his reading of Husserl in relation to time and his reflections on the relevance of Weber's economic sociology. The final product of Bourdieu's Algerian research was published by Editions du Minuit, Paris, in 1964 as *Le déracinement, la crise de l'agriculture traditionnelle en Algérie*. It offered an account of the ‘regroupment’ policy which had caused the resettlement of millions of rural Algerians in the late 1950s, and then, on the basis of case-studies of 13 different kinds of resettlements in regions with different kinds of traditional values, it sought to establish how far the colonial interventions could be held to be responsible for the breakdown of traditional rural values. The final chapter – “Le sabir culturel” (the cultural dialect) – was written in December, 1963, and, for the moment, it represented Bourdieu's final published thoughts on Algeria.

It is possible to highlight several main issues arising from Bourdieu's earliest work. There was clearly an interest in the encounter between traditional and modern societies and, in particular, between conceptual traditions which had historically attempted to interpret that encounter – on the one hand the legacy of the Durkheimian distinction between mechanical and organic solidarity and, on the other, the legacy of the Weberian debate with Marx in relation to the competing explanatory claims of economic and cultural motivations in social behaviour. Related to this substantive interest, there was clearly a preoccupation with evaluating the validity of general explanations derived statistically in relation to interpretations derived from ethnographic procedures, and this interest was exposed painstakingly in detailed appendices. Finally, there was the interest already discussed in the practice of photography and the social effects of photo-taking.

Aron was eager that his Research Group should undertake empirical enquiries, and his reputation attracted financial backing, notably from the Ford Foundation. Bourdieu and Passeron were thrown together for the first time in the early 1960s. As we have seen, Bourdieu was already well established intellectually as a result of the research which he had undertaken in Algeria during the War of Independence. Passeron had no comparable achievement behind him, but he did have the closer relationship with Aron. Bourdieu and Passeron had in common socially the fact that they had both been upwardly mobile as a result of their educational achievements, and both were acutely embarrassed by the inequalities in the French educational system which they had observed as they had benefited from it. Both were angry about these inequalities but I think it is possible to say that Bourdieu showed a greater attachment to the traditional values which modernity had destroyed. Bourdieu was inclined to analyse the transition from the old to the new – the disenchantment of the world – with some nostalgia for primary inter-personal contact. Nevertheless, they were both able to agree on a research agenda for the Centre de Sociologie Européenne which would concentrate on the empirical analysis of contemporary social mobility in France. Aron was the figurehead, but the two angry young men were the driving forces of the activities which became associated with the Research Group.

Under the aegis of the 'Centre de Sociologie Européenne' which had little institutional presence but operated solely out of offices alongside Aron in 10, rue Monsieur le Prince, Bourdieu and Passeron seem to have mobilised other researchers to act as the 'group for the sociology of education' of the CSE⁵. In parallel with this mobilisation, there was a comparable process of mobilisation within the CSE in relation to photography. In March, 1965, Bourdieu and Boltanski, Castel and Chamboredon, published *Un Art Moyen. Essai sur les usages sociaux de la photographie*. (Minuit, Paris). The first appendix (not reproduced in *Photography. A Middle-brow Art*) gives a detailed chronology of the researches which had been used in the production of the book. It indicates the nature of the programme for the years, 1961-62, 1962-3, and 1963-4. Space only allows me to give attention to the first year of activity. It was as follows (with my numbers added for reference):

“Année scolaire 1961-1962:

1. Séminaire sur l'image dans la société industrielle, organisé par le Centre de Sociologie Européenne sous la direction de Raymond Aron. (Seminar on the image in industrial society, organised ... under the direction of Raymond Aron).
2. La photographie en milieu rural, enquête réalisée par Pierre Bourdieu avec la collaboration de Marie-Claire Bourdieu. (Photography in a rural context, an enquiry carried out by Pierre Bourdieu with the collaboration of Marie-Claire Bourdieu).
3. La photographie aux usines Renault, enquête réalisée par Jean-Claude Passeron avec la collaboration de Raymonde Moulin. (Photography in the Renault factories,

enquiry carried out by Jean-Claude Passeron with the collaboration of Raymonde Moulin)

4. Les clubs de photographes amateurs de la région lilloise, enquête réalisée par Jean-Claude Asset et Philippe Fritsch sous la direction de Raymonde Moulin. (The amateur photographic clubs of the Lille region, enquiry carried out by Jean-Claude Asset and Philippe Fritsch under the direction of Raymonde Moulin).
5. Le club de photographes de Bologne, enquête réalisée par Dominique Schnapper. (The photographic clubs of Bologna, enquiry carried out by Dominique Schnapper).

Whilst these enquiries were proceeding Bourdieu continued to publish articles about the characteristics of traditional societies, both in Algeria and the Béarn: “La société traditionnelle. Attitude à l’égard du temps et conduite économique” in *Sociologie du travail* in January – March, 1963, and the English version of this article in *Mediterranean Countrymen*, edited by J. Pitt-Rivers, and published by Mouton & co, Paris/The Hague in 1964. In January – March, 1964, he published, with Abdelmalek Sayad, “Paysans déracinés, bouleversements morphologiques et changements culturels en Algérie” (uprooted peasants, morphological disruptions and cultural changes in Algeria) in *Etudes rurales*. These two strands of Bourdieu’s work came together in an article which he published with his wife almost immediately after the publication of *Un Art Moyen*, arising from enquiry 2 listed in its appendix. This was “Le paysan et la photographie” (the peasant and photography), published in the *Revue française de sociologie* in April – June, 1965.

During the same period, Passeron issued his report on enquiry 3 as an internal CSE paper entitled: “La photographie parmi le personnel des usines Renault” (Photography amongst the staff of the Renault factories) (1962). Similarly he issued internally a report on women students (“Les étudiantes”, 1963) and a report on medical students (“Enquête sur les étudiants en médecine”, 1964). Apart from the article co-authored with Bourdieu, published in *Les temps modernes* in December, 1963, Passeron also collaborated with Bourdieu in an article which was published under a constructed nom de plume of E. Boupareyre, standing for P. Bourdieu, J.-C. Passeron, J.-D. Reynaud and J.-R. Tréanton, in *Esprit*, May – June, 1964, with the title: “L’universitaire et son université” (The academic and his university).

Bourdieu and Passeron: the emergence of divergent sociologies of photography.

This is the mise-en-scène of the early intellectual association between Passeron and Bourdieu. I want to look at the relative positions which emerge from these early texts, comparing here only the arguments about photography advanced by Passeron in “La photographie parmi le personnel des usines Renault” (Passeron, 1962) with those advanced by Bourdieu (in collaboration with his wife) in “Le paysan et la photographie” (Bourdieu & Bourdieu, 1965).⁶ Following the agenda for photographic research cited above, the work for the first year (1961-2) was launched by a seminar, under the direction of Aron, on ‘the image in industrial society’. It was Passeron’s enquiry (3) which explicitly pursued this perspective by focussing on photography amongst factory workers at the Renault works. By contrast, Bourdieu examined photography in rural society – a bi-product, it has to be assumed, of his deployment of photography in his ethnographic fieldwork both in Algeria and the Béarn.

Passeron was amongst the first to produce a written report. “La photographie parmi le personnel des usines Renault” (Passeron, 1962) was Part II (pages 82-174) of a working paper produced within CSE entitled *Eléments pour une sociologie de la photographie* (elements for a sociology of photography), the third part (pages 175-253) of which was Raymonde Moulin’s report on

project 4: “Les clubs de photographes amateurs de la région lilloise”⁷. Passeron offered two chapters of findings and a conclusion, supported by detailed appendices containing diagrams and case-studies. The first chapter concentrated on the implications of the relationship between the photographic equipment possessed by the research sample and the nature of their activities. Passeron was interested in the relationship between the technical sophistication of cameras and the nature of the differences between the ‘cultural’ activities made possible as a consequence. At the same time, degrees of technical sophistication were a function of the spending capacity of the sample and, hence, cultural activity was indirectly influenced by socio-economic factors. Importantly, Passeron began his first chapter with an account of his sample so as to define ‘the limits of the enquiry’. Renault had established a ‘Leisure and Culture’ programme for employees with a photographic section that constituted a ‘Photo-Club’. There was only a nominal fee and the openness of the provision meant that there were widely different kinds of participation. Passeron identified three levels of participation. First level participants were happy only to use the facility to purchase their films. Second-level participants (between 130 and 140 people) used the collective laboratory irregularly to develop and print their photographs which, normally, were ‘sans prétention’ -(unpretentious) family, week-end, or holiday snaps. Third-level participants (a core of 10 to 15 people) who saw themselves as really ‘doing photography’ went regularly to the laboratory, took part in competitions and exhibited their work. For his enquiry, Passeron restricted himself deliberately to analysis of only first and second level participants and referred to the analyses being undertaken in Lille for consideration of those people who joined Photo-Clubs and were oriented to a more professional approach. Passeron’s sample of unpretentious users amounted to 44 people, 6 of whom were women. These 44 completed questionnaires and they also were asked to articulate responses to two ‘batteries’ of photographs. This methodology reflects Passeron’s main interests. The questionnaires enabled him to investigate correlations between social backgrounds and attitudes both towards the activity of taking photos and towards photos as visual representations. Passeron’s text derives findings from appended statistical details. He concludes that his sample can be characterised as ‘bricoleurs’ (jacks-of-all-trades) in relation to photographic technology in a similar way in which they might also be in relation to cars, that is to say, that they ambivalently and simultaneously are attracted by the technology whilst wanting to be sceptical about its value. This perhaps corresponds, Passeron suggests, with a ‘traditional’ preference for manual labour and a disinclination to regard technical photographic representation as creative – a preference which is analogous with scepticism about avant garde art in as much as it is also thought to demonstrate a lack of manual, artistic skill. The important point is that Passeron is interested in the relations between *attitudes* towards photographic practice. His evidence does not convince him, however, that attitudinal differences correspond with social differences (or, specifically, variable employment positions). This does not yet amount to a questioning of the correspondence which Bourdieu was to seek to establish later in the 1960s between cultural and social reproduction (in his single-authored article of that title – Bourdieu, 1971 – which was his adjunct to the co-authored *La Reproduction* – Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970) since Passeron attributes the negative correspondence to the fact that photography has become so common in urban areas that it no longer provides the basis for achieving status differentiation, but it does serve to highlight the extent to which Passeron’s analysis proceeds to emphasize internal differentiations of discourse without pushing further the possibility that these internal differentiations might be extraneously determined. The second chapter – entitled ‘Photographic values and thought in an urban workers’ context’ – interprets the responses of the sample to being shown two batteries of photographs (one of 13 photos and the other of 11) What strikes Passeron in general is the consistency with which the photos elicit certain dominant reactions which, he says, seem to represent ‘the motivating principles of a photographic logic’ or a kind of ‘photographic normativity’. The report tabulates verbatim responses, categorising these as ‘rationalisations’ and ‘reactions’ and interpreting them as ‘specific norms (explicitly) invoked’

or '(implicit) general norms, categories and forms of judgement'. There is much sophisticated discussion of, for instance, how responses to a photo of a 'dead soldier' relate to the perception of the 'sign' or the moral judgement of what is 'signified'. Passeron's conclusion is that urban responses to photos are 'photographic' and not 'more directly social as in a rural milieu' but that the normativity of photographic responses has to be understood as itself socially constructed. Although Passeron does not subscribe to any emotive theory of communication, his discussion of photography bears comparison with I.A. Richards's analyses of the constituents of the affects of religious poetry, whether emotive or cognitive, precisely because, at the back of both, is an interest in the 'meaning of meaning'⁸. Significantly, Passeron makes reference to Weber in trying to explain what his findings in respect of photography seem to suggest is a process of social construction of a-social norms:

“Although the concepts and values which the [photographic aesthetic] uses remain sociologically explicable, they give way to norms which are subjectively experienced as the rules of photography – and no longer of good manners [*savoir-vivre*] (that is to say as what is derived from photography and no longer self-derived). This change in meaning accorded to the photographic act expresses the transformations of photographic behaviour: in Weberian terms, the norms of the 'photographable' become autonomous ['s'autonomisent'] to the extent that the behaviour which corresponds to them, in developing, itself becomes rational ['se rationalise']. This emergent autonomy of photographic thinking then reacts on the rationalisation which it accelerates.” (Passeron, 1962, 134, my translation).

In other words, the detachment of photographic from social values is a function of rationalising modernity. Passeron's conclusion considers 'the social functions of the photographic image' and he extends his argument to suggest that 'autonomous' photos consolidate new social relations and do not simply operate as a mechanism for the collective memory of pre-existing social relationships. He contends that, for the urban worker, photography has a particular relation to leisure and that taking photos of scenes and poses even constitutes the leisure category since 'the photographic act testifies that one has had the leisure to photograph them.' (Passeron, 1962, 142, my translation) This leads Passeron to discuss in more detail the motivations of photographers and, in an aside, he comments that 'military service often determines the purchase of a camera' (Passeron, 1962, 141, my translation).

This remark leads me to turn to Bourdieu's photographic practice. Passeron's analysis of the practice of Renault workers can be said to draw attention to competing conceptualisations of photography – on the one hand a Durkheimian conceptualisation which seemed to remain appropriate in relation to rural practice and, on the other, a Weberian conceptualisation which seemed to make explanatory sense of the function of a new technology in an urban, industrial context. The final question I want to pose uses Passeron's thinking to attempt to situate Bourdieu's photographic practice as a form of visual anthropology and to attempt to situate ourselves as observers of his products. I am wanting to suggest that Bourdieu's analysis of the function of photography in a rural society reflected his attitude towards his own photographic actions and products at the time - that is to say that, historically, his own photography was a contribution to the consolidation of a collective memory of traditional society, to the substitution of a technologically achieved organic solidarity for the declining mechanical solidarity of the communities which he observed. Those same photographs are, for us in the present, autonomous objects which no longer possess their originating inter-personal meanings but are, instead, imbued with significance in accordance with the prevailing moral or aesthetic criteria of judgement.

The most significant feature of “Le paysan et la photographie” (Bourdieu & Bourdieu, 1965) is the emphasis on the function of photographic images in fulfilling ‘functions that pre-existed their introduction’ (Bourdieu & Bourdieu, 1965, 164; 2004, 603). The reference to Durkheim is explicit, if notionally provisional:

“If one accepts, with Durkheim (1995), that the function of festivals is to revivify the group, one understands why photography should be associated with them, since it provides the means of eternizing and solemnizing these climactic moments of social life wherein the group reasserts its unity.” (Bourdieu & Bourdieu, 1965, 165; 2004, 603⁹).

The article, as published in the *Revue française de sociologie*, carried no photographs. The ‘findings’ are not the conclusions of systematic analyses of interviews or questionnaires but, rather, interpretations of transcripts of conversations held at the same time as the research which led to the publication of “Célibat et condition paysanne” (Bourdieu, 1962) – an article which does juxtapose statistical data and ethnographic material and which was published with a few photographs of his native Béarn taken by Bourdieu.¹⁰ The article, therefore, comments on the phenomenon of photography within a rural community but Bourdieu makes no attempt to comment on the status of his photographs of that community. The nature of the observed social uses of photography entail, Bourdieu argues, a sociological understanding:

“... it is understandable that photographs should be the object of a reading that one may call sociological and that they are never considered in themselves and for themselves, in terms of their technical or aesthetic qualities.” (Bourdieu & Bourdieu, 1965, 167; 2004, 605)

This is all very well as an interpretation of the immanent function of photographs within an observed community, but the question for us is whether a sociological analysis of our response to Bourdieu’s photographs is comparably imposed by the situation in which we view them. The article ends with a discussion of the way in which ‘popular photography eliminates the accidental or the aspect, which, as a fleeting image, dissolves the real by temporalizing it’ (Bourdieu & Bourdieu, 1965, 173; 2004, 612). It concludes with the suggestion that

“... when they spontaneously adopt the arrangements and postures of the figures of Byzantine mosaics, the peasants of Béarn who pose for a wedding photo seem to want to escape the power that photography has to de-realize the world by temporalizing it.” (Bourdieu & Bourdieu, 1965, 174; 2004, 612).

Did Bourdieu sanction the contemporary display of his historical photographs in order to consolidate the strategy he suggests that the Béarn peasants used to counter-act de-realizing? Should we read his photographs as nostalgic representations of a world which has become disenchanted and as attempts to construct a trans-cultural and trans-temporal universal human empathy, or should we accept them as autonomous artifacts before our eyes and deploy the discourses of post-colonialism or forced migration to constitute a photographic logic for ourselves which perceives them as critical reflections of uprooting?

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¹ My translation was published, with an introduction, internally as a Working Paper 10 of the Group for Research into Access and Student Programmes (GRASP), University of East London, October, 1994 and is obtainable by reference to me. The introduction to the translation is reproduced in Robbins (2006), pp. 119-125.

² In Robbins (2007).

³ As an example of the mutation of the verbal mediation of visual meaning, it is interesting to note that whereas the emphasis of ‘Le labour des figuiers en Kabylie’ is on the labour rather than on the categorisation of the labourer, the reproduction of this photo alongside an extract from Bourdieu’s *Esquisse pour une auto-analyse* (Bourdieu, 2004a), offered as “Algerian landing” (Bourdieu, 2004b, 434), translates the phrase as ‘A peasant ploughing his field under the fig trees in Kabylia’ – choosing to emphasize the ‘peasant’ condition mirrored opposite in the reproduction of a photo showing ‘a peasant and his wife ploughing their field in Béarn’.

⁴ Aron’s Preface was written after the declaration of Algerian Independence on July 1, 1962. In introducing the book by his ‘friend Pierre Bourdieu’, Aron speculated about the future of Algeria, finding grounds for optimism in the fact that ‘Precisely because the struggle has given them an awareness of their own worth, the

Moslems of Algeria henceforth are open to modern civilization.’ (Bourdieu, 1962, vi.)

⁵ These were educational enquiries which led to the joint publications, notably *Les Héritiers* (1964) and *La Reproduction* (1970) with which Bourdieu and Passeron first established their reputations, but this paper will not consider this aspect of their collaboration.

⁶ It would need another article to follow through the construction of the argument of *Un Art Moyen* in relation to the contributory projects of 1963/4 and 1964/5 as well as to those of 1962/3.

⁷ I have yet to discover who wrote Part I (pages 1-81). This information is derived from footnote 1 of the contribution to *Un Art Moyen* made by Robert Castel and Dominique Schnapper: “Ambition esthétique et aspirations sociales”(aesthetic ambition and social aspirations) (Bourdieu, Boltanski, Castel, & Chamboredon, 1965, 144) where they acknowledge that their contribution is based upon a collection of enquiries on the same theme. The footnote is not reproduced in the English translation. Schnapper (the daughter of Aron) was to publish her own account of her research in Bologna (project 5): “Photographie et peinture – Le club photographique de Bologne” (photography and painting – the photographic club of Bologna) at the same time as *Un Art Moyen* in the *Revue française de sociologie*, 1964-5.

⁸ See Richards (1929) and Ogden & Richards (1923).

⁹ The original article of 1965 obviously does not specify ‘Durkheim (1995)’ which the editors reference as a recent translation of Durkheim’s *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, originally published in French in 1912. The original article has no specific citation of Durkheim at all and hence the reference is only to a generalised summary of Durkheim’s position.

¹⁰ The nine photos published with the original article were reproduced in Bourdieu (2002). Three of these were published with the extract from “Célibat et condition paysanne” published as “The peasant and his body” (Bourdieu, 2004c). A fourth photo published with this article is an addition.