Reflections on Patrick Baert's *The Existentialist Moment: The Rise of Sartre as a Public Intellectual*

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Abstract In this chapter, Simon Susen provides an in-depth review of Patrick Baert's *The Existentialist Moment: The Rise of Sartre as a Public Intellectual* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), focusing on the theoretical dimensions underpinning the analysis developed in this book. The chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part, Susen gives a detailed, and largely sympathetic, overview of Baert's approach, drawing attention to its main conceptual and methodological contributions to the sociological study of intellectuals. In the second part, Susen grapples with the limitations and shortcomings of Baert's approach, especially with respect to its plea for a paradigm shift from a 'vocabulary of intentions' to a 'vocabulary of effects' in the sociology of intellectuals. The chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the role that intellectuals may play in shaping the development of society.

Keywords Baert · Effects · Intellectuals · Intentions · Public intellectuals · Sartre · Sociology of intellectuals

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Patrick Baert's *The Existentialist Moment: The Rise of Sartre as a Public Intellectual*[1] can be regarded as a highly original, and also much-needed, contribution to contemporary sociological thought. It provides an unprecedented account of the socio-historical conditions permitting Jean-Paul Sartre to become one of the most influential public intellectuals in modern history.

The book is divided into seven chapters. *Chapter 1* explores the extraordinary historical constellations that emerged within 'the unusual context of the occupation of France, from mid-1940 until mid-1944'[2], illustrating the extent to which it impacted upon the cultural field and intensified 'already existing divisions within the intellectual community'[3]. *Chapter 2* examines 'the purge of French collaborationist intellectuals'[4], notably in the period 1944–1945, focusing on the politico-ideological controversies sparked by the prosecutions of those accused of collaboration with the Nazis. *Chapter 3* sheds light on 'the intellectual shifts that took place in France'[5] as a result of the purge, paying particular attention to Sartre's journalistic interventions published between 1944 and 1945. *Chapter 4* grapples with 'the sudden rise of existentialism in the autumn of 1945'[6], to which Simone de Beauvoir famously referred as the 'existentialist offensive'[7]. *Chapter 5* aims to explain how Sartre succeeded in establishing himself as 'a committed intellectual'[8] between 1946 and 1947. *Chapter 6* offers 'a multi-levelled account for the rise of Sartre'[9], in addition to scrutinizing the main reasons behind the gradual decline of existentialism in French intellectual life 'from the early 1960s onwards'[10]. *Chapter 7* elucidates the theoretical framework underlying this study, sketching out and defending 'a performative perspective for conceptualizing intellectual interventions'[11], developments, and transformations. It is the purpose of the following sections to discuss, above all, the *theoretical* dimensions underpinning Baert's analysis in *The Existentialist Moment*.

FIRST PART: BAERT'S ARGUMENT

I. Sartre: Public Intellectual and Public Celebrity

As his fiercest critics will be forced to concede, 'Jean-Paul Sartre achieved an astonishingly high public profile during his heyday'[12], which some commentators may characterize as 'unrivalled'[13] in terms of the media attention he received as well as the wider political influence he enjoyed both in France and in other 'Western' countries. Baert's book is a

conceptually sophisticated, methodologically rigorous, and empirically substantiated attempt to grasp the multiple factors leading to the emergence of 'this extraordinary case of public celebrity'[14]. One of the fascinating aspects of this case is that it was in a remarkably brief timespan that Sartre managed to rise 'from relative obscurity to public prominence'[15], occupying a central place in the political and philosophical imagination of intellectuals, initially in France and eventually across the world.

Baert wishes to challenge the commonly held assumption that the rise of both Sartre in particular and existentialism in general are intimately interrelated with the political turbulence of the late 1960s. Contrary to this supposition, he makes a strong case for the view that, in the aforementioned period, the status, credibility, and influence of Sartre's philosophy were already in decline. In fact, upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that it was *between 1944 and 1947*—'especially in *the autumn of 1945*'[16]—that Sartre gained an exceptional amount of public prominence. Before then, his writings—including his masterpiece *L'être et le néant* [*Being and Nothingness*][17]—were hardly known beyond a specialist circle of expert philosophers. It should take Sartre barely more than three years, however, to convert himself into a high-profile figure on the international scene of intellectual discourse.

Throughout his study, Baert aims to respond to two fundamental questions. The first question concerns the *historical context* in which Sartre and his philosophical movement gained popularity: why did the rise of Sartrean existentialism occur between 1944 and 1947, rather than before or after this period? The second question relates to the role that the *intellectual specificity* of Sartre and his philosophical movement played in contributing to their sudden and extensive popularity: why did Sartrean existentialism become highly influential on a global intellectual stage, despite the somewhat opaque and impenetrable nature of its key scholarly outputs, which were inspired by the writings of the German philosopher Martin Heidegger, whose complicity with and involvement in the Nazi regime were a well-known fact?[18]

Seeking to address these questions, Baert points out that two chief factors deserve particular attention. First, 'between 1940 and 1945, French intellectuals became involved in intense *power struggles* in which those seen to be associated with the Resistance were ultimately victorious'[19]. In this context, 'the purge (*épuration*) of collaborationist intellectuals'[20] gained prominence in the shared effort to create a *progressive*

political climate in France. Second, during and after its occupation by the Nazis, France went through a *national cultural trauma*, that is, 'a widespread sense that certain events—in this case, Vichy and the occupation—caused collective distress and irredeemable damage, potentially threatening the social fabric of society'[21]. In this respect, the challenge, faced not only by intellectuals but also by ordinary citizens, consisted in grappling with and contributing to 'the *remaking of French nationhood*'[22] within a historical period that was still overshadowed by individual and collective attempts to come to terms with 'the trauma of the war'[23].

II. Two Scholarly 'Explanations': Bourdieu and Collins

As Baert spells out, despite there being 'a wide body of academic literature on existentialism'[24], there is little in the way of a systematic, let alone conclusive, commentary 'on why existentialism gained such prominence when it did'[25]. The two only noteworthy exceptions in the sociological literature are *Pierre Bourdieu's field theory* and *Randall Collins's network approach*. Given their relevance in relation to the thematic focus of this book, it is worth considering them in some detail.

1.

Bourdieu's field-theoretic framework lies at the heart of Anna Boschetti's *Sartre et « Les Temps Modernes »*. *Une entreprise intellectuelle* [*The Intellectual Enterprise. Sartre and 'Les Temps Modernes'*][26]. As highlighted in Bourdieu's writings on socially stratified forms of cultural production[27], one of the most distinctive features of the cultural field in modern France is that it is 'exceptionally unified, centralized and hierarchical'[28], marked by 'a fierce struggle over symbolic recognition'[29]. In the *cultural field*, just as in other social fields, different *agents* are equipped with different types and volumes of *capital* and, thus, with different forms and amounts of material and symbolic *resources*, enabling them to compete with one another within a vertically structured realm of objectively externalized *positions* and subjectively internalized *dispositions*.[30] The historical specificity of the French cultural arena in the nineteenth century was due to its internal *division* between the *literary* world and the *academic* world, which may be conceived of as two different fields, 'each with its own logic'[31]. In fact, '[i]t is only in the course of the twentieth century that the two fields started to intersect, and few people managed to combine the

requirements to excel in both fields'[32]. Sartre was one of the few intellectual figures who succeeded in deciphering, and benefiting from, the codes of accomplishment within these two domains, putting him in an exceptionally strong position to occupy a triumphant—and, ultimately, hegemonic—place in the French intellectual field in the mid-1940s.

It appears, then, that it was, to a large extent, due to Sartre's 'ability to stand out in those two genres'[33]—which he used 'as complementary channels'[34] for the circulation of his ideas, claims, and convictions—that he could embrace the opportunity to establish himself as one of the most influential European intellectuals of all time. Owing to his capacity to immerse himself and to function within different realms of high culture, he managed to overcome the 'sharp division between novelists and professors'[35]: the former tended to be self-funded, emerging from relatively privileged backgrounds; the latter tended to pass through the elitist channels of the *École normale superieure*. Sartre mastered—to use a Bourdieusian metaphor—'the rules of the game'[36] within both spheres of cultural expression. Indeed, 'journalism would allow him to add another string to his bow'[37] of manifold scholarly engagements, converting him into the epitome of the 'total intellectual'[38].

Undoubtedly, Sartre was able to count with the logistical, emotional, and ideological support of leading intellectuals 'occupying editorial positions in literary journals and in newspapers'[39] and, hence, ensuring the largely favourable reception of his work in influential circles. The decisive function of this professional network of sympathetic peers was illustrated—perhaps, most significantly—in the formative role of the journal *Les Temps Modernes*, founded in 1945, which turned out to serve as 'a hegemonic power base'[40] of discursive influence for Sartre and his followers for many years to come.

One of the strongest points of Boschetti's analysis lies in its capacity to shed light on 'the *inner logic* of the French field of intellectual production'[41], notably in terms of its reliance on 'distinctive elite institutions'[42] sufficiently powerful to advance Sartre's 'career and public profile'[43] in France, thereby paving the way for his successive influence on a global scale. One of the weakest points of her approach, however, is its 'tendency to treat the intellectual sphere as a relatively autonomous unity'[44], thereby overlooking the *wider socio-political conditions* impacting upon the development of the intellectual field. From such a narrow perspective, it is difficult 'to explain why the rise of Sartre and

existentialism occurred during this particular period—not before, not after'[45]. Just as it would be erroneous to reduce a paradigmatic rise to a *field-specific logic*, it would be mistaken to account for it in terms of an '*individualistic logic*'[46], which is motivated by the personality-focused conviction that it was mainly Sartre's 'unique and multiple qualities'[47], including 'his genius or unrivalled charisma'[48], that equipped him with a decisive competitive advantage over his peers in the French intellectual field in the mid-twentieth century. Although, according to Baert, Boschetti's inquiry succeeds in elucidating both the ideological trends and the 'broader societal developments that impinged on the cultural sphere'[49] in mid-twentieth century France, it fails to take into consideration 'the specific conditions at the end of the war and their dramatic repercussions for the intellectual field'[50], particularly with regard to their power to favour the rise of some philosophical currents, while obstructing the consolidation of others.

2.

Randall Collins's network approach is forcefully articulated in his ground-breaking *The Sociology of Philosophies. A Global Theory of Intellectual Change*[51]. As indicated in the title, this study is motivated by the ambitious venture to provide 'a general theory of intellectual change'[52], highlighting the structural and ideological transformations that have taken place within the prestigious discipline of philosophy over the past three centuries at an international level. Given his emphasis on the *macro-social embeddedness of all cultural—including intellectual—developments*, Collins is suspicious of non-sociological—that is, idealistic, personalistic, and individualistic— interpretations of the production of symbolic forms. Rather than conceiving of culture as 'autonomous of society'[53], as if it were reducible to a self-sufficient force of an untouchable superstructure, and instead of endeavouring to write 'the type of intellectual history that attempts to show, through a detailed investigation of arguments and counterarguments, how one set of ideas brings about another'[54], Collins proposes to explore the *social conditions of production* in which symbolically mediated actions take place. On this view, it is misleading to endorse an 'intellectual history that glorifies the individual and his or her creative output'[55], to the degree that such a personality-focused approach fails to account for the sociological variables that shape human practices.

According to Collins's 'general theory of interaction rituals'[56] (or—if one prefers—his 'wider theory of interaction ritual chains'[57]), two concepts are crucial for the sociological analysis of the intellectual field: (a) *emotional energy* and (b) *cultural capital*. The former constitutes 'a motivating force'[58] by which imaginative entities are driven when converting the symbolic goods that they produce into meaning-bearing vehicles of self-realization. The latter 'helps to direct creative output effectively'[59], equipping purposive beings with the collectively transmitted and individually assimilated resources that need to be mobilized in the pursuit of social recognition. The belief in intellectual originality strikes a chord with those obsessed with the construction of culturally codified—and, hence, not universally accessible—currencies. On this account, it is both an ontological delusion and a methodological error 'to conceive of ideas as rooted in individuals or individual minds'[60], since they are 'anchored in *networks* and motivated to a considerable extent by *rivalries* between individuals and between groups of individuals'[61].

To be sure, for Collins, the creation and reproduction of academic networks are far from arbitrary. According to the 'law of small numbers'[62], 'only three to six successful creative schools can exist at one time'[63]: less than three are highly improbable, owing to the dynamic and competitive constitution of the intellectual field; more than six are hardly viable, due to 'the survival of the fittest' logic permeating the evolution of the intellectual field. In other words, some intellectual schools survive, whereas others will be extinguished. In the chapter 'Writers' Markets and Academic Networks: The French Connection'[64], Collins examines the development and influence of existentialism, which he regards as an intellectual current that has reached the paradigmatic status of belonging to the circle of 'one of those competitive creative schools'[65]. Scrutinizing the personal, institutional, and cultural connections between influential French scholars (such as Simone de Beauvoir, Paul Nizan, Georges Canguilhem, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Raymond Aron, and Jean-Paul Sartre), Collins draws attention to the vital role of social networks in deter- mining the effectiveness of both emotional energy and cultural capital, when scholars—as emerging or established figures—seek to position themselves within a 'highly selective, competitive and hierarchical'[66] field of intellectuals. In this respect, it is striking that a largely *French* network of existentialists, such as Sartre and his followers, arose out of a *German* network of phenomenologists, such as Edmund

Husserl and Martin Heidegger. It would be inaccurate, however, to overlook the fact that existentialism was also profoundly shaped by Francophone scholars, such as Alexandre Koyré and Alexandre Kojève, whose philosophical projects were based upon central ideas developed in Germanophone circles of intellectual thought.[67]

In addition to benefiting from an exceptionally high amount of cultural capital (derived from his privileged access to valuable social, educational, linguistic, and symbolic resources), Sartre took advantage of his close connections with the publisher Gallimard, which became a 'network centre'[68] for up-and-coming French intellectuals, permitting them to distribute their works in the form of affordable paperback editions, which suited *hybridized* approaches such as existentialism, whose intellectual outlook cut across the disciplinary boundaries separating literature and philosophy.[69]

One of the *strongest* points of Collins's analysis is its capacity to account for the confluence of *multiple factors* in the emergence of intellectual fields. Social networks are contingent upon the connections established between polycentrically positioned agents, whose embodied practices are performed in multidimensionally structured—and, on numerous levels, overlapping—realms of action and interaction: private and public, personal and professional, ephemeral and institutional, cultural and political, ideological and logistical, material and symbolic.[70] One of the *weakest* points of his approach, however, is reflected in its incapacity to flesh out the *specificity* of the existentialist movement—notably, in terms of its competitive advantages over rival philosophical currents, which could have exploited (or, in some cases, did exploit) the various transformations taking place in the intellectual field to a similar extent, but which did *not* enjoy the same degree of success in the mid-1940s, at least not in France. This explanatory deficit is reinforced by the erroneous tendency to treat the intellectual field as 'relatively autonomous from other societal developments'[71], thereby shifting the analytical focus away from macro-historical trends to 'the inner struggle for attention in the intellectual space'[72]. This methodological strategy is barely appropriate, however, for 'explaining why, at a particular point, some intellectuals, and indeed some intellectual currents, have a broader appeal'[73] than others. Thus, Collins's framework falls short of providing satisfying answers to fundamental questions such as 'Why Sartre?', 'Why existentialism?', and 'Why both Sartre and existentialism in the mid-1940s?'. In response to these matters, Baert affirms that it is crucial to

take 'the broader cultural climate of the mid-1940s'[74] into consideration. The question of why some intellectual scholars and schools are successful (and others are not) is, as we shall see, essential to understanding both the constitution and the evolution of knowledge production in modern societies.

III. Four Alternative 'Explanations'

With the exception of Boschetti's and Collins's respective accounts, as well as Ingrid Galster's edited collection *La naissance du phénomène Sartre. Raisons d'un succès, 1938–1945*[75], one finds little in the way of sociological research attempting to explain the rise of Sartre and existentialism in the contemporary literature. Unsurprisingly, there are numerous secondary sources on Sartre, formulating a variety of hypotheses concerning his achievements and success as a major public intellectual.[76] As Baert spells out, four perspectives are particularly influential in this regard.

First, one may seek to explain Sartre's success in terms of his '*individual qualities*'[77]. On this view, 'his intellect, his charisma, charm, adaptability, opportunism or simply his determination, ambition and work ethic'[78] were so outstanding that—irrespective of the social circumstances that might have benefitted his rise—Sartre (the person) was fated to become 'Sartre' (the label). This narrative implies that he managed to enter the kingdom of classics in philosophy owing to the perfect combination of 'natural aptitude and hard work'[79]. Undoubtedly, Sartre's talents and industry played a vital role in his success story. Given that many other intellectuals were equipped with these attributes, however, it is problematic to consider them in isolation from other factors.

Second, one may wish to explain Sartre's success in terms of '*the autumn of 1945*'[80], also known as '*the "existentialist offensive"* ' [81]. On this interpretation, Sartre's public lecture *L'existentialisme est un humanisme*[82], delivered on 29th October 1945, played a pivotal role in granting Sartre 'celebrity status'[83]—initially in France and eventually across the world. The main shortcoming of this reading, however, is that, while remaining largely 'descriptive'[84], it tends to disregard 'the broader historical context'[85] in which the rise of Sartre and existentialism occurred. To the extent that historical analysis focuses on a snapshot taken in relation to the autumn of 1945, it fails to account for the importance of the developments that took place in preceding, as well as in succeeding,

years—not only in France, but also in other 'Western' countries. Collective efforts to come to terms with the multiple traumatic experiences of the Second World War—which, in the French case, amounted to a curious mixture of conflicting sentiments such as 'guilt, pride and shame'[86]—posed a tangible challenge to the intellectual landscape on all sides of the political spectrum. A snapshot view, however, falls short of doing justice to the complexity of diverse—and, at several levels, interrelated—historical dynamics.

Third, one may elect to explain Sartre's success in terms of '*the relaxing of morals*'[87] as a collectively desired 'antidote to the repressive years of Vichy'[88]. On this understanding, Sartre—not least because of his fierce opposition to the Vichy regime—epitomized the values, principles, and practices of those supporting the *Résistance* against the conservative values of the morally oppressive and politically opportunistic sectors of French society. This interpretation is problematic, however, to the degree that it is based on the misleading assumption that existentialism, due to its alleged emphasis on the radical freedom pervading the course of human agency, 'hardly imposed any burden on the individual'[89], and even less so on the collective conscience of society. Yet, as Baert remarks, '[t]o suggest that Sartre's existentialism was experienced as a licence for unbridled freedom ignores his strong moral vocabulary at the time and the centrality of the notion of responsibility'[90]. Contrary to common misconceptions, our freedom to make choices means that we—as rational subjects capable of morally guided behaviour—are *responsible* for our actions. Hence, far from making a case for the relaxation, let alone the rejection, of morals, Sartre's existentialist philosophy is a systematic attempt to demonstrate that human beings are accountable for their decisions and actions.

Fourth, one may prefer to explain Sartre's success in terms of '*the power of generational shifts*'[91]. The underlying supposition of this stance is the—seemingly plausible—notion that different generations experience particular socio-political events and trends in a variety of forms. On this perspective, 'shared experiences'[92] generate 'similar sensitivities'[93]—that is, a sort of common habitus of a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*, which may be defined as a group of individuals united by the collective experience of the same, or a similar, fate. Surely, the use of the word 'generation' as an 'explanatory concept'[94] appears useful, in the sense that it permits us to account for the dispositional formation of 'likes and dislikes'[95] in terms of one of the most powerful stratifying variables of social structure: *age*.

Yet, the ways in which individuals relate to, make sense of, and act upon the world is shaped by *multiple* sociological variables—such as class, ethnicity, gender, 'ability', and age.[96] Thus, 'the notion of generation is too blunt an instrument to capture the complex relationship between experience and intellectual sensitivities'[97], especially to the extent that it fails to unearth the *intersectional* constitution of the human immersion in the world, which is *irreducible* to the preponderance of *one* sociological determinant. To be clear, this is not to deny the significance, let alone the existence, of generational shifts; this is to recognize, however, that it would be reductive to portray the rise of Sartre and existentialism as a mere expression of a mood change, expressed in the emergence of a new 'collective psyche'[98] in post-war France.

The point, then, is to accept that, while the aforementioned considerations capture significant aspects of a complex constellation of conditions and circumstances, the analysis of the *combination* of these elements, rather than of their ostensibly isolated role, is necessary for a *comprehensive* understanding of the key factors that contributed to the rise of Sartre and existentialism.

IV. Baert's Theoretical Orientation

Baert proposes to distinguish between *intellectuals* and *critics*. The former concept refers to creative individuals who 'tend to produce relatively innovative intellectual goods, like plays, novels or philosophical treatises'[99]. The latter concept designates discursively equipped agents who 'tend to paraphrase and [to] comment on those products in journals or newspapers with a relatively wide circulation'[100]. Far from being reducible to merely passive or reactive analysts or pundits, critics can take on the powerful 'role of gatekeeper[s]'[101], capable of either facilitating or obstructing the distribution of intellectual contributions, depending on whether they are sympathetically disposed towards or negatively prejudiced against them.

It would be misleading to associate intellectuals with the realm of imaginative transcendence and critics with the realm of mind-numbing immanence, as if they constituted two entirely separate groups of people with diametrically opposed tasks and interests. Instead, it is crucial to recognize that—while they fulfil complementary functions—the distinction between them is, in practice, somewhat blurred. Indeed, although Sartre and his followers acted, above all, as *intellectuals*, they frequently

adopted the role of *critics*, especially when commenting on each other's contentions and contributions. This tacit role switch works both ways: critics sporadically generate intellectual outputs for which they claim full and legitimate authorship, just as intellectuals regularly comment on the writings of fellow intellectuals—notably in magazines, journals, books, and serials, but also in public debates, lectures, workshops, and conferences.[102]

Furthermore, Baert proposes to distinguish between *intra-intellectual arena* and *public intellectual arena*. The former concept describes a relationally constructed sphere in which 'professional intellectuals address mainly other professional intellectuals'[103]. As such, it delineates a discursive domain that is, to a large degree, 'governed by the intellectuals themselves'[104]. The latter concept, by contrast, designates a relatively open realm of exchanges of opinion requiring 'a degree of validation by the "consumers" of knowledge as well as the producers'[105]. By definition, public intellectuals seek to reach a broad audience of both experts and laypersons; the success of their 'output[s] is determined not solely by intellectuals, but also by the media—professional journalists and commentators—and publishers'[106]. Consequently, they depend on mechanisms of approval, recognition, appreciation, and legitimation, whose underlying ideological and logistical parameters lie not only outside their comfort zone but also, to a significant degree, beyond their control.

In relation to the previous distinction, Baert offers the following *points of clarification*:

1. 'The *self-regulatory* principle of the *intra-intellectual* world is epitomised by the Humboldtian notion of the university according to which the academic world is largely managed by the academic producers themselves'[107]. From this perspective, academic life needs to assert a healthy degree of *autonomy* in order to avoid being partly or totally absorbed and colonized by the systemic imperatives of market-driven and state-administered societies.[108] To be sure, both the commodification and the bureaucratization of almost every interactional sphere in highly differentiated societies tend to undermine the emancipatory resources inherent in the human quest for individual and collective forms of self-realization based on autonomy and sovereignty. In practice, 'increasing government interference, a rising audit culture and budget cuts have meant the gradual erosion of the Humboldtian vision'[109], reinforcing the suspicion of

the systemic colonization of people's lifeworlds[110], including those spheres—such as the intellectual, scientific, artistic, and academic fields—which are bastions of human freedom, imagination, and creativity. One of the remarkable facts about Sartre is that—despite the precious cultural, educational, and intellectual capital that he obtained as a student within the academic field and notwithstanding the massive influence that he had upon the development of the academic field—he 'never held an academic position'[111]. One may speculate whether it was *because of* or *in spite of* Sartre's 'academic non-academic profile' that he did not succeed in reaching 'a wider public until the end of the war'[112]. What is clear, however, is that he eventually established himself as one of the most prominent public intellectuals in the history of 'Western' civilization.

2. Baert's distinction between *intra-intellectual arena* and *public intellectual arena* displays a striking resemblance to Bourdieu's conceptual differentiation between 'the field of *restricted* cultural production' and 'the field of *generalized* cultural production'.[113] Within the former, 'producers address other producers and defy an economic logic'[114]. In this sphere, what is produced is, to a large extent, *aimed at producers* themselves and, hence, at those who find themselves in the privileged position of being able to make sense of the normative parameters that are projected upon symbolically codified creations by an exclusivist group of specialists and gatekeepers. Within the latter, 'producers address a broader public and embrace a business model'[115]. In this sphere, what is produced is, to a large degree, *aimed at non-producers* and, thus, at those who belong to the wider community of ordinary people, who are, above all, destined to consume cultural goods whose enjoyment—because it defies complexity—is not hindered by protectionist codes of snobbish elitism.

3. The *intra-intellectual arena* has been 'the subject of extensive sociological analyses'[116], to a larger extent than the *public intellectual arena*. This far-reaching sociological interest in spheres of scholarly productions and exchanges is, to a considerable degree, due to the fact that intellectuals have a tendency to be obsessed with *themselves*, thereby breeding the kind of collective narcissism that is needed to make themselves believe that their behavioural and ideological modes of functioning are cognitively,

morally, and aesthetically superior to those produced and reproduced by ordinary human beings. The 'broader underlying question'[117], however, is '*under which conditions ideas are likely to spread from the intra- to the public intellectual arena*'[118].

In order to uncover the reasons behind the transition from 'intra-intellectual' to 'extra-intellectual' in the realm of ideas, Baert proposes a shift in emphasis from '*text-based*'[119] methods, which tend to be concerned with endless exegesis and interpretation for the sake of interpretation, and *personalistic* accounts, which tend to be 'preoccupied with motives and strategies of individual thinkers'[120], as well as *idealistic* frameworks, which 'tend to treat the intellectual field as in relative isolation from external factors'[121], towards a genuinely *sociological* approach, which seeks to do justice to the significance of the social conditions of production that undergird both the constitution and the evolution of knowledge and belief systems. Such an investigative project, then, endeavours to study 'the diffusion of a set of ideas from the intra- to the public intellectual domain'[122]. It aims to accomplish this not simply in *hermeneuticist*, *personalistic*, or *idealistic* terms, but, rather, by putting forward a research model that is conceptually, methodologically, and empirically '*sensitive to the broader institutional and cultural dimensions* that have bearing on the intellectual field'[123]. By definition, a sociologically reflexive undertaking needs to be open, non-dogmatic, and multifactorial, in the sense that it 'avoids imposing too rigid a theoretical framework from the outset'[124] and, furthermore, makes both a conscious and an explicit 'effort not to exclude *a priori* any factors that might have been constitutive of the making'[125] of the social, political, ideological, or intellectual movement under scrutiny.

In essence, this posture leads us to Baert's plea for a *theory of positioning*. The twofold assumption underlying this perspective is that '*through their work writers position themselves intellectually*'[126] and that, moreover, 'this *positioning affects whether their ideas are taken up by others and, if successful, how they are adopted*'[127]. To be exact, such a 'positionist' approach is based on the following three presuppositions:

1. Thinkers, researchers, and paradigm-inventers increase the prospect of disseminating their contributions, not only in the intra-intellectual but also in the public intellectual domain, if their ideas 'are "*packaged*" in terms of a coherent intellectual doctrine

and "*labelled*"'[128]. Intellectual ideas—which are mediated by the dynamic circle of affirmation and negation, proposition and contradiction, construction and deconstruction, private background preparation and public foreground presentation—appear to stand a greater chance of capturing, if not colonizing, the public imagination if they are delivered 'in a *unified fashion* and as part of a *coherent doctrine*'[129].

2. The relative success, consolidation, and spread of an intellectual doctrine depends on the *logistical*, *ideological*, *institutional*, and—in numerous cases—*charismatic* capacity of those endorsing it to establish an efficient, vibrant, and resourceful relationship '*vis-à-vis* the *intellectual establishment*, the *publishing industry* and the *critics*'[130].
3. An intellectual doctrine can enter the public intellectual domain, and thereby capture significant parts of the *Zeitgeist* prominent in a given society, on condition that 'it manages to *resonate with recent socio-political experiences*'[131] of particular sectors of the population and only to the extent that it achieves this in a more convincing, pioneering, and inspiring fashion than 'older, established ideas'[132].

V. Baert's Five Central Hypotheses

On the basis of the aforementioned presuppositions, Baert formulates *five central hypotheses*, which shall be considered in this section.

1. Ideas spread more rapidly if those who endorse them succeed in developing 'intricate *connections within the world of critics*'[133]. In most cases, this requires their advocates to establish 'a good rapport with the *journalistic world*'[134], in whose discursive spaces of argumentation they seek approval and recognition.
2. Ideas spread more rapidly if hitherto widely accepted—or even hegemonic—knowledge and belief systems undergo a *validity crisis* within society, *either* because they 'no longer resonate with a larger public'[135] *or* because their advocates 'have lost legitimacy or have diminished authority'[136] in terms of their capacity to set the agenda by determining cognitive parameters of objectivity, normativity, and perceptibility.

3. Ideas spread more rapidly, and also more effectively, if they are systematically promoted and widely disseminated by key players of the *publishing industry*, capable of tapping into a dynamic and adaptable supply-demand chain of 'a "high-brow" mass market'[137]: the stronger an intellectual's connections to dominant agents within the publishing industry, the better his or her chances of establishing him- or herself as a prominent public figure with paradigmatic influence within the academic field in particular and within society in general.
4. Ideas spread more rapidly if those who subscribe to them are prepared to make use of *supplementary communication and dissemination channels*, such as 'public lectures and radio or television appearances'[138] as well as, in the 'digital age'[139], social and alternative media.
5. Ideas spread more rapidly if 'they *resonate* with the broader *cultural climate among the educated classes*'[140] and permit large sections of the cultural elite and/or of the wider population to identify with them, insofar as they reflect their own concerns, preoccupations, and experiences. Irrespective of how sophisticated, original, insightful, and pertinent a specific set of ideas may be, if it fails 'to connect with the recent and present experiences of the people involved'[141] in a particular cultural sphere, it will not manage to penetrate, let alone to hegemonize, the collective imagination of the public intellectual arena, and even less so of the rest of the population.

Baert is keen to avoid any misunderstandings arising from a misreading of his plea for a positionist approach to the study of Sartre's success story. Drawing attention to the ground-breaking influence of Henri Bergson's *L'évolution créatrice*[142], Baert spells out that he is 'not arguing that Sartre was the first French philosopher to gain public prominence'[143]. Yet, the rise of Sartre and existentialism in the mid-1940s is a case in point, since it demonstrates the various challenges attached to the *sociological task of exploring 'the emergence of the modern notion of the intellectual'*[144].

In this context, the *Dreyfus affair*[145]—which unfolded in the 1890s and which, to a significant degree, both triggered and expressed deep ideological divisions in France between 1894 and 1906—is of paramount

importance, illustrating the centrality of *two diametrically opposed conceptions of what it means to be an intellectual*:

- On the one hand, the so-called *Dreyfusards* used the term 'intellectual' in a *positive* and *affirmative* manner. For them, intellectuals could be conceived of as 'principled defenders of true French values of justice and truth'[146]. On this account, one could and should refer to them 'with pride'[147], recognizing that they had made, and would continue to make, invaluable contributions to the development of knowledge in particular and of human civilization in general. Following this line of thought, the term 'intellectual' took on the role of 'a self-congratulatory concept'[148], whose empowering connotations were confiscated by and mobilized for those who were in need of scholarly self-justification—namely, intellectuals themselves.
- On the other hand, the so-called *anti-Dreyfusards* employed the term 'intellectual' in a *negative* and *suspicious* manner. Insofar as they used this label 'pejoratively and invariably with a sarcastic undertone'[149], they sought to make fun of what they perceived as 'the intellectualism of intellectuals'[150]—that is, of a self-sufficient attitude based on a toxic mixture of vanity, narcissism, and elitism. In their eyes, intellectuals were socially awkward and self-deceiving individuals, who—while, as *de facto* 'outsiders'[151], existing on the margins of the national community—'drew on abstract thinking'[152], spoke a private language, and remained caught up in self-sufficient thought experiments, 'out of touch with the historical roots'[153] of everyday culture shared by ordinary people. According to the anti-Dreyfusards, most intellectuals were little more than 'pretenders'[154]—that is, 'would-be cultured people'[155] specializing in the art of image management and self-promotion. There was a strong *nationalistic*—if not, *purist* and *racist*—undercurrent in this mode of thought, insofar as anti-Dreyfusards assumed that a large number of prominent intellectuals were 'of foreign extraction'[156], aiming to cover up the fact that, in reality, they were 'unable to match the cultural and aesthetic attributes of those with a long French ancestry'[157].

Eventually, Dreyfusards were triumphant and, consequently, succeeded in ensuring that the affirmative, rather than the pejorative, conception of 'the intellectual' established itself as a predominant and positive reference point

in the imaginary of twentieth-century discourses in the humanities and social sciences, but also, at least to some extent, outside academic circles.

In relation to the aforementioned distinction, Baert makes two additional observations.

1. When examining the 'Manifesto of the Intellectuals'[158], it is striking that their *professional status* appeared to endow them with the *privilege of exerting 'authority over the wider public'*[159], implying that, more generally, they would find themselves in an epistemically superior position.
2. On both sides of the argument, the intellectual was portrayed as a *discursive* as well as an *embodied* entity, '*actively engaged* in the world, in particular involved in the politics of the day'[160].

Owing to their concern with the ideals of *liberté*, *égalité*, and *fraternité*, most intellectuals are unambiguously 'situated on the left of the political spectrum'[161]. Due to their subversive tendencies—expressed in their commitment to challenging the status quo as well as to questioning established behavioural, ideological, and institutional patterns of existence—,they are 'anti-conformists who distrust *le pouvoir*'[162]. Given their shared belief in the values of the Enlightenment—epitomized in the Kantian defence of the emancipatory potential that is presumably inherent in the civilizational triad of *Verstand*, *Vernunft*, and *Urteilskraft*[163]—, 'they present themselves as the voice of reason against government forces'[164], especially where these amount to arbitrary forms of authoritarian state power. The notion that intellectuals subscribe to normative agendas motivated by a 'progressive political commitment'[165] has become a commonplace assumption—not only in France, but also in other national contexts. Indeed, 'by the mid-1940s the idea of political engagement had become the new orthodoxy'[166], suggesting that intellectuals were expected to position themselves in relation to current affairs and issues of contention. The 'era of the *intellectuel engagé*'[167] had begun.

VI. Baert's Project: Overcoming the Deficiencies of Existing Accounts

Baert's project, pursued in this book, is an ambitious one: it consists, as he puts it, in '*explaining intellectuals*'[168]. Thus, the task that he sets himself is not simply to describe, to analyse, to interpret, or to assess

intellectuals but, in a more fundamental sense, to *explain* their existence and, hence, the socio-historical conditions underlying their coming-into-being. To be exact, he seeks to provide a '*multi-level explanation*'[169]—that is, a multifactorial approach that takes into account numerous aspects that are of constitutive importance in the development of intellectual fields and of their protagonists. Such a 'broader sociological theory of intellectuals'[170] places particular emphasis on the role of 'positioning'[171], as well as on the role of 'networks and conflict[s]'[172], in shaping not only the creation, evolution, dissemination, and reception of ideas but also the historical settings within which they can become influential.

As Baert elucidates with admirable clarity and eloquence, the epistemic validity of dominant narratives concerning both the constitution and the function of intellectuals in modern societies suffers from a number of significant limitations and shortcomings. In this regard, the following *five issues* are particularly important.

1. The *empiricist bias* refers to the problem that some studies of intellectuals are insufficiently theoretical. Just as theoreticist accounts of social agents, structures, and phenomena fall short of engaging with the empirical dimensions of intellectual fields, their empiricist counterparts fail to provide conceptually sophisticated frameworks capable of challenging naïve, stereotypical, and common-sense understandings of reality. According to Baert, scholars concerned with the writing of 'intellectual history'[173], rather than with the pursuit of a critical 'sociology of intellectuals'[174], are often guilty of this empiricist bias, especially if they are obsessed with 'deciphering the context and depicting the intellectual moves within it'[175], instead of aiming to articulate 'broader theoretical considerations'[176] contributing to the social-scientific comprehension of significant patterns, trends, and lines of development. As Baert remarks, however, 'even more sociologically inclined authors do not always elaborate on their theoretical stance'[177], shying away from the laborious task of embedding their empirical findings within a solid conceptual architecture.
2. The *motivational bias* refers to the problems arising from the fact that some research programmes 'attempt systematically to uncover the motivations or intentions behind intellectual interventions'[178]. In fact, such a methodological strategy reflects an epistemological framework of presuppositions, which is (a) *motivationalist*,

in the sense that it seeks to shed light on an intellectual impetus, (b) *intentionalist*, in the sense that it aims to expose an intellectual purpose, and (c) *voluntarist*, in the sense that it strives to unearth an intellectual will or desire. In Baert's eyes, an illustrative example of this kind of approach can be found in the Cambridge School of Intellectual History[179], which—owing to its 'emphasis on 'the "linguistic" or "ideological context" in which intellectual interventions take place'[180]—fails to take into consideration, let alone to explain, the role of 'the cultural landscape'[181] and of the wider socio-historical setting within which intellectual ideas, currents, and paradigms emerge and develop. It is not enough, then, to study the 'intellectual milieu'[182] within which ideas gain, or fail to gain, referential currency; it is just as important to scrutinize the wider societal situation in which an intellectual field is situated. A crucial analytical mistake consists in taking 'the meaning of an intellectual intervention within a given context to be synonymous with the intent behind it'[183], as if its seemingly obvious teleological function could be taken at face value. For the sake of epistemic clarity, it is vital to draw a distinction between, on the one hand, the *impetus*, *purpose*, and *desire* behind an intellectual intervention and, on the other hand, the *effect*—or, indeed, the multiple *effects*—of an intellectual intervention.[184] What matters, from a pragmatist perspective, are the *consequences* of an intellectual intervention, rather than the motivations, intentions, or will behind it.

> So rather than speculating on what *certain intellectuals* through their interventions *intend* to achieve, we shall see that *positioning theory* provides the conceptual tools to investigate how they and their products might acquire *institutional or symbolic (dis)advantages* within the *cultural and political arenas* in which they find themselves or in which those texts or ideas are *appropriated*. [...] [T]he theory suggested here opens up conceptual space for the *exploration of the social mechanisms through which some intellectuals come to prominence and others do not and, related, certain texts acquire classical status and others do not.*[185]

Thus, such a positionist account highlights that, whereas it is difficult, if not futile, 'to speculate about the *motivations* behind intellectual choices'[186], it is sociologically illuminating to focus on the

effects of intellectual performances, which—unlike hidden intentions or desires—can be empirically studied, if not measured.

3. The *structural bias* refers to the problems resulting from reductive 'attempts to explain individual decisions by sociological determinants'[187]. The 'soft' version of this bias is illustrated in the contention that individual decisions are *shaped* by structural forces, whereas the 'hard' version of this bias is reflected in the claim that individual decisions are *determined* by structural forces. To be sure, one may seek to uncover a variety of structural forces: social, cultural, economic, demographic, political, ideological, or linguistic—to mention only a few. While, following the Durkheimian tradition of sociological analysis, social facts can, and should, be examined in relation to other social facts, this does not mean that—despite their influence by social forces—*individual* motivations, intentions, or desires can be reduced to *social* facts.[188] The importance of this difference lies at the heart of the Durkheimian distinction between 'social facts' and 'individual instances'.[189] It would be erroneous, then, to explain an intellectual's philosophical or ideological orientation exclusively in terms of their social background.[190] In short, what needs to be avoided is 'conflating sociological and individual explanations'[191], that is, providing merely structural explanations of individual beliefs or behaviours.

4. The *authenticity bias* refers to the problems attached to the flawed assumption that 'intellectuals have a clear sense of their identity and values, with these self-notions guiding their work and the choices they make'[192]. It is tempting to take what intellectuals have to say about themselves at face value, especially if one sympathizes with them or finds their work fascinating. Yet, as critical sociologists, we need to resist the temptation to idealize intellectuals, by glorifying their works, romanticizing their public and/or private lives, and hypostatizing their capacity to develop—and to project—a sense of truthfulness, uniqueness, and genius-like matchlessness.

> [T]he authenticity bias is integral to a particular genre of intellectual biography that attributes particular significance to the *author's self-description* as a guide for understanding the various *intellectual moves* that he or she made.[193]

It is true that most intellectuals construct *narratives* about themselves, which they present both to themselves and to others; one may even gather evidence to support the suspicion that these narratives 'shape their creative output'[194]. This does not mean, however, that intellectuals constitute entirely self-conscious, as well as behaviourally and ideologically coherent, entities, whose endeavours are expressions of their 'authenticity', in the sense that they are totally in sync with their identities, convictions, values, and worldviews—let alone, with their everyday behaviour. In order to avoid falling into the trap of interpretive idealism or romanticism, based on the naïve belief that intellectuals are the epitome of human authenticity derived from their pursuit of higher meanings through the quest for enlightenment and creativity, we need to account for the fact that the *intellectual field*—similar to other social fields—is a *realm of struggle between asymmetrically positioned agents*.

> Whether within the academy or outside it, intellectuals operate within *competitive arenas*, struggling over symbolic and institutional recognition and scarce financial *resources*. It makes a lot of sense [...] to recognize the extent to which their *interventions*—whether through books, articles or speeches—are an integral part of this *power struggle* rather than an expression of some *deeper self*.[195]

The intellectual field is marked by a permanent *struggle for recognition*—no less than other social fields that are shaped by power-laden dynamics of ranking, competition, and status-acquisition.[196] If there is one defining characteristic of the existence of intellectuals, it is their immersion in power struggles, that is, in conflicts over access to symbolic—as well as, increasingly, material and institutional—resources. From a positionist perspective, it is crucial to establish, and to defend, 'a critical distance *vis-à-vis* the way in which most intellectuals portray themselves to their audience'[197]. Such an approach permits us to question the validity of the potentially deceiving signals sent by intellectuals' foreground performances, focusing instead on the unspoken language of truth that manifests itself in the—often hidden—background of their ordinary practices. To the extent that '[i]ntellectuals have a tendency to depict their

own intellectual trajectory as untainted by [...] material, symbolic and institutional constraints'[198], it is the task of critical sociologists to demystify the quest for purity and transcendentality by shedding light on the reified nature of scholastic claims to authenticity.[199]

5. The *stability bias* refers to the problems generated by the misleading presupposition that 'early formation makes for *fixity* of somebody's subsequent intellectual *trajectory*'[200]. This assumption is reflected in 'notions of self-concept and *habitus*'[201], endorsed by Neil Gross and Pierre Bourdieu respectively.[202] On this view, there is always a substantial level of 'fixity within the project and output of an intellectual'[203], which has a tendency to perpetuate itself, thereby dictating the parameters of what is possible, and what is impossible, within a specific horizon of options. Yet, we must resist the desire to attribute a sense of all-encompassing and eternal consistency to intellectual trajectories, based on how a scholar presents and 'sees him- or herself '[204] and the—in many cases, mystifying—ways in which 'he or she wants to be seen and remembered'[205] when seeking to acquire the status of a 'classic'. As Baert insists, '*it is rare for intellectuals to stick to a single self-concept or coherent project throughout their lives*'[206]. Just like ordinary agents, intellectuals have to invent and to reinvent themselves, not only because they may get bored if they remain caught up in the same mode of thinking, but also because, to the degree that they claim to be in touch with the different *Zeitgeister* of the present, they need to adjust to the constantly changing challenges by which they are surrounded. Hence, most intellectuals have a tendency to 'reinvent themselves, articulating new outlooks and taking on new positions'[207] within their field of expertise in particular and within the wider arena of society in general. It is no accident, then, that it is common to distinguish between an 'early' and a 'late' phase when trying to make sense of the contributions made by a particular thinker (famous examples, in this respect, are Karl Marx and Ludwig Wittgenstein). *Being an intellectual requires immersion in a horizon of constantly shifting relations, expectations, and positions.* Indeed, it is Baert's conviction that one of the key advantages of positioning theory is that it is 'able to capture shifts of this kind'[208].

VII. Performative Positioning and Positional Performance

Drawing upon speech act theory, positionist approaches focus on the extent to which words, ideas, and discourses—rather than simply 'representing or mirroring the external world'[209]—'*accomplish* things'[210]. Far from serving a merely constative, affirmative, or mimetic function, linguistic expressions fulfil a *performative* role. Utterances are performative, in the sense that they '*do* something'[211], have an *impact* upon the world, and *construct* reality in one way or another. Over the past century, 'fewer and fewer philosophers thought it fruitful to conceive of language as copying the external world'[212], insisting that 'language is an act which, like any act, *does* something'[213]. In light of this paradigmatic transition in the second half of the twentieth century, there has been a shift away from representationalist accounts of knowledge and correspondence theories of truth towards *constructivist* and *interpretivist* epistemologies.[214]

It is in this spirit that Baert proposes to undertake a '*performative turn for the theorizing of intellectuals*'[215]. In accordance with this endeavour, the performative logic that permeates the functioning of *language* pervades, in a similar fashion, the unfolding of *intellectual interventions*. On this account, it is crucial to examine 'what intellectual interventions *do* and *achieve* rather than what they represent'[216]. As Baert points out, such a performativist conception of intellectuals may, at first glance, appear counterintuitive, in the sense that 'we tend to think of intellectual tracts as somehow representational'[217]—that is, we are inclined to 'see them as *reflecting* on the world (or reflecting on the representations of others) rather than *acting* on it'[218].

In short, Baert makes a case for a theoretical stance that may be characterized as—simultaneously—*pragmatist*, *performativist*, and *positionist*:

1. It is *pragmatist*, in the sense that it centres on intellectual *practices*, that is, on what intellectuals *do* and how their interventions *impact* upon reality.
2. It is *performativist*, in the sense that it focuses on intellectual *performances*, that is, on the roles that intellectuals take on and through which they *act* in particular ways.
3. It is *positionist*, in the sense that it is concerned with intellectual *positioning*, that is, with the ways in which intellectuals *situate*

> themselves in relation to others, as well as with the ways in which they are *situated*—on the basis of processes of recognition, legitimation, and social ranking—by others.

For instance, an academic journal article—irrespective of how abstract, specialist, impenetrable, or esoteric it may appear—'*does* a wide range of things'[219], and it *does* so on various levels and, potentially, in relation to different agents directly or indirectly involved: 'for the author, for the authors cited, for the discipline'[220], for the readership, for the language in which it is written, for the development of knowledge, for the academic field—in short, for the world.

The previous reflection leads us from the *pragmatist* and *performativist* aspects to the *positionist* dimensions of Baert's analysis. The term *positioning*, as it is employed here, 'indicates the process by which certain *features* are *attributed* to an individual or a group or some other entity'[221]. As such, it designates a course of action that involves the assignation of meaning performed by an individual or a collective subject capable of judgement and recognition in relation to others. Positioning is an act of *placing*: within a particular field of the social universe, agents seek to *place* themselves, while being *placed* by other agents. Acts of positioning can be performed consciously or unconsciously, deliberately or unintentionally, calculatedly or inadvertently. Thus, human agents are equipped with the capacity 'to alter how they represent themselves and how they locate others'[222]. Acts of positioning, however, are often carried out by intuitively guided performers, who are—to a large extent—'unaware of the illocutionary force'[223] that undergirds their practices.

For Baert, positioning theory is inconceivable without a paradigmatic shift in emphasis from the structuralist concern with *stability*, *constancy*, and *determinacy* to the action-focused interest in *fluidity*, *irregularity*, and *indeterminacy*:

> Whereas explanations in terms of *rules* and *roles* denote *stability*, positioning theory acknowledges *fluidity*—the *ongoing changes* in how people identify themselves and position others.[224]

Positioning theory has been applied—extensively—to the study of personality formation (at the *micro*-level), face-to-face interactions (at the *meso*-level), and international relations and politics (at the *macro*-level).

Yet, the literature, one finds only a few examples in which it has been systematically employed for the sociological exploration of the intellectual realm. In order to avoid falling into the trap of the 'individualistic bias'[225], however, it is vital to examine the dynamic of positioning in relation to the 'social setting'[226] in which it takes place, thereby accounting for the fact that—on several levels—it constitutes 'a collective endeavour'[227]—that is, a collective practice, performance, and projection.

VIII. Positioning: The Dialectics of a Tension-laden Process

Baert's starting point is a simple one: all intellectual interventions—irrespective of whether they are articulated by means of writing, speaking, or artistic expression, such as music or painting—'involve *positioning*'[228]. For Baert, the concept of *intellectual intervention* refers to '*any contribution to the intellectual realm*, whether it is in the form of a book, an article, a blog, a speech or indeed part of any of these (say, a passage or a sentence)'[229]. Notwithstanding whether or not they are aware of the situatedness underlying their contribution, 'such intervention *locates* the author(s) or speaker(s) within the intellectual field or within a broader socio-political or artistic arena'[230]. In other words, positioning constitutes an integral component of intellectual interventions. According to Baert, intellectual statements bring about two types of effects: (1) the *positioning* itself and (2) the *dissemination* of ideas, which may reinforce or undermine an agent's career and his or her chances of obtaining 'symbolic and institutional recognition'[231].

Positioning, then, needs to be understood in terms of both *endogenous* and *exogenous* agency: on the one hand, there is 'an "agent" , *making* the intervention and *doing* the positioning'[232]; on the other hand, there is 'a "positional party", being *attributed* certain features'[233]. Regardless of whether we are dealing with an individual subject or with a collective subject, all carriers of intellectual interventions depend on both endogenous and exogenous forms of agency. In cases of *self-positioning*[234], 'the agent and positioned party coincide'[235], giving him or her the opportunity to choose where exactly he or she wishes to be placed within an intellectual field. Yet, self-positioning cannot be dissociated from the positioning of other agents.[236]

One of the most effective forms of *positioning* is *anti-positioning*. In fact, taking a position in opposition to another position—which may be

associated with a particular intellectual current, paradigm, or set of assumptions—can be a source of strength. Thus, 'it is often in relation to a positioned party other than oneself—for instance, by *contrasting* one's own position with those of other individual(s) or a group—that self-positioning is at its most effective'[237]. In intellectual circles, the willingness to challenge another epistemic position, or various other epistemic positions, forms a central element of the creation of a presuppositional stance.

Positioning can be achieved both subtly and overtly:

- *Subtle* forms of positioning are essential to intellectual practices that are directly or indirectly constrained by repressive external political forces—as, for instance, in absolutist, authoritarian, or dictatorial regimes. In addition, they can be vital to intellectual interventions whose authors wish to remain anonymous or do not wish to be brought into connection with what they may perceive as the cognitive straitjacket of one specific viewpoint or mode of thought.
- *Overt* forms of positioning are particularly common in introductory, as well as concluding, sections of articles, books, and speeches, in which intellectuals are given the opportunity to situate themselves and their interventions in relation to other scholars.[238]

The invention of *intellectual labels* is tantamount to the creation of *scholarly brands*:

> Intellectuals often use *labels* to flag their own *position*. These labels tend to capture the core idea in a succinct fashion. […] Of course, intellectuals use labels not just to refer to themselves but also [to refer] to others, sometimes with the aim of *criticizing* or *ridiculing* their work. […] The introduction of a label can facilitate the *dissemination of ideas*, but the clarity of its meaning and its distinctiveness might be undermined once others start subscribing to the same label.[239]

In Baert's view, two forms of positioning are particularly important:

1. *intellectual positioning*, which locates the agent within the intellectual field; and
2. *politico-ethical positioning*, which requires the agent to take 'a broader political or ethical stance'[240], going beyond the narrow limits of the intellectual sphere.

To the extent that this conceptual distinction is based on two ideal-types, however, it is important to point out that, '*[i]n practice, intellectual positioning and political-ethical positioning tend to be intertwined*'[241]. Furthermore, these two forms of positioning may overlap with other forms of positioning (such as artistic positioning, aesthetic positioning, ethnic positioning, cultural positioning, etc.). As Baert perceptively remarks, 'a *politically charged climate* can lead to the *blurring* of the difference between politico-ethical and intellectual positioning'[242]. In such an atmosphere, thinkers and commentators may feel obliged to take a stance in relation to key issues, thereby illustrating that the seemingly most disinterested, neutral, and unbiased pursuit of scholarly activity cannot be divorced from the ideological presuppositions to which its protagonists consciously or unconsciously subscribe.

IX. Positioning: Performative Tools, Narratives, and Argumentation

1. Performative Tools

Performative tools can be defined as 'material and symbolic means that enable an effective intervention'[243]. From a sociological point of view, it is crucial to conceive of intellectual products as *performative*, in order to account for the multiple '*material and symbolic props and devices* that help to bring about effectively the intervention or positioning'[244]. In order for a publication of a book or a journal article to have an impact on the field of intellectual productions, for example, it is essential that the publishers develop and employ *marketing strategies*. The influence of an intellectual output depends not only on the symbolic power of its author but also, to a large extent, on the prestige of the publisher. In the case of Sartre, this is obvious, given his personal connections with leading editors at Gallimard.

Metaphorically speaking, 'vitamin C'—that is, 'vitamin connection'—constitutes a vital element in the career of an intellectual. Sartre's ability to capitalize on his connections in multiple fields—above all, in the fields of philosophy, literature, theatre, journalism, and politics—permitted him to carve a niche for himself as a transdisciplinary public intellectual. The unequal distribution of performative tools is embedded in the establishment of formal and informal hierarchies that involve the explicit

or implicit 'ranking of research institutions, publishers and journals'[245] as well as of the languages in which their outputs are written. If a textual contribution is made and published in one of the hegemonic languages of the contemporary humanities and social sciences (that is, in English, French, or German), it is more likely to be read and taken seriously by an audience of legitimizing agents than if it is produced in a non-hegemonic language (such as Basque, Catalan, Finish, Araucano, or Mapudungun—to mention but a few).

2. Narratives

Narratives, as they are developed in the intellectual field, can be conceived of as 'relatively coherent stories that accompany and make possible effective positioning'[246]. Intellectuals, similar to other agents, can produce both *small narratives* and *grand narratives*: the former refer to context-dependent stories, emphasizing the *particularity* and *irreducibility* of local developments in a given society; the latter stand for context-transcendent stories, making a claim to *universality* and *generalizability* of developments in relation to the course of human history.[247] The intimate *relationship* between the construction of *narratives* and processes of *positioning* permeates people's symbolically mediated involvement in reality:

> *Positioning* depends not just on what the *narrative* explicitly *states*, but also on what it implies and, crucially, what it *leaves out*. Narratives often involve recollections and reconstructions of the past, ranging from an individual's trajectories to societal pasts.[248]

Within the intellectual field, narratives that emerge out of dynamics of positioning can make reference both to the *past* (for instance, by making 'claims about "cultural trauma"'[249]) and to the *future* (for example, by proclaiming 'a new beginning […], a new life or a more just society'[250]). Hence, a choice has to be made between what is *included* in and what is *excluded* from the story that is being told.

3. Argumentation

Argumentation constitutes a discursive process oriented towards the presentation and elaboration of reasons invoked in order to justify a

stance, belief, conviction, opinion, or narrative. Within the intellectual field, the construction of narratives hinges on carefully crafted forms of argumentation, comparable to those one encounters in the judicial, political, and journalistic fields:

> *Positioning and narratives* draw on *argumentation*, especially in the *intellectual field*. It is *through arguments* that *intellectuals differentiate themselves from others or associate themselves with them*. In contrast with other forms of positioning in which visuals and unconscious associations play a significant role (e.g. advertising of a product) , intellectual positioning stands or falls with *explicit arguments*. […] Particularly prevalent in intellectual positioning are *meta-arguments*.[251]

In essence, meta-arguments are arguments about arguments. Given the existential significance attached to the role of developing, articulating, and exchanging arguments, intellectuals—notably those with pronounced narcissistic tendencies—may seek to acquire a quasi-religious status, providing them with the opportunity to set the agenda in their respective interactional fields in particular and in society in general, even if—and, often, especially when—they claim to be 'secular intellectuals'[252]. The remarkable discursive influence of prominent 'preaching' intellectuals can have proselytizing effects, to the degree that they seek to 'lecture' different members of society about the vital ingredients of 'the good life'.

X. Positioning: A Relational Affair

By definition, positioning constitutes a *relational* affair. Consequently, an intellectual intervention involves a specific form of positioning to the extent that it takes place within a *field* of social agents, who may, or may not, take note of, reflect upon, and respond to it. According to Baert, three aspects underlying this relational logic are particularly important:[253]

1. *The individual*[254]: The effects that an intellectual intervention may, or may not, have are contingent upon the status and symbolic power of *the individual* responsible for it. If, for instance, two agents carry out very similar, or even identical, intellectual interventions, these may be perceived differently and trigger uneven effects, depending on how and where they are *positioned*—in terms of status, power, capital, resources, connections, influence, standpoint, trajectory, and reputation—in the social space. Put differently, *validity claims are*

legitimacy claims.[255] The epistemic validity attached to an intellectual statement by a readership or an audience is subject to the degree of social legitimacy attributed to it on various levels: '*Who?*' (author), '*To whom?*' (addressee), '*When* and *where?*' (spatiotemporal context), as well as '*How?*' (medium). To the extent that these variables differ, an intellectual intervention will have an impact in one form or another.

2. *Other individuals*[256]: The effects that an intellectual intervention may, or may not, have are shaped by the role of '*other individuals* at play within the same field'[257]. For this reason, rather than conceiving of intellectuals as atomized agents, we need to acknowledge that they are *interdependent*: '[s]hifts in the positioning of other individuals affect our positioning and self-positioning'[258]. In the case of Sartre, it is impossible to understand his shifting positions within the intellectual field without taking into account his relation to other 'key players'—such as Karl Marx (1818–1883), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913), Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961), Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009), and Michel Foucault (1926–1984).

3. *Context*[259]: The effects that an intellectual intervention may, or may not, have hinge on 'the specific intellectual or socio-political *context*'[260] in which it takes place. The 'historically rooted sensitivities'[261] shared by particular groups of agents are embedded within spatiotemporally contingent settings. Thus, the aforementioned relationship between an *individual* and other *individuals* is always *context-dependent*. This is reflected in the fact that 'the same intellectual intervention might generate different positioning when transposed to different contexts'[262]. The context-dependence of intellectual interventions is indicative of the *relativity* permeating all claims to epistemic validity. Noteworthy, in this respect, is the fact that *how intellectuals are perceived, and how their works are received, is largely beyond their control*. The most refined techniques of image- and impression-management cannot do away with the contingency that pervades not only the contents but also, crucially, the effects of intellectual outputs. Hence, 'even when intellectuals are involved in carefully constructed or calculated positioning and self-positioning, not all effects of their intellectual interventions are within their control'[263]. Depending on what kind of audiences

they reach, 'intellectual interventions can amount to very different forms of positioning and self-positioning'[264]. *Posthumous assessments* of scholarly contributions are a striking example of the fact that the works of an intellectual can be interpreted and reinterpreted in accordance with the normative agendas pursued by other intellectuals in diverging spatiotemporal contexts.[265] In some cases, intellectuals—similar to many artists—are given the credit they deserve only after their death; frequently, this happens on the basis of posthumously published works.[266] To be sure, retrospective assessments can lead to harsh judgements concerning the contributions made by intellectuals who, because they are no longer alive, are deprived of the opportunity to defend themselves.[267]

XI. Positioning: Cooperation and Individualization

As stressed by Baert, in most cases, a cumulative effort of numerous attempts is required in order for a scholarly contribution to have a tangible impact on the intellectual field or, possibly, on other social fields.

> It is rare for a single intellectual intervention to bring about the desired effect. In most cases *several interventions*—often repeating the same position—are *necessary* to get a message across.[268]

Of course, one may think of various exceptions. Each 'big thinker' tends to be associated with a *magnum opus*, which may represent the main—and, in some instances, ground-breaking—work that paved the way for a successful career and, in cases of distinction, for a place among the 'classics' and 'game changers' in a particular discipline. From a relationalist perspective, however, it appears that not even repeated intellectual interventions—either on one topic or on multiple topics—will suffice for a scholar to establish him- or herself, because his or her position in the field 'depends on so many other agents'[269] and, indeed, on several additional variables, two of which are especially significant:

1. Intellectual positioning is inconceivable without *intellectual networks*. Similar to other webs of social relations, intellectual networks—since they are generated and sustained by various agents—are in a constant state of flux and potentially complex.

> The *networks* of an intellectual comprise a *large number of agents*, who engage with him or her and confirm his or her *positioning*, even if they disagree or are overtly hostile. […] The *status and recognition of intellectuals* are dependent partly on *where they are acknowledged* (in which journals or book series), and *who precisely acknowledges them* (what is their positioning and status).[270]

An intellectual's position within a network of fellow intellectuals, then, is the product of his or her immersion in struggles for status and recognition.

2. Intellectual positioning is inconceivable without *intellectual teams*. Intellectual teams are more confined than intellectual networks, in the sense that their members 'actively cooperate in positioning themselves, for instance, by grouping around a school or research programme, often using a label which makes their work and agenda immediately recognizable'[271]. Hence, in line with Michael Farrell's concept of 'collaborative circles'[272], teams of this kind can be described as 'intense, small groups of innovative artistic and intellectual endeavour'[273], whose members are united by a shared set of ideas, principles, and practices as well as, in some cases, by a common institutional basis. Within the intellectual field, team membership is a double-edged sword:

   - On the one hand, it can *strengthen* one's position in the field, especially if one occupies a dominant position within an influential current or school of thought.
   - On the other hand, it can *weaken* one's position in the field, particularly if one occupies a marginal position within a peripheral current or school of thought.

   In any case, *positioning within a team through a field* and *positioning within a field through a team* can be regarded as indispensable components of intellectual life, constituting 'an ongoing achievement'[274], in the sense that a participant's place in the intellectual universe has to be constantly affirmed and reaffirmed in order to obtain any normative currency.[275]

Yet, just as intellectuals rely on processes of *collaboration*, they depend on processes of *individualization*:

> *Teams* capture the *cooperative side of intellectual life*, but what we call '*individualization*' is equally intrinsic to the *realm of intellectuals*. By *intellectual individualization*, we refer to the *process by which intellectuals distinguish themselves from others*, making themselves look *different* from them and possibly *unique*. Individualization is achieved through *careful self-positioning and positioning*, differentiating oneself from others. It may involve *conflict* because the *act of differentiating* tends to take place through *criticisms of others*. This is not to say that *individualization* and *teamwork* are necessarily mutually exclusive: intellectuals might collaborate with other team members to emphasize their distinct stance and to elaborate on how this stance differs from that of others.[276]

In short, collaborative and individuative practices represent two complementary dynamics in intellectual life. A peculiar phenomenon in this respect, which highlights the power-ladenness of the intellectual field, is that, '[i]n general, *the more secure and established one's position, the less one needs to rely on teamwork and the more likely one will press for intellectual individualization*'[277]. This performative imbalance is due to the fact that socially recognized and institutionally protected intellectuals tend to enjoy a greater degree of material and symbolic autonomy than those who are only just 'entering the game' or those who have been 'playing the game'—or, rather, 'trying to play the game'—for a while but without much success and who, hence, find themselves in highly volatile, dependent, and potentially precarious situations.

In light of the previous reflections, we can conclude that at least *five main parties* are involved in the *positioning process*: (1) *the intellectual* him- or herself as an individual; (2) *team members*; (3) *field or network members*; (4) *members of other social fields*, notably of the political and journalistic fields; (5) *members of the general public* and, in an even larger sense, *of society* as a whole.

XII. Baert's 'Paradigm Shift'

1. The Hermeneutics of Positioning

As Baert spells out, we face a number of serious *philosophical and methodological issues*[278] when reflecting upon what we may describe as 'the hermeneutics of positioning'. Particularly important in this regard are intellectual forms of '*intentional* positioning'[279], which reveal the '*premeditated* nature of intellectual interventions'[280]. Conscious and

explicit modes of positioning are vital to the differential unfolding of intellectual life in the modern era:

> Almost every formal presentation of new intellectual work begins with a '*position statement*' identifying the work on which it builds, the work that complements and supports it, and the work by other authors that it contradicts or supersedes.[281]

In essence, position statements express the intellectual's need to take a stance and place him- or herself within a field of expertise and in relation to other scholars. Indeed, when providing a credible *justification* for the relevance and originality of a piece of research submitted for peer review, position statements—which are usually included in the introductory and concluding sections of a manuscript—are a precondition for publication. Conscious and explicit positioning is 'built into the modern scientific and social-scientific paper'[282], whose authors are expected not only to spell out how it relates to other—already published—studies but also to explain the extent to which it challenges and goes beyond contributions previously made within the field of expertise in which it is placed.[283]

Wary of any attempts to overstate the role of motives behind intellectual interventions, Baert suggests that 'the solution lies in abandoning a *vocabulary of intentions* for a *vocabulary of effects*'[284]. Notwithstanding the various sociological implications of this consequentialist perspective, Baert's 'hermeneutics of positioning' places a strong emphasis on the *interpretive* and *meaning-laden* dimensions permeating the ways in which intellectual works are produced as well as received:

> [...] the *study of an author's positioning* needs to be accompanied by a *hermeneutic understanding of the experiences*, *concerns, and hopes of the audience* within the *socio-political context* at the time.[285]

Given their spatiotemporally contingent constitution, 'intellectual interventions "travel" from one context to another'[286] and trigger different reactions in different places and at different times. *Two methodological remarks* are crucial when trying to make sense of Baert's proposed paradigm shift from a 'vocabulary of intentions' to a 'vocabulary of effects'[287]:

a. *Stability*: Positioning theory seeks to provide a convincing explanation for the relative stability that appears to pervade most

intellectual careers and trajectories. To be clear, positioning theory aims to avoid the aforementioned 'stability bias', which—arguably—weakens the quality of Gross's and Bourdieu's respective interpretations of the intellectual field. It endeavours to accomplish this by accounting 'for a certain element of *fluidity* in how intellectuals project themselves and how they locate others'[288]. It would be erroneous, however, to assume that there is endless room for developmental flexibility. In fact, it is 'rare for intellectuals to reinvent themselves on a regular basis'[289]—partly, because they would lose credibility if, every few years, they sought to shift from one paradigm to another, making them appear unstable and volatile; and, partly, because it usually takes a substantial amount of time to develop a solid set of ideas and principles within a given field, making it hard to create, and to subscribe to, numerous intellectual approaches in a single lifespan, especially if they are diametrically opposed to one another.

b. *Evolution*: Positioning theory seeks to provide a convincing explanation for the 'evolutionary logic'[290] permeating the intellectual field.[291] In this sense, positioning theory constitutes a research programme that 'explores the *selective advantages or disadvantages* for the agents and for the intellectual interventions'[292]. Similar to many other social fields, within the intellectual field, agents relate to one another in terms of a contradictory *dialectics of collaboration and competition*. Irrespective of whether one favours Darwinian or Lamarckian (or any other) accounts of evolution[293] when examining social interactions, it is difficult to overlook the fact that, within the intellectual field, an agent's fate is decided, to a large extent, by an underlying logic that may be described as 'the survival of the fittest'. The constant struggle for access to material and symbolic resources shapes the value-, interest-, and power-laden ways in which agents relate to one another in the intellectual field. One of the most interesting issues in this regard remains the question of 'why some intellectual interventions are rewarded and diffused and others are not'[294] and, thus, why some intellectuals are more influential than others.

As Baert points out, processes of positioning and repositioning involve both *costs* and *risks*. To the extent that 'positioning is not a one-off

event, but an ongoing achievement'[295], which can, from time to time, require a significant degree of repositioning, it may turn out to be *costly* for those undertaking it. To the extent that 'repositioning might be noticed by other intellectuals who might demand justification'[296], those seeking to accomplish it might be obliged to take serious reputational *risks*. Indeed, according to Baert, 'radical repositioning is rarely attained without loss of credibility'[297], as it may appear hardly justifiable, especially if an intellectual decides to shift towards a position that is, at least on the face of it, diametrically opposed to the position that he or she previously endorsed.

> The more the *intellectual* is known, the more likely the *repositioning* will have to be accounted for. In sum, *repositioning* entails *reputational risks*. *Both factors*—the *costs* and the *reputational risks*—explain why *repositioning* tends to be found among either firmly *established intellectuals*, such as tenured academics, or *those who are just starting off and have not yet publicly cemented their position*.[298]

In other words, repositioning constitutes a process that may be undertaken *either* by established scholars *or* by newcomers; it may have multiple consequences, depending on where an agent is positioned in the intellectual field (and, for that matter, in other social fields) when initiating the process of redefining his or her objective, normative, and/or subjective place in the universe.

2. A Tripartite Typology of Intellectuals

Baert aims to scrutinize the conditions underlying the 'transformation of the public intellectual'[299]. Faced with this challenge, he makes it clear that, in his view, the analytical emphasis needs to be placed on *effects*, rather than on *intentions*:

> There is no need to resort to arguments about *intentional positioning*. The *effects speak louder than words*: regardless of Sartre's intentions, his intellectual interventions gave him symbolic recognition and helped the diffusion of his ideas.[300]

The *effects* > *intentions* formula underpins Baert's entire study. On his account, it is because of the *effects* that a thinker's presence may have

on the intellectual field in particular and on the public sphere in general that some varieties of being a 'public intellectual' are viable in one context but not viable in another; an intellectual's *intentions* are largely irrelevant to his or her field-specific positioning. In order to understand both the rise and the demise of Sartre and existentialism, then, it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that he 'was a particular type of public intellectual'[301] and, more specifically, to concede that the kind of public engagement for which he stood during the time of his success 'is no longer quite as viable today as it was back then'[302]. With the aim of illustrating this in further detail, Baert proposes to distinguish three modes of positioning, which are—ultimately—epitomized in three types of intellectuals: (a) *authoritative public intellectuals*, (b) *expert public intellectuals*, and (c) *embedded or dialogical public intellectuals*.

a. *Authoritative public intellectuals* rely on, as well as represent, 'high cultural capital'[303]. They tend to be trained in, to build upon, and to contribute to high-profile disciplines, such as philosophy, thereby—consciously or unconsciously—perpetuating the 'inside-outside divide'[304] sustained by paradigm-driven gatekeepers and protagonists of particular academic fields and subfields. Typically, they find themselves in the advantageous position of being able to draw upon the material and symbolic resources to which they have access due to their 'very privileged background'[305]. Given their prominent and privileged position within society, authoritative public intellectuals 'can oppose the establishment without ever substantially losing status or authority'[306]. Since they usually grapple with a wide range of issues, some of which are characterized by a profoundly inter- or transdisciplinary nature, they are inclined to address a large variety of topics and questions 'without being experts as such'[307]—mainly, because the scope of the subjects they cover is, in many cases, extraordinarily vast. In terms of their positioning within hierarchically structured fields and subfields, they have a tendency to '*speak from above—at, rather than with, their audience*'[308]. Thus, they appear to have a somewhat condescending attitude—not only towards ordinary members of society, but also towards fellow intellectuals. For the right or the wrong reasons, they are thought of as possessing 'a strong moral voice'[309], making judgements and recommendations about the normative parameters underlying defensible ideological, behavioural, and institutional patterns.

Authoritative public intellectuals tend to be particularly successful in societies in which intellectual contributions are significantly valued and, hence, have currency *beyond* the sphere of specialists in the humanities and social sciences. Another precondition for their triumph, however, is reflected in the existence of *socio-protectionist mechanisms* that guarantee that 'cultural and intellectual capital is concentrated within a small elite'[310], permitting its select members to 'thrive in a hierarchical educational context'[311]. Educational hierarchies manifest themselves in multiple oppositions: elite universities versus average universities, public institutions versus private institutions, high-status disciplines versus low-status disciplines—to mention only a few.[312] The competitive advantage that most authoritative public intellectuals have is that, unlike other intellectuals, they can exist '*independently of academic appointments because of independent resources*'[313], which they can mobilize not simply to get by but, crucially, to enhance their careers.

Traditionally, authoritative public intellectuals have been attributed sufficient amounts of symbolic power, enabling them to express their opinion on 'a wide range of social and political issues without being criticized for dilettantism'[314]—not only because their privileged backgrounds tend to equip them with plenty of self-confidence, embedded in a habitus whose *raison d'être* is based on entitlement, but also because, in many cases, they are assigned the role of the charismatic leader by other members of society. The intimate link between epistemic validity and social legitimacy is epitomized in the emergence of high-profile intellectuals, who enjoy sufficient symbolic authority to express their opinion on almost any subject and are granted significant levels of credibility even in relation to topics on which they possess no expert knowledge, let alone a formal degree or certified competency.

> *The early part of the twentieth century*, especially in parts of *Europe*, fits this ideal type remarkably well. It was *the era of the philosopher as a public intellectual*.[315]

Therefore, the question that poses itself is to what extent the sociohistorical conditions facilitating the rise of the authoritative public intellectual have changed in recent decades. Seeking to respond to this question, Baert draws attention to a number of key developments, which shall be considered in subsequent sections.

b. *Expert public intellectuals* are driven by the mission to generate 'professional knowledge'[316]. Their task consists in developing codified epistemic frameworks that can be understood, first and foremost, by specialists who are equipped with the conceptual, methodological, and—in some cases—empirical tools that are necessary to comprehend, and to contribute to, the quasi-private language games of experts. To be clear, expert public intellectuals are not necessarily disconnected from the tangible dimensions of social reality. In order to elucidate this point, Baert refers to three influential social and political thinkers.

   i. In the 1970s, *Michel Foucault*—while grappling with the multifaceted constitution of power relations in human societies—conceived of himself as a 'specific intellectual'[317], who was, by definition, committed to a 'focused and expert-driven engagement'[318] with reality.

   ii. In the 1990s, *Pierre Bourdieu*—while launching a political attack on neoliberalism—proposed to use the power of social science to shed light on both the causes and the consequences of marginalization, discrimination, and pauperization.

   iii. Throughout his career, especially over the past few decades, *Noam Chomsky*—while converting himself into 'a public figure as an expert on and critic of American foreign policy'[319]—crossed the bridge between linguistics and politics, taking radical and provocative positions, albeit for different reasons, in both disciplines.

   What these examples illustrate is that intellectuals can be world-renowned experts in a particular field and, at the same time, exhibit a genuine commitment to contributing to the progressive transformation of social reality. *Authoritative public intellectuals* found themselves in the privileged position of being able to 'exert influence outside their specialist subject entirely through demonstrated intellect and educational prowess'[320] as well as, in many cases, through a sense of entitlement and symbolic power. By contrast, *expert public intellectuals* rely, almost exclusively, on specialist 'intellect and acquired knowledge'[321] when seeking to mobilize their material and symbolic resources in the pursuit of a wider

normative project, aimed at having a progressive-transformative impact upon society.

c. *Dialogical public intellectuals* 'do not assume a superior stance towards their publics'[322], since, in principle, they stand on an equal footing with everyone else. This does not mean that they cannot possess a significant amount of (i) *authority on* or (ii) *expertise in* a particular domain of knowledge. This implies, however, that they place the emphasis on (iii) *dialogue with* different members of the wider public. Instead of 'dictating an ideological agenda or imposing a political direction'[323] on society, they seek to engage in non-dogmatic forms of reciprocal communication with citizens and non-citizens from all walks of life. Arguably, in the contemporary age, there has been a decisive move away from (i) *authoritative* and (ii) *expert* towards (iii) *dialogical* public intellectuals.

> Today, increasingly, *intellectuals engage with their publics in a more interactive fashion*, partly because of the technologies which make this *dialogical format* now possible and to a certain extent *blur the distinction between public intellectuals and their publics*; and partly because, with *higher educational levels*, the *publics are no longer willing to accept entrenched hierarchies* as they once did.[324]

This dialogical approach is exemplified in Michael Burawoy's conception of a 'public sociology'[325], which is founded on an unambiguous commitment to a 'critical engagement with the non-academic world'[326]. On this account, the challenge consists in establishing 'an *intellectual and social partnership* between the *sociological researchers* and the *communities* they serve, whereby both parties are willing to learn from each other and [to] collaborate, while striving for a *common political goal*'[327]. If this endeavour is taken seriously, then the relationship between intellectual and non-intellectual members of the public is conceived of not in terms of an insurmountable gulf between 'epistemic superiority' and 'epistemic inferiority' but, rather, in terms of a *mutually empowering project based on trust*, *reciprocity*, and *solidarity*—and, therefore, on openness towards the possibility of learning from one another by overcoming discrepancies of understanding derived from narrow-mindedness, complacency, and self-referentiality.

3. Paradigmatic Changes

a. Developments within and outside Philosophy

The *first* set of changes concerns major *developments both within and outside philosophy*. The most remarkable shift in the balance of disciplinary power, in this respect, is the fact that 'philosophy has lost to a certain extent its previous intellectual dominance'[328]. In other words, the assumption that philosophy constitutes 'the queen of knowledge' and, hence, a master discipline that stands above all other forms of inquiry has come under attack and is, arguably, no longer tenable.[329] In fact, it is due to significant developments not only *outside* philosophy—in particular, the spread and professionalization of both the natural sciences and the social sciences—but also *within* philosophy—notably, the influence of postmodern and neopragmatist approaches—that its hitherto hegemonic position has been severely undermined.[330] The increasing influence of the social sciences, however, appears to be the crucial factor challenging the erstwhile preponderant position of philosophy in the intellectual field in particular and in the wider domain of systematic knowledge production in general. Baert puts this eloquently as follows:

> The *social sciences* have emerged as a *significant force* and have *professionalized*, making it *more difficult for philosophers* or others without appropriate training and expertise in the social sciences to make *authoritative claims* about the *nature of the social and political world* without being challenged. *The massive expansion of the ranks of professional social scientists* means there are now lifelong specialists in the areas that public intellectuals used to comment on who are better placed to contest such *'generalist' interventions* as *uninformed and superficial*.[331]

One may add to this consideration that, reflecting upon the status of philosophy as a discipline, we are confronted with a curious paradox:

- On the one hand, philosophy represents a '*timeless*' discipline, to the extent that it makes intellectual contributions that claim to possess transcendental validity.
- On the other hand, philosophy constitutes a '*time-laden*' discipline, to the extent that large parts of its intellectual contributions possess, at best, a degree of spatiotemporally contingent legitimacy.

Insofar as all forms of knowledge production are context-laden, value-laden, meaning-laden, perspective-laden, interest-laden, and power-laden[332], the dream of epistemic transcendentality amounts to little more than a pretentious, but ultimately untenable, *ambition* of scholastic philosophy. In an age whose social, political, and environmental developments are increasingly shaped by the tangible impact of empirical research in the natural and social sciences, such a dream constitutes an illusory narrative of the past.

b. The Blurring of the Boundaries between Experts and Laypersons

The *second* set of changes concerns the *epistemic relationship between experts and laypersons*. Traditionally, it has been assumed that there is a profound *gap* between, on the one hand, the *specialized knowledge* produced by scholars, academics, and professional researchers and, on the other hand, the *common-sense knowledge* employed by ordinary people. Yet, in light of the rising 'high educational levels for larger sections of society, the erstwhile distinction between an intellectual elite and the rest no longer holds to quite the same extent'[333]. In postindustrial societies, in which—arguably—knowledge, information, and science play a greater role than ever before in human history, the disparity between 'the enlighteners' and 'the to-be-enlightened' is less and less pronounced.

> With *higher education* also comes a *growing scepticism towards epistemic and moral authority*, an *increasing recognition of the fallibility of knowledge and of the existence of alternative perspectives*. Speaking from above and *at* their audience, as authoritative public intellectuals do, is no longer as acceptable as it used to be.[334]

The rise of social and alternative media is experienced as an individually and collectively empowering phenomenon by those who do not shy away from challenging traditional sources and channels of cognitive, normative, and aesthetic authority. To insist on the fact that, in principle, every ordinary agent capable of speech and self-justification is equipped with purposive reason (*Verstand*), normative reason (*Vernunft*), and critical reason (*Urteilskraft*) means to advocate a universalist—that is, intersubjectivized—conception of epistemic faculties. While 'the dialogical and democratic potential of the new social media'[335] should not be overestimated, let alone idealized or fetishized, there is no doubt that the rise of 'glocalized' grassroots forms of communication has significantly

contributed to the '"democratization" of public intellectual interventions'[336], thereby challenging the legitimacy of traditional—and, to a large degree, institutionally consolidated—epistemic hierarchies.

c. The Waning Influence of 'Philosophical Systems'

The *third* set of changes concerns the fact that 'there has since been a *growing disquiet about "philosophical systems"* such as Marxism in whose name numerous authoritarian regimes have been established and legitimized'[337]. Arguably, the rise of postmodernism in the 1990s can be conceived of as an immediate expression of the crisis of Marxism, which—as even its fiercest critics have to admit—constitutes one of the most influential metanarratives of modernity.[338] In Baert's view, free-market ideologies have been 'equally *fanatical* about the desirability of its utopian vision and equally adamant that an inevitable march of history would sweep across the globe'[339]. Irrespective of what one makes of Francis Fukuyama's announcement of 'the end of history'[340], and regardless of how one assesses the failures and contributions, as well as the normative defensibility, of major political ideologies of the modern age, one does not have to be a postmodernist to concede that, although metanarratives have far from disappeared, they play a less foundational—and, at the same time, a more hybridized—role in most contemporary 'Western' societies than they used to in the past.[341] As a consequence, in 'the era of micronarratives'[342], public intellectuals are less likely to take monoideological positions than they were in 'the age of extremes'[343].

SECOND PART: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON BAERT'S ACCOUNT OF INTELLECTUALS

The above reflections should make clear that Baert has produced an impressively methodical, insightful, and enlightening account of the various conditions shaping both the constitution and the development of the intellectual field in the modern era. His proposal for 'explaining intellectuals'[344] is of unprecedented quality and of considerable originality, especially with the regard to his plea for a paradigm shift from a 'vocabulary of intentions' to a 'vocabulary of effects'[345]. It is equally important, however, to grapple with the limitations and shortcomings of Baert's analysis. It is the purpose of the following sections to attend to this critical task.

I. Intersectionality

One striking shortcoming of Baert's approach is that it does not include a systematic consideration of the ways in which intellectual life is substantially shaped by the *intersection* of central sociological determinants—such as *class, status, education, social networks, ethnicity*, *nationality*, 'race', language, gender, sexual *orientation*, *age*, and 'ability'. Not all but most influential intellectuals of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries fall into the following categories:

- *class:* middle or upper class

  (average or high amount of dominant economic capital)

  → classism

- *status:* privileged

  (high amount of dominant symbolic capital)

  → protectionism

- *education:* well-educated and well-trained

  (high amount of dominant educational capital)

  → elitism

- *social networks:* well-connected

  (high amount of dominant social capital)

  → nepotism / favouritism

- *ethnicity:* 'Western', predominantly European or North American

  (high amount of dominant ethnic capital)

  → ethnocentrism / Eurocentrism

- *nationality:* British, Canadian, US-American, German, French, Spanish, or Italian

  (high amount of dominant national capital)

  → methodological nationalism / national chauvinism

- *'race':* white

(high amount of dominant 'racial' capital)

→ cultural / institutional racism

– *language:* Anglophone, Germanophone, Francophone, Hispanophone, or Italianophone (or a combination of these)

(high amount of dominant linguistic capital)

→ linguistic chauvinism

– *gender:* male / malestream

(high amount of dominant gender capital)

→ cultural / institutional sexism

– *sexual orientation:* heterosexual

(high amount of dominant sexual capital)

→ heteronormativism

– *age:* middle-aged or old-aged

(high amount of dominant generational capital)

→ ageism

– *ability:* predominantly 'able' / 'abled'

(high amount of dominant performative capital)

→ ableism

Given the far-reaching significance of the aforementioned sociological variables, it is crucial not only to examine the role of each of these dimensions in shaping the intellectual field, but also to shed light on the extent to which their *intersectional* constitution contributes to the development—that is, success or failure—of intellectual careers.

II. (In-) Commensurability

Throughout his book, Baert seeks to argue for the uniqueness of the case of Sartre—notably, in terms of his legacy and his massive impact within and beyond the intellectual field. Yet, to claim that

'[t]he amount of sustained media attention and his political influence in France and abroad has been *unrivalled*'[346] is questionable. The names of prominent twentieth-century intellectuals spring to mind: Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), Michel Foucault (1926–1984), Noam Chomsky (1928–), Jürgen Habermas (1929–), Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002), Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), Ulrich Beck (1944–2015), Nancy Fraser (1947–), Slavoj Žižek (1949–), and Judith Butler (1956–)—to mention only a few. Similar to Sartre, they can be regarded as high-ranking and world-renowned public intellectuals whose works have had, and continue to have, a considerable impact on contemporary social and political debates, especially in 'Western' societies.

III. Interpenetrability

To conceive of 'the field' as 'any system of social relations that has its own logic'[347] means to miss out on its *power-laden* dimensions. From a Bourdieusian perspective, 'the field' constitutes a relationally structured realm in which agents—who occupy objectively externalized positions and acquire subjectively internalized dispositions—are immersed in a constant *struggle* for access to material and symbolic resources. The idiosyncratic logic underlying the reproduction of a field is vital to its capacity to distinguish itself from other interactional microcosms within the societal macrocosm. Yet, the power-ladenness of a field—that is, the extent to which the interactions taking place within it are *asymmetrically* structured and, thus, shaped by *unequal* access to resources for action—is central to the multifaceted ways in which social struggles continue to play a pivotal role in the development of human—including intellectual—affairs.[348]

Baert gives a highly differentiated account of the complex historical relations hip between the 'literary field' and the 'academic field'. More specifically, he argues that, in nineteenth-century France, the cultural arena was divided between these two fields.[349] One problem with this contention is that it portrays *both the literary field and the academic field* as the *two principal sub-fields of the cultural field*. Natural scientists—but also numerous social scientists, as well as scholars working in the humanities, including philosophers—will find it difficult to subscribe to the assertion that they are conducting research in the cultural field. While Baert is right to state that the literary field and the academic field can be interpreted as 'separate fields, each with its own logic'[350], his twin claims

that '[i]t is only in the course of the twentieth century that the two fields started to intersect, and [that] few people managed to combine the requirements to excel in both fields'[351], are problematic.

In fact, the literary field and the academic field *began to intersect in the early modern period*—if not, long before then. There are manifold examples of intellectuals who were—albeit, admittedly, to varying degrees—well equipped, and creatively immersed, in both fields:

> René Descartes (1596–1650), Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716), François-Marie Voltaire (1694–1778), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1978), Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), Georg W. F. Hegel (1770–1831), Karl Marx (1818–1883), and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900).

Arguably, this also applies to the aforementioned twentieth-century intellectuals:

> Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), Michel Foucault (1926–1984), Noam Chomsky (1928–), Jürgen Habermas (1929–), Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002), Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), Ulrich Beck (1944–2015), Nancy Fraser (1947–), Slavoj Žižek (1949–), and Judith Butler (1956–).

In various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences (above all, in the 'discursive' ones, such as literature, philosophy, historiography, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, and political science), influential scholars need to demonstrate that they are able to draw upon both the 'literary field' and the 'academic field', by combining and cross-fertilizing the conceptual and methodological tools available in each of them.

A related conceptual problem arises from the fact that in some sections Baert insists upon Sartre's ability to master the rules of both the 'literary field' and the '*academic* field'[352], whereas in other sections he draws attention to Sartre's skilfulness in thriving in both the 'literary field' and the '*philosophical* field'[353]. This conceptual inconsistency, however, is not insignificant, since the terms '*academic* field' and '*philosophical* field'—insofar as they refer to two different states of affairs—should

not be used interchangeably. Not every academic is a philosopher, and not every philosopher is an academic.

This conceptual inconsistency put to one side, rather than affirming that 'Sartre's popularity can be explained mainly by his *unprecedented ability to stand out in those two genres*, using them as complementary channels for his ideas, as he managed to compete successfully in both the literary and [the] philosophical fields'[354], we need to recognize that there are numerous examples of intellectuals who have built their careers by relying on their capacity to shine in both of these areas, as well as in both academic and non-academic spheres of life.

IV. Diversity

Overall, one gets the impression that, in Baert's analytical framework, there is little—if any—place for *intellectuals from 'non-traditional'—notably, humble or socially deprived—backgrounds*. Indeed, on his account, it appears almost impossible that people with limited (or at least initially limited) material and symbolic resources, especially those from marginalized sectors of society, stand any realistic chance of converting themselves into intellectuals, let alone into prominent public intellectuals.

For instance, when examining the 'sharp division between novelists and professors'[355], Baert contends that '[t]he former were often self-funded and *invariably* came from *privileged* backgrounds, whereas the latter went through the *meritocratic* channels of the École normale'[356]. The Darwinist sense of 'meritocracy' underlying the French education system is, of course, highly problematic to the degree that, in practice, it perpetuates the logic of social privilege and entitlement, even though its official rhetoric—which centres around notions of *liberté*, *égalité*, and *fraternité*, based on a canonical belief in the universal rights of all members of humanity—suggests otherwise.[357] Irrespective of how one assesses the relative merits and failures of the French educational system (and, for that matter, of other educational systems), the sociologically challenging question that poses itself in the context of this inquiry concerns the extent to which—against all odds—some individuals from non-privileged backgrounds are able to gain access to sufficient volume of capital (such as cultural, symbolic, and social capital) permitting them to convert themselves into serious—and, in exceptional cases, into influential public—intellectuals. The fine-grained complexity of Baert's account indicates that he does not deny this possibility.[358] Yet, there is *little in the*

way of conceptual and empirical room for the rise of successful intellectuals from non-traditional—that is, non-privileged—backgrounds in Baert's theoretical framework.

More specifically, the issue that needs to be explored, in this respect, concerns the question of the degree to which individuals from relatively or completely disempowered social groups can convert themselves into low- or high-profile intellectuals. What needs to be studied, then, is the extent to which it *is* possible for agents who—at least initially—score low on crucial forms of capital (such as economic, symbolic, educational, social, ethnic, national, 'racial', linguistic, gender-specific, sexual, generational, and performative capital) to transform themselves into low- or high-profile intellectuals. As critical sociologists, we need to face up to the fact that intellectuals who can be described in terms of one (or a combination) of the following characteristics are in the minority:

- 'member of the working class';
- 'member of a lower-status group';
- 'receiver of basic formal education, acquired in a low-income institution';
- 'citizen without access to privileged social networks';
- 'member of a non-hegemonic ethnic group';
- 'citizen—or former citizen—of a non-"Western" and developing country';
- 'non-white';
- 'speaking and writing in a non-European language';
- 'female';
- 'LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender)';
- 'young adult';
- 'mentally and/or physically disabled'.

There is no point in taking this reflection too far. It poses a sociologically relevant problem, however, in the sense that it obliges us to scrutinize the role that social backgrounds play in the lives and careers of intellectuals.

V. (Socio-) Historicity

Baert posits that one of the principal problems with Boschetti's approach is that it tends 'to ignore the *wider socio-political context*'[359] in which intellectuals either manage or fail to thrive. This omission, he maintains,

'makes it difficult for her to explain why the rise of Sartre and existentialism occurred during this particular period—not before, not after'[360]. Hence, rather than treating 'the intellectual sphere as a relatively autonomous unity'[361], it is vital to examine the ways in which it is shaped by multiple 'socio-political factors *outside*'[362] itself. It would be a methodological mistake, then, to follow an 'individualistic logic'[363], which prevents the critical researcher from accounting for the 'broader *societal developments* that impinged on the *cultural sphere*'[364] in general and on the *intellectual sphere* in particular.

Baert may be right to accuse Boschetti of falling short of paying adequate attention to the idiosyncratic socio-historical conditions in postwar France, including their far-reaching implications for the development of the intellectual field in the same country. He appears to overlook, however, that one of the main objectives of *Bourdieusian studies of intellectuals* is to shed light on the *socio-historical conditions of production* under which they operate.[365] In fact, Bourdieusian approaches tend to be suspicious of scholastic frameworks of analysis[366], rejecting them for failing to conceive of social actions and social structures in terms of field-specific dynamics, let alone in terms of wider historical developments and trends. Baert announces that his own approach aims to 'explain the relative solidity of positioning *more sociologically*'[367]. It gets hardly any more *sociological*, however, than in Bourdieu's writings and the accounts offered by those who have followed in his footsteps (such as Anna Boschetti, Neil Gross, and Randall Collins).[368]

VI. Narrativity

Baert provides a comprehensive and systematic overview of *'four of the most recurrent narratives'*[369] *explaining the rise of Sartre*. While the points he makes in this section are remarkably compelling, it is not evident *which* authors actually advocate these four perspectives. In addition to failing to spell this out, *Baert does not provide any bibliographical references* that would permit the reader to locate the textual sources in which these positions are being methodically defended. Baert states that 'there are plenty of secondary sources on Sartre that drop tentative hypotheses as to his success without elaborating or properly defending them'[370]. What remains unclear, however, is not only which particular secondary sources make insufficiently substantiated claims concerning Sartre's influence, but also how exactly they fall into the 'four of the most recurrent

narratives'[371] identified by Baert. Given the centrality of these four interpretations of Sartre for the construction of Baert's own theoretical framework, this shortcoming is not insignificant. Even those who are sympathetic to Baert's approach may legitimately object that, in this section, he is dealing with *four nameless straw men*.

VII. Autonomy

Baert asserts that '[t]he *self-regulatory principle of the intra-intellectual world* is epitomised by the *Humboldtian notion of the university* according to which the academic world is largely managed by the academic producers themselves'[372]. Yet, this reflects a misrepresentation of the Humboldtian conception of the university. Instead of implicitly portraying Humboldt as a Luhmannian systems theorist[373], we need to acknowledge that, on his account, *universities*—far from constituting autopoietic systems—fulfil a wider *societal function*, which consists in forming cognitively competent, morally conscientious, and aesthetically appreciative individuals, who are capable of contributing to the construction of 'the good society' on the basis of their purposive, normative, and evaluative resources, acquired within a humanistic education system. Of course, for Humboldt, the ideal of academic autonomy is crucial to an educational apparatus that is not entirely colonized by the administrative logic of the state and the commodifying logic of the market. Yet, in Humboldt's eyes, educational institutions—at all levels—should be conceived of as interconnected organs of the collective body called 'society'. Put differently, from a Humboldtian perspective, there is no *Bildung des Individuums* (education of the individual) without the *Bildung der Gesellschaft* (education of society), and vice versa.[374]

VIII. Heterogeneity

On the face of it, Baert is right to suggest that '*ideas are more likely to spread from the intra- to the public intellectual domain if they are "packaged" in terms of a coherent intellectual doctrine and "labelled"* '[375]. Thus, in principle, anything that helps to present a set of ideas 'in a unified fashion and as part of a coherent doctrine'[376] will contribute to promoting them in terms of an overarching intellectual programme. We must not lose sight of the fact, however, that some currents of thought have been extraordinarily successful although—or, perhaps, because—they are

amorphous and *contradictory* as well as, to a considerable extent, *internally fragmented*.

- One may examine the *'major' political ideologies* of modernity: anarchism, communism/socialism, liberalism, conservatism, and fascism. Arguably, all of them have been significantly shaped by intellectual thought, even if we admit that some of their variants—especially in the case of right-wing ideologies—tend to be anti-intellectualist. Moreover, one may scrutinize the *'sub-major' political ideologies* of modernity: for instance, nationalism, feminism, and environmentalism. Again, all of them have been profoundly influenced by intellectual thought. All of these 'major' and 'sub-major' ideologies, however, are *internally fragmented*.[377]
- In order to comprehend the tangible impact of intellectual ideas upon the development of modern societies, one may distinguish five main types of *metanarrative*: (1) political metanarratives, (2) philosophical metanarratives, (3) religious metanarratives, (4) economic metanarratives, and (5) cultural metanarratives. All of these types of metanarrative are *internally fragmented*.[378]
- One may find several examples in the humanities and social sciences that highlight their fragmented nature. An obvious paradigm illustrating this point is *'postmodernism'*, a label with which numerous researchers—notably philosophers, social methodologists, sociologists, historians, and political scientists—of the late twentieth century are associated, in many cases against their will and as 'reluctant participants'.[379] One may consider other intellectual currents within the humanities and social sciences: structuralism and poststructuralism, idealism and materialism, constructivism and realism, interpretivism and positivism—to mention only a few. These traditions of thought are *internally fragmented*, creating manifold 'sub-schools' and 'sub-canons'.[380]

What Baert's study does not explore are the implications of the following—counterintuitive—insight: *paradoxically, the absence of unambiguous forms of packaging and branding of intellectual ideas may contribute to their rise and success, rather than to their demise or failure*. Granted, in the vast majority of cases, the art of packaging and branding determines the

survival or extinction of intellectual ideas. Some intellectual ideas are even more fascinating and often even more influential, however, when it is difficult to pigeonhole them.

IX. Imaginary

For Baert, in order for a doctrine 'to enter the public intellectual domain'[381], it needs 'to *resonate* with recent socio-political experiences'[382]. This assumption is problematic insofar as the term 'resonate' can mean different things to different agents in different contexts. Furthermore, we may turn Baert's contention upside down: in some cases, the success of a paradigm—in terms of its capacity to occupy an influential discursive place in the public intellectual domain—may depend on its capacity *not* to resonate with recent socio-political experiences. For instance, postmodernism has not simply *echoed* but also *distorted* major socio-political experiences made by individual and collective agents in the late twentieth century, by portraying the confluence of consumer capitalism and neoliberalism—owing to the massive post-1989 legitimacy crisis of Marxism—as 'the only game in town'.[383]

As Baert himself concedes, the important aspects of a narrative are to be found not simply in what is being said, but, crucially, in what is *not* being said.[384] Thus, a critical reading of intellectual paradigms needs to expose their misconceptions, misperceptions, misrepresentations, misconstructions, and misinterpretations as much as the numerous points in which they get it right. It is often because of their *distortive functions*, rather than because of their capacity to provide objective accounts of reality, that intellectual paradigms can become prominent, especially when taking their audience and readership further away from, rather than closer to, what genuinely matters in terms of their day-to-day immersion in reality. The *distortive* functions of intellectual paradigms can be just as vital to their capacity to capture their followers' imagination as their *purposive*, *normative*, and *evaluative* potential. In brief, intellectual paradigms, and those inventing or propagating them, must be, at least partly, distortive in order to be successful, praising their own achievements and playing down those of other—above all, rival—currents of thought.

X. Intellectuality

Baert formulates five hypotheses on the conditions under which 'ideas spread more rapidly'[385]. One fundamental problem with these hypotheses, however, derives from the fact that Baert fails to *specify* what *kind* of ideas he has in mind. Although it should be clear from the textual context in which these hypotheses are articulated that he is referring to *intellectual ideas*, his five central statements are, in the current wording, ambiguous. To be precise, the formulations 'ideas spread more rapidly if '[386] (1st and 2nd hypothesis), 'ideas spread more effectively if '[387] (3rd hypothesis), 'ideas are more likely to spread if '[388] (4th hypothesis), and 'ideas will disseminate more effectively if '[389] (5th hypothesis) should state explicitly that they are intended to claim validity with respect to '*intellectual* ideas'. The point is not to be pedantic about the exact phrasing of these hypotheses; rather, the point is to recognize that, without this conceptual specification, the five hypotheses formulated by Baert are untenable, since they apply *mainly*—if not, *exclusively*—to intellectual ideas, that is, they do *not* apply to other types of ideas (such as ideas based on common sense, on dogmas and traditions of everyday life, on religious belief systems, and so forth). Put differently, Baert's five hypotheses, far from being applicable to *any* kind of ideas, can be empirically verified in relation to *intellectual* ideas only. Given the significance of this terminological imprecision, the difference between 'intellectual ideas' and 'non-intellectual ideas' needs to be spelled out.

XI. Ideology

Baert is right to suggest that, typically, *l'intellectuel* is 'situated on the *left* of the political spectrum'[390] and that there is a legitimate tendency to regard intellectuals as 'anti-conformists who distrust *le pouvoir*'[391]. Even if we share this view, however, we need to acknowledge the fact that there are numerous *right-wing intellectuals* in the public sphere in general and in the academic field in particular. Unsurprisingly, they come in different forms and emerge in different realms. In principle, they can be found in *all* academic disciplines, although in some disciplines (such as sociology, anthropology, and social work) they tend to be more marginalized than in others (such as political science, business studies, and management studies).

The fact that there is hardly any place for right-wing intellectuals in Baert's study makes the explanatory scope of his account more limited than it otherwise could have been. The analytical challenges arising from this issue can be summarized as follows:

1. How do we explain the striking *imbalance* between, on the one hand, the *abundance of left-wing—or, at least, left-leaning—intellectuals* (broadly conceived of as 'progressive' or, in their radical variants, as 'revolutionary') and, on the other hand, the *scarcity of right-wing—or, at least, right-leaning—intellectuals* (broadly conceived of as 'conservative' or, in their radical variants, as 'reactionary')?

2. Following on from the previous question, is there an inherent tendency in the *intellectual field* both to *attract* and to *produce* left-wing or left-leaning individuals? If so, is this the case because most intellectuals aim (a) to reflect *critically* on the constitution of the social world, (b) to reject *categorically* any arbitrary systems of domination, and (c) to contribute *universally* to the betterment of the human condition?

3. How do we explain, on a case-by-case basis, that some *academic disciplines* are more likely, and others less likely, to attract—or to produce—either *left-wing / left-leaning* or *right-wing / right-leaning* intellectuals? In other words, what is it about the 'epistemic spirit' that appears to make them prone to drawing in thinkers with particular sets of ideological credentials? More specifically, it is possible to make—seriously tenable—universal claims about tendencies of ideological preponderance in relation to particular academic disciplines? Or, are ideological trends within a discipline, in the long run, volatile and unpredictable?

4. How do we explain, on a case-by-case basis, that some *political ideologies* are more likely, and others less likely, to attract—and, indeed, to be theoretically and practically developed by—intellectuals? What is it about the 'normative spirit' that appears to make them prone to being founded on a more or less complex intellectual architecture? More specifically, it is possible to make tenable *universal* claims about tendencies of intellectual preponderance in relation to *particular* ideologies?

   - Typically, *left-wing major political ideologies* (such as anarchism and communism/socialism) tend to be considered '*intellectual*'

or even '*intellectualist*', whereas *right-wing major political ideologies* (such as conservatism and fascism) tend to be regarded as '*anti-intellectual*' or even '*anti-intellectualist*'. *Centre-ground major political ideologies* (such as liberalism) tend to be conceived of as *'intellectually inspired' without being 'intellectualist'*.

- The picture gets more complex if one includes *'sub-major' political ideologies* (such as nationalism, feminism, and environmentalism). Arguably, all of them possess a strong *intellectual* component, while also comprising a pronounced *anti-intellectual* outlook insofar as they express scepticism towards overly theoreticist (that is, abstract and disconnected) ways of relating to, and making sense of, social life.

  The main questions that we face in light of these complexities can be synthesized as follows: Are these stereotypical ways of conceptualizing the *link between political ideologies and intellectual thought*, to a significant extent, justified? If so, how can these differences be explained?

5. Where do we draw the *line between 'intellectual' and 'non-intellectual'* thoughts, ideas, and principles? The answer to this query is crucial, as it will determine how we respond to the preceding questions. Only insofar as we are explicit about the *qualitative specificity* of *intellectual modes of relating, and attributing meaning, to the world* will we be in a position to make insightful assertions about the *role of intellectuals* with respect to the aforementioned tensions: (a) *'left' versus 'right'*, (b) *'emancipation' versus 'domination'*, (c) *'academic commitment' versus 'political commitment'*, (d) *'intellectual ideologies' versus 'non-intellectual ideologies*', and—more generally—(e) *'intellectual' versus 'non-intellectual'*.[392]

XII. Theory

Baert posits that 'studies of intellectuals are often insufficiently theorized'[393] and that, more specifically, '[o]ne tends to associate the *lack of an explicit theoretical underpinning* more with *intellectual history* than with *sociology of intellectuals*'[394]. The reason for this, he contends, is that, unlike the latter, 'the former is supposed to be more preoccupied with *deciphering the context and depicting the intellectual moves within it* than with broader theoretical considerations as such'[395]. As a closer look at these two research traditions reveals, however, numerous inquiries within

the area of intellectual history, although some of them are indeed rather descriptive, tend to examine the genealogy of ideas in a conceptually sophisticated and theoretically informed fashion.[396] In fact, as Baert concedes, 'even more *sociologically inclined authors* do not always elaborate on their theoretical stance'[397].

What is more significant, however, is that sociological accounts of intellectuals—while they may draw upon theoretical frameworks to explain or to interpret developments in the intellectual field—in many cases fail to engage with the *substance* of the contributions made by the figures whose lives they study. For example, in relation to a different issue, Baert mentions Bourdieu's analysis of Heidegger.[398] The irony of Bourdieu's account of Heidegger may be described as follows: although it provides useful field-theoretic tools to shed light on Heidegger's position within the academic field in mid-twentieth century Germany, Bourdieu's analysis lacks agenuine engagement with the conceptual depth, let alone with the major philosophical contributions, of his oeuvre. In short, *both* in intellectual history *and* in the sociology of intellectuals one finds manifold investigations that—since they suffer from an 'empiricist' or a 'descriptivist' bias—are not sufficiently informed, let alone guided, by theoretical considerations concerning *either* the wider socio-historical circumstances in which ideas develop *or* the substance of the ideas themselves (or a combination of these two deficits of critical analysis).

XIII. Fallacy

Baert identifies 'five recurring problems'[399] that, in his view, undermine the quality of existing studies of intellectuals: the *empiricist bias*, the *motivational bias*, the *structural fallacy*, the *authenticity bias*, and the *stability bias*.[400] Two issues immediately spring to mind, however, when reflecting on the validity of Baert's conceptualization of these limitations. First, it is not clear why Baert characterizes four out of five issues as forms of '*bias*'[401] and only one of them as a '*fallacy*'[402]. The point is not to make a case for the rigid view that an argument can be coherent only to the extent that it is terminologically consistent—that is, in this case, semantically homological. Rather, the point is to acknowledge not only that the terms 'bias' and 'fallacy' describe two very different states of affairs, but also that the latter has much more profound implications for the validity of a particular explanatory account than

the former. If an argument or approach is permeated by a specific type of 'bias', its validity is not completely undermined. If, by contrast, an argument or approach suffers from a 'fallacy', its validity can hardly be sustained. The question that poses itself in this regard is why we should assume that Baert's third issue—the 'structural' one—deserves to be described as a fallacy, whereas the other four issues do not. The reader is left in the dark as to why this is the case. It seems to me that, in relation to the aforementioned 'five recurring problems'[403], Baert's terminological choice merits a few words of explanation.

Second, it is far from evident why Baert characterizes only one out of five issues as a form of '*ism*' ('empiricist')[404]—that is, with a suffix denoting a *doctrine*—, whereas the other issues are described with standard adjectives ('motivational' and 'structural')[405] and standard nouns ('authenticity' and 'stability')[406]. Given that, arguably, every form of bias contains a motivational component (especially in the development of an explanatory approach), and given that every fallacy comprises various structural dimensions (particularly within a sociological account concerned with the interplay between different social forces), it would have been more appropriate to characterize these sources of bias as 'motivational*ist*' and 'structural*ist*', respectively. The reader is not given the luxury of clarification concerning this conceptual differentiation. Once again, it would have been useful if this terminological incongruity had been accompanied by a brief elucidation.

XIV. Sociality

When scrutinizing what he calls the 'structural fallacy'[407], Baert states that this form of *misjudgement* consists in attempting 'to explain individual decisions by sociological determinants'[408]. Drawing upon Durkheim's *Rules of Sociological Method*[409], he goes on to affirm that, according to the conceptual framework proposed in this ground-breaking study, '*social facts* ought to be explained and predicted by other *social facts*'[410] and that, crucially, such a '*sociological explanation* did not extend to *individual facts*'[411]. This contention is problematic for at least two reasons.

1. Baert does not provide definitions of the concepts 'social facts' and 'individual facts', which would have been useful to understand the exact differences between these two states of affairs.

2. Baert seems to overlook one of the main objectives underlying Durkheim's analysis, which consists in demonstrating that *seemingly* '*individual* facts' (such as suicide) and *seemingly* '*individual* acts' (such as committing suicide) *actually* constitute '*social* facts' and '*social* acts' to the extent that they are profoundly shaped by *social* forces.

The following remark, which he makes in this context, is equally misleading: 'while he [Durkheim] thought that levels of *societal* integration and regulations explain and predict suicide patterns, he realized that they do not account effectively for an *individual* suicide'[412]. As Durkheimian scholars may object, the opposite is the case. The principal purpose of Durkheim's four-dimensional typologization of suicide—(1) 'egoistic suicide', (2) 'altruistic suicide', (3) 'anomic suicide', and (4) 'fatalistic suicide'—is to illustrate the extent to which human acts that, at first glance, *appear* to have a merely *individual* motivational and behavioural structure are, as a thorough sociological examination reveals, profoundly shaped by *social* (notably, cultural, political, economic, and historical) forces.[413]

Hence, when criticizing prominent sociological accounts—as the ones developed by Perry Anderson and Neil Gross[414]—for 'conflating sociological and individual explanations'[415], Baert is right to be wary of 'sociologistic' attempts to explain almost *everything*—including an intellectual's preference for a particular doctrine—in *merely* sociological terms. Yet, to the extent that, as Durkheimians convincingly insist, *all* aspects of human existence—including those that may appear to be 'subjectively', or even 'biologically', determined—*are* influenced by *social* forces, it is a methodological mistake to create a conceptual opposition between 'individual facts' and 'social facts'. The most sensible way forward, then, is to make a case for a *multifactorial* form of analysis, which—while permitting the researcher to prioritize some causal factors over others in a context-sensitive fashion—avoids falling into the trap of providing simplistic explanations that reduce the complexity of the interplay between social actions and social structures to one overriding dimension.

XV. Authenticity

In the context of examining what he characterizes as the 'authenticity bias'[416], Baert insists that '*intellectuals* operate within *competitive arenas*, *struggling over symbolic and institutional recognition* and *scarce*

financial resources'[417]. It appears that, in this respect, intellectuals do not have much of a choice: *either* they are 'in' by *accepting* 'the rules of the game', *or* they are 'out' by *rejecting* 'the rules of the game' (in which case, for them, there is no game—that is, no game within the intellectual field). For Baert, intellectual interventions constitute 'an integral part of this power struggle'[418], implying that it would be an interpretive mistake to regard their creative contributions as 'an expression of some deeper self'[419]. It follows that, within the analytical parameters set by Baert's positionist framework, the notion that it is 'essential to establish a critical distance *vis-à-vis* the way in which most intellectuals portray themselves to their audience'[420] can be considered a categorical methodological imperative.

This proposition reflects not only a *valid* point in relation to the ambition to develop a sociologically reflexive programme for the study of intellectuals but also an *empowering* component of a critical posture that prevents researchers from making the epistemological mistake of taking the statements made by their objects of examination at face value. What this methodological strategy tends to underestimate, however, is the extent to which intellectuals are in a position to *bypass* the struggles to which they are exposed, and in which they participate, in their field of competition. To put it bluntly, some intellectuals are more, and some intellectuals are less, affected by these struggles than others. To be sure, this is not a Mannheim-inspired plea for a 'universe of free-floating intellectuals'.[421] Rather, this is to recognize that intellectuals can challenge and, in some cases, subvert the rigid and constraining boundaries of field-specific realities. Since they are usually equipped with powerful conceptual and methodological tools, by means of which they can question the apparent givenness of reality, intellectuals possess both the *theoretical* capacity to create their own critical imaginaries and the *practical* capacity to construct their own experiential spheres of objectivity, normativity, and subjectivity.

In short, a major sociological challenge consists in shedding light on the following paradox:

- On the one hand, intellectuals, in order to *position themselves* in relation to other intellectuals in particular and to other members of society in general, are obliged to *obey*, if not to *promote*, 'the rules of the game' by entering into a field-specific struggle over access to material and symbolic resources.

– On the other hand, intellectuals, in order to *distinguish themselves* from other intellectuals in particular and from other members of society in general, are able to *bypass*, if not to *undermine*, 'the rules of the game' by generating both theoretical and practical spheres of retreat, allowing them to escape, at least to some degree, the constraining logic of field-specific mechanisms of material and symbolic profit-driven reproduction, ranking, and competition.

Baert's analysis provides astute reflections on the former, while offering little in the way of insightful contemplations on the latter.

XVI. (In-) Determinacy

Undoubtedly, it is possible to gather substantial textual evidence to support the view that it is appropriate to describe *Bourdieu as a 'determinist'*.[422] When doing so, however, one needs to recognize that a close reading of Bourdieu's writings demonstrates that his conception of *human action* in particular and his conception of *society* in general are far more *complex* than such a reductive interpretation may suggest.[423] In fact, in addition to the first contention that *Bourdieu was a determinist* and to the second contention that *Bourdieu was not a determinist*, one is confronted with the third contention that *Bourdieu was not sufficiently determinist*, to which, of course, one may wish to oppose the fourth contention that *Bourdieu was not sufficiently anti-determinist*.[424]

Irrespective of which of these perspectives one may wish to endorse, Baert's interpretation of Bourdieusian analysis is weakened by the fact that, without further reflection, the former tends to associate the latter with *sociological determinism*. Surely, Baert is right to reject 'the assumption that early formation makes for *fixity* of somebody's subsequent intellectual trajectory'[425]. The problem with this statement, however, is that—although some Bourdieu-inspired researchers, such as Gross, may support this arguably reductive view—it is untenable to accuse Bourdieu himself of this kind of crude sociological determinism. In Gross's *defence*, one may point out that hardly anyone would seriously claim that an individual's early formation makes for 'fixity' of his or her subsequent trajectory (intellectually or otherwise defined).

Baert appears to make a case for a more balanced account when stating that 'Bourdieu and Gross are right in so far as intellectuals' orientations remain *relatively* stable'[426], which is illustrated in the

fact that most of them 'do not change their stance constantly'[427]. Yet, his hope that positioning theory can 'provide a more convincing explanation'[428] is based on shaky foundations to the extent that it is motivated by the misleading assumption that rival approaches—notably, Bourdieu's 'theory of practice'[429] and Gross's application of this framework to the study of intellectuals—are thoroughly and unambiguously *deterministic*.

To be clear, there is no point in denying that Bourdieusian forms of social analysis are pervaded by deterministic tendencies.[430] It would be misleading not to acknowledge, however, that Bourdieu as well as many of his followers rightly insist on the *generative* potential permeating the objective, normative, and subjective dimensions of human existence.[431] Interestingly, Bourdieu himself was a striking example of this *generative* potential, since his own habitus changed dramatically throughout his life, converting him into a self-reflexive protagonist of *upward social mobility*.[432] One may wish to focus on the dispositions one acquires through one's *habitus*, on the positions one occupies in different social *fields*, or on the material and symbolic resources one accumulates by means of different forms of *capital*. Irrespective of one's primary analytical concern, to the extent that all of these sociological variables are subject to high degrees of malleability, adaptability, and convertibility, they reflect the *generative potential* that is built into social actions in particular and human existence in general. Baert's account suffers from a lack of attention to the role of this generative potential in shaping the lives of, and relations between, intellectuals.

XVII. Performativity

Baert draws an interesting *analogy between 'language' and 'intellectual interventions'*.[433] To be exact, it appears that *the 'performative turn'* can be examined in comparative terms on two levels:

- On the one hand, it has been undertaken in *linguistics* by virtue of pragmatist approaches based on speech-act theory, which influenced the effort to reformulate critical theory in communication-theoretic terms (Jürgen Habermas)[434] as well as the attempt to redefine the role of the philosopher in anti-foundationalist terms (Richard Rorty)[435].

– On the other hand, it may be pursued in the *sociology of intellectuals*, as proposed by Baert, in order to shed light on the ways in which thinkers, by virtue of their scholarly interventions, not only *reflect* but also *act* upon the world by which they are surrounded, in which they are embedded, and to which they are connected.

The pragmatist rationale behind this analogy, then, can be described as follows: just as 'words, rather than representing or mirroring the external world, *accomplish* things'[436], so do intellectual interventions. Far from simply describing, analysing, interpreting, explaining, or assessing particular aspects of social reality, intellectual interventions *do* things—that is, they *act* upon, and in relation to, the world.

This analogy, however, is problematic for the following reason: while we may regard both *language* and *intellectual interventions* as part of the symbolically constructed *superstructure* of society, the former constitutes an *integral* and *foundational* element of everyday life, whereas the latter can be seen as a *potentially significant*, yet *ultimately dispensable*, aspect of advanced civilizations. To use a Wittgensteinian metaphor, both *language games* and *intellectual games* are embedded in field-specific life forms. Yet, whereas the former play a pivotal role, the latter serve a rather peripheral function, in the construction of symbolically mediated modes of existence—even in societies in which intellectual contributions enjoy high degrees of appreciation and recognition.

In order to illustrate the centrality of this point, it may be useful to consider the distinction between 'foundational field', 'contingent field', and 'ephemeral field':

> (i) A *foundational* field constitutes a civilizational ensemble of relationally structured conditions the existence of which is *necessary* for the emergence of social order. (ii) A *contingent* field represents a societal ensemble of relationally structured conditions the existence of which is *possible* within the emergence of social order. (iii) An *ephemeral* field stands for an interactional ensemble of relationally structured conditions the existence of which is largely *irrelevant* to the emergence of social order.[437]

The analogy between *linguistic forms* and *intellectual forms* is valid only to the extent that we recognize the following: the former constitute a

foundational field, whereas the latter constitute a *contingent field*. In brief, human society is inconceivable without language, while it is conceivable without intellectuals.

XVIII. Positionality

It is surprising, and equally disappointing, that, despite the central place that this notion occupies within his analysis, Baert provides a remarkably vague, and somewhat dissatisfying, definition of the concept of 'positioning'[438], which reads as follows:

> The key notion that captures this activity is '*positioning*'. This indicates the process by which certain *features* are *attributed to an individual or a group or some other entity*.[439]

This statement is *problematic* for a number of reasons:

1. Since it defines 'positioning' in the *passive voice* ('the process by which certain features *are* attributed to an individual or a group or some other entity'), 'positioning' is erroneously portrayed as a process that is exclusively determined by exogenous agents, that is, as a process of which the positioning subject itself is *not in charge*.
2. Since, in addition to defining 'positioning' in the passive voice, it does not specify who the *hidden subject of the action* is ('the process by which certain features are *attributed [by whom?]* to an individual or a group or some other entity'), 'positioning' is mistakenly described as a process in which it is not clear *who* the *exogenous agents* are that are, presumably, in charge of this dynamic.
3. The aforementioned definition fails to capture the fact that 'positioning' constitutes a multifaceted process based on (a) *relationality*, (b) *reciprocity*, (c) *reconstructability*, (d) *renormalizability*, and (e) *recognizability*.[440]
    a. 'Positioning' is possible only in terms of *relations* established between positioned and positioning subjects, that is, as a process that is created by socially interconnected agents. A positioning subject exists *with*—that is, by relating to—other positioning subjects.
    b. 'Positioning' is possible only in terms of a minimal degree of *reciprocity* established between positioned and positioning subjects,

that is, as a process that depends on the interlocking of actions and reactions. A positioning subject exists *through*—that is, by interacting with and reacting to—other positioning subjects.

c. 'Positioning' is possible only in terms of a minimal degree of *reconstructability* established between positioned and positioning subjects, that is, as a process that involves the constant rebuilding of social relations. A positioning subject exists *beyond*—that is, by inventing and reinventing its relation to—other positioning subjects.

d. 'Positioning' is possible only in terms of a minimal degree of *renormalizability* established between positioned and positioning subjects, that is, as a process in which the meanings and values attributed to behavioural, ideological, and institutional patterns of social life—which manifest themselves in the real or imagined positions that human agents occupy in the social space—are incessantly being negotiated and renegotiated. A positioning subject exists *about*—that is, by attaching meanings and values to—other positioning subjects.

e. 'Positioning' is possible only in terms of a minimal degree of *recognizability* established between positioned and positioning subjects, that is, as a process that evolves in the form of a daily struggle for recognition. A positioning subject exists *within*—that is, by seeking acknowledgment from—other positioning subjects.

In short, the existence of a positioning subject is conceivable only as a social constellation that unfolds *with*, *through*, *beyond*, *about*, and *within* the existence of other positioning subjects.[441]

XIX. Multipositionality

Baert convincingly distinguishes between different types of positioning. More specifically, he claims that '[p]ositioning can take two ideal-typical forms'[442]: (1) *intellectual positioning* and (2) *politico-ethical positioning*. The former 'locates the agent primarily within the intellectual realm'[443], the key currency of success being 'originality or intellectual power'[444]. The latter requires agents to take 'a broader political or ethical stance which surpasses the narrow confines of the intellectual sphere'[445],

implying that the principal challenge consists in defending a coherent stance in relation to the normative constitution of particular sets of social arrangements. Baert is right to suggest that, '[i]n practice, intellectual positioning and political-ethical positioning tend to be *intertwined*'[446]. The fact that, in many cases, it is far from obvious to what extent they can be disentangled may indicate that they are intimately interrelated: it is difficult to advocate a coherent and well-founded *political-ethical* position without drawing on *intellectual* thought, just as it is hard to endorse a timely and cutting-edge intellectual position without taking into account *political-ethical* considerations.

What is surprising, however, is that Baert explicitly *limits* his analytical framework to the aforementioned types of positioning. Arguably, there are *many other—significant—forms of positioning* that are crucially related to, if not closely interwoven with, intellectual positioning. Indeed, one may go a step further by contending the following: to the degree that intellectual positioning always takes place against a particular disciplinary background, it is possible to identify a large variety of intellectual forms of positioning.

- Particularly important, in this respect, are intellectual forms of positioning in key areas of *philosophical inquiry*: epistemology ('the nature of knowledge'), ontology ('the nature of being'), logic ('the nature of argument'), ethics ('the nature of morality'), and aesthetics ('the nature of art, beauty, and taste').
- No less significant in this regard are intellectual forms of positioning in key areas of *social-scientific inquiry*: anthropology, criminology, communication studies, economics, educational studies, geography, political science, psychology, and sociology.
- To the previous list, one may add intellectual forms of positioning in key areas of the *humanities*: ancient and modern languages, literature, visual arts, performing arts, musicology, religious studies, archaeology, classical studies, law, semiotics, linguistics, history and historiography, and—as previously mentioned—philosophy.
- Finally, it is not trivial that intellectual forms of positioning take place, to an increasing extent, in key areas of *natural-scientific inquiry*: astronomy, biology, chemistry, earth science, and physics.

To be sure, this is not to deny the socio-historical significance of *intellectual positioning* and *political-ethical* positioning. This is to suggest,

however, that there are numerous additional noteworthy forms of positioning that occupy a central place in the intellectual field. Of course, the importance attached to particular forms of positioning is spatiotemporally contingent. A sociological account of intellectual positioning that fails to consider, let alone to explain, the multitude of forms of positioning that shape the intellectual field, however, falls short of doing justice to the *complexity* permeating the wide-ranging and eclectic production of ideas, knowledge, and discourses in advanced societies.

XX. Teams

Reflecting upon the unfolding of intellectual life, Baert insists upon the centrality of '*teams*', which he distinguishes from 'networks'. More specifically, he claims that the former are narrower than the latter in that *their members 'actively cooperate in positioning themselves'*[447]. Within the behavioural and ideological—as well as, in some cases, institutional—framework of a 'team', it is common that intellectual groups start to develop in terms of '*schools*' or '*research programmes*', 'often using a label which makes their work and agenda immediately recognizable'[448].

When assessing the validity of the concept of 'team' in the context of the intellectual field, however, we are confronted with a number of issues.

1. Arguably, *not every intellectual has a 'team'*—at least not in the sense of a collaborative network of human resources upon which an agent can rely when seeking to acquire, or to consolidate, a materially and/or symbolically empowering position in the intellectual field. Surely, one may object that, at least in the long run, intellectuals—including those that seem to flourish in rather isolated and atomized ways—cannot have a significant impact upon paradigmatic developments in any social field unless they make allies with members of a particular 'team' or start building their own 'team' from scratch. Yet, it would be an interesting research project in itself to scrutinize the unusual *cases of 'solitary intellectuals'* who manage to set the agenda within a specific area of investigation or engagement, but, at least initially, *without* being members of a clearly identifiable 'team'. There does not appear to be much—if any—room for the 'solitary intellectual' within Baert's explanatory framework.

2. Another crucial issue concerns the question of *what happens when an intellectual*—consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or implicitly, deliberately or unwittingly—*joins more than one team at the same time*. To be clear, *team identity* and *team membership* can be defined on several levels:

- in '*major/classical ideological*' terms (e.g. anarchist, communist/socialist, liberal, conservative, or fascist);
- in '*sub-major ideological*' terms (e.g. nationalist, feminist, environmentalist, etc.);
- in *disciplinary* terms (e.g. anthropology, classics, communication studies, cultural studies, economics, historiography, human geography, law, linguistics, literary studies, musicology, philosophy, political science, psychology, religious studies, sociology, etc.);
- in *paradigmatic* terms (e.g. structuralism or poststructuralism, idealism or materialism, constructivism or realism, interpretivism or positivism, etc.);
- in *institutional* terms (e.g. research centre, department, school, faculty, university, etc.);
- in *linguistic* terms (e.g. Anglophone, Germanophone, Francophone, Hispanophone, Italianophone, etc.);
- in *national* terms (e.g. British, German, French, Spanish, Italian, etc.);
- in *generational* terms (e.g. adult, middle-aged, old-aged; e.g. particularly productive in the sixties, seventies, eighties, etc.);
- in *personal* terms (e.g. friendships, social circles, etc.).

In practice, team identity and team membership are defined in terms of a combination of the aforementioned (and various other) factors. In all cases, however, team members need at least one central common denominator on which to form a collective identity, spirit, and project. In light of the above, we are confronted with various important sociological questions, such as the following:

a. What are the practical and theoretical *implications* of the fact that an intellectual can be a member of more than one 'team'?
b. Is there a *limit* as to the number of 'teams' of which an intellectual can be a member?
c. Who or what decides which of the various teams to which an intellectual may belong will be the *crucial* one in defining his or her relative success, or failure, within the field of intellectuals?

3. Another key issue concerns the question of what *defines* membership within a team. More specifically, it is far from evident to what degree team membership is (a) *objectively*, (b) *normatively*, and/or (c) *subjectively* constituted. The sociological challenge, then, consists in exploring whether the *criteria* that determine team membership are primarily objective, normative, or subjective (or a combination of these elements).

   a. To the extent that team membership criteria are *objective*, they are conceptually representable, methodologically measurable, and empirically verifiable—irrespective of normative standards and/or subjective perceptions.
   b. To the extent that team membership criteria are *normative*, they are relationally malleable, historically variable, and socially arbitrary—irrespective of objective indicators and/or subjective perceptions.
   c. To the extent that team membership criteria are *subjective*, they are psychologically projectable, personally interpretable, and individually adjustable—irrespective of objective indicators or normative standards.

   To the extent that the criteria that determine team membership are defined by a *combination* of these factors (a/b/c), there is no clear way of delineating it.[449]
   The problem of identifying reliable criteria that permit us to define team membership has serious conceptual, methodological, and empirical implications:

- On the *conceptual* level, it demonstrates that it is far from straightforward to propose a sound explanatory framework for the theoretically informed understanding of intellectuals.
- On the *methodological* level, it illustrates that it is far from simple to develop a procedurally rigorous research strategy for the practically oriented study of intellectuals.
- On the *empirical* level, it shows that it is far from clear how to paint an accurate picture of the multiple facets shaping the contents, processes, practices, and stakes—as well as the forms, configurations, structures, and boundaries—of intellectual life.[450]

XXI. Cooperative Individuality

Baert rightly draws attention to the paradoxical relationship between two fundamental dynamics shaping the development of the intellectual field: *cooperation* and *individualization*.[451] In this respect, he makes the following claim:

> In general, the more *secure* and *established* one's position, the less one needs to rely on teamwork and the more likely one will press for intellectual *individualization*.[452]

It would have been interesting, however, to consider empirical or hypothetical *counterexamples* that contradict this tendency. The importance of this task is due to the fact that, for some intellectuals, the opposite may be true: *the more secure and established they are in the field, the more they depend not only on the continuous recognition by, but also on the continuous cooperation with, their fellow intellectuals*. Without regular recognition by their peers, even the most established intellectuals—unless they have already reached the status of a 'classic' in their field—may find it difficult not to disappear from the radar.

Another critical comment in relation to this point highlights the fact that *cooperation* and *individualization*—and, indeed, *collaboration* and *competition*—constitute two contradictory processes of *any* social field. In other words, the tension-laden interplay between socializing and individualizing, as well as between collaborative and competitive, processes does not represent a unique feature of the field of intellectuals. The sociologically more interesting question, however, concerns the extent to which the dynamic between these two tendencies *varies* between different social fields and *why* this is the case. (For instance, in some social fields, one of the two tendencies may be preponderant, that is, the emphasis may be placed on collaboration, rather than on competition, or vice versa.) The aforementioned distinction between (1) 'foundational fields', (2) 'contingent fields', and (3) 'ephemeral fields'[453] may be useful in this regard: different social fields possess different degrees of *cooperation* and *individualization*, as well as of *collaboration* and *competition*, depending on the underlying logic of their respective functioning. The more vital the existence of a particular field is to the constitution of society, the more profoundly the interactional dynamics of the former impact upon the small- and large-scale developments of the latter.

XXII. Credibility

Baert affirms that '*radical repositioning is rarely attained without loss of credibility*'[454]. It appears that there are two main reasons for this:

- During or after an act of 'radical repositioning', an *intellectual* has to provide a strong justification for his or her shift in perspective. As mentioned in one of the preceding sections, this may turn out to be tricky—or even impossible—if an intellectual decides to shift towards a position that is—at least at first glance—diametrically opposed to the position that he or she previously advocated.
- After an act of 'radical repositioning', an *intellectual's followers* have to decide whether or not they wish to continue supporting him or her (either *in spite of* or *because of* his or her new stance). Just as the intellectual protagonist will have to provide sound justifications for his or her shift in perspective, so do those who openly subscribe to his or her position if they opt to continue endorsing, and looking up to, their leading figure.

Baert's claim concerning the nexus between (re-)positioning and credibility may be challenged, however, by turning it upside down: *in many cases, 'radical repositioning' has made intellectuals more, rather than less, credible*. As spelled out in one of the previous sections, in the history and sociology of intellectual thought, it is common to distinguish between an 'early' and a 'late' phase when trying to make sense of the contributions made by a particular thinker. Famous examples include Karl Marx and Ludwig Wittgenstein, but also—more recently—Theodor W. Adorno, Jürgen Habermas, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, and Luc Boltanski. To the extent that being an intellectual requires being immersed in a horizon of constantly shifting relations, expectations, and positions, 'radical repositioning' constitutes an integral element of what it means to be an intellectual. As Baert rightly states, 'radical repositioning' can trigger a *loss of credibility*. As Baert fails to acknowledge, however, 'radical repositioning' can also allow for an *increase in credibility*—especially if and where a fundamental change in direction represents the only option an intellectual has to take on board both his or her supporters' and his or her adversaries' *criticisms*, thereby demonstrating that he or she, instead of sticking dogmatically to one position, is willing to *revise* his or her viewpoints and to *adjust* them in a timely, constructive, and dialogical fashion.[455]

XXIII. (In-) Security

Based on his remarks on processes of 'radical repositioning', Baert takes his argument a step further, as expressed in the following—previously quoted—statement:

> The more the *intellectual* is known, the more likely the *repositioning* will have to be accounted for. In sum, *repositioning* entails *reputational risks*. *Both factors*—the *costs* and the *reputational risks*—explain why *repositioning* tends to be found among either firmly *established intellectuals*, such as tenured academics, or *those who are just starting off and have not yet publicly cemented their position*.[456]

Effectively, Baert distinguishes between '*established intellectuals*' and '*non-established intellectuals*'. In most cases, the former enjoy a considerable degree of institutional, financial, and reputational *security*. By contrast, the latter—especially if they are newcomers—tend to occupy rather precarious positions within the intellectual field, characterized by a significant level of institutional, financial, and reputational *insecurity*.

For all its merits and perceptiveness, the previous distinction is problematic for at least two reasons.

1. One key problem with this binary distinction is that it seems to imply that, in terms of success measurement, the separation between 'established' and 'non-established', in addition to representing *the* major dividing line, is all there is in the intellectual field. In reality, however, the picture is much more complex, for there are numerous individual and collective agents in the intellectual field that do *not* fit any of these two categories—that is, those who are neither 'established' nor 'non-established', but who are situated somewhere between these two positions.
2. Another noteworthy problem with this binary distinction is that it fails to do justice to the *qualitative difference* between *acts of 'repositioning' undertaken by 'established' intellectuals* and *acts of 'repositioning' carried out by 'non-established' intellectuals*—not to mention those who are situated somewhere between these two positions. For instance, when examining these two (or, possibly, three) groups on the basis of empirical data, 'repositioning' processes may appear *radical* in some cases and *moderate* in others. Furthermore, agents in

one of these two (or three) groups may have very *different motives* for undertaking these repositioning processes—partly, because they have diverging *interests*; partly because they have different *backgrounds*; and, partly, because they have diverse *trajectories*. In this respect, the sociological challenge consists in shedding light on the question of whether or not it is possible to identify *group-specific patterns of repositioning within the intellectual field*.

XXIV. Epistemocracy

Baert appears to be suggesting that *the epistemic disparity between experts and laypersons has been narrowing in recent decades*. Arguably, contemporary societal developments have undermined the traditional gap between, on the one hand, the *specialized knowledge* produced by scholars, academics, and professional researchers and, on the other hand, the *common-sense knowledge* employed by ordinary people.

There are, according to Baert's analysis, various reasons for this significant change.

1. The *rising 'high educational levels for larger sections of society'*[457] have contributed to the fact that 'the erstwhile distinction between an intellectual elite and the rest no longer holds to quite the same extent'[458].
2. Due to higher levels of education for larger sections of society, there has been 'a *growing scepticism towards epistemic and moral authority*, an *increasing recognition of the fallibility of knowledge and of the existence of alternative perspectives*'[459]. As a consequence, it is considered less and less appropriate for intellectuals to engage in patronizing processes based on '[s]peaking from above and *at* their audience'[460], instead of speaking from below and *with* their audience.
3. Since the economies of *advanced postindustrial formations* are centred around knowledge, information, and science, both the production and the exchange of epistemic resources have been increasingly 'democratized'.
4. In the 'digital age'[461], the *rise of social and alternative media* has substantially contributed to the democratization of access to, and exchange of, knowledge and information.

Indicative of this far-reaching trend is, in Baert's view, the rise of '*dialogical public intellectuals*'[462]. One of their defining features is that they 'do not assume a superior stance towards their publics'[463] and that, instead, they 'engage with their publics in a more interactive fashion'[464] and on a more horizontal basis. Under such parameters, based on critical dialogue and horizontal reciprocity, it becomes possible to establish 'an *intellectual and social partnership* between the *sociological researchers* and the *communities* they serve, whereby both parties are willing to learn from each other and collaborate, while striving for a *common political goal*'[465].

Although Baert's diagnosis of the relationship between experts and laypersons is largely accurate, it tends to overlook the importance of a curious *paradox* of the contemporary age, which can be described as follows:

- On the one hand, the epistemic gap between experts and laypersons has been *narrowing* due to the gradual *universalization* of the production, distribution, and consumption of knowledge and information.
- On the other hand, the epistemic gap between experts and laypersons has been *widening* due to the gradual *specialization* of the production, distribution, and consumption of knowledge and information.

Baert provides a perceptive account of the former tendency, but he offers little in the way of an in-depth, let alone a critical, engagement with the latter development. In a society in which knowledge—above all, scientific knowledge—is increasingly specialized and, on many levels, even hyper-specialized—that is, divided and sub-divided into disciplines, sub-disciplines, and niche areas—it seems untenable to focus almost exclusively on the universalizing and democratizing trends in relation to the production, distribution, and consumption of epistemic resources. *The simultaneous universalization and particularization of knowledge generation in advanced societies are two sides of the same coin.*[466] As such, both processes need to be empirically studied, conceptually grasped, and analytically assessed. Otherwise, we risk telling only one part of the story.

In addition, one may object the following:

1. The gap between experts and laypersons *remains*, since human agents, in stratified societies, are equipped with *unequally distributed material and symbolic resources*, which manifest themselves in asymmetrically allocated forms of capital (notably, in relation to social, economic, cultural, educational, linguistic, political, and symbolic capital).
2. The gap between experts and laypersons *remains*, since human agents, in stratified societies, are equipped with *specialized epistemic resources*, which manifest themselves in asymmetrically allocated forms of knowledge (which is increasingly divided and sub-divided into disciplines, sub-disciplines, and niche areas).
3. The gap between experts and laypersons *remains*, since human agents, in stratified societies, are equipped with *context-dependent conceptual and methodological resources*, which manifest themselves in the functional division between *science and common sense* (and, correspondingly, in the separation between the systematic *study* of reality and the quotidian *immersion* in reality).

Furthermore, one may wonder to what extent the idea of a partnership between researchers and grassroots communities, prepared to learn from one another and 'striving for a *common political goal*'[467], can be considered a guarantee of the realization of a project that is not only *practically viable* but also *normatively defensible and desirable*. For instance, authoritarian and fascist movements typically claim to bridge the divide between 'the elite' and 'the people'.[468] An obvious historical example of this ideological rhetoric is Nazi Germany, in which the adjective *völkisch* was commonly used to give the impression of a 'democratized' (that is, *Volk*-based) usage of scientific forms of knowledge production.[469] One may find far less extreme examples to illustrate the following point: the fact that both researchers 'from above' and laypersons 'from below' are involved in dialogical exchanges of knowledge is not a guarantee of the normative defensibility, let alone desirability, of their goals.[470]

Finally, the idea of a partnership between researchers and grassroots communities sounds, of course, appealing *in theory*. It is far from obvious, however, what it actually means *in practice* and how it can be converted into *feasible* modes of organizing spheres of knowledge

production, which can claim to shape constitutive realms of society in a more democratic—that is, universally empowering and, hence, emancipatory—fashion.[471]

Thus, one of the principal civilizational challenges of the twenty-first century consists *in* drawing upon the respective strengths, while avoiding the respective pitfalls, of (1) *authoritative*, (2) *expert*, and (3) *dialogical public* intellectuals. Highly differentiated societies need intellectuals who are capable of being *authoritative* without being dogmatic, *specialized* without being disconnected, and *dialogical* without being condescending. Rather than relying on the stifling mechanisms of self-referential empires of epistemic power, democratically organized social formations need to make use of the powerful, yet fallible, conceptual resources provided by authoritative, knowledgeable, and dialogical intellectuals.

XXV. Effectology

Baert's plea for a *paradigm shift from a concern with 'intentions' to an emphasis on 'effects'* lies at the heart of his entire treatise. The former may be associated with a—philosophically inspired—*deontological* approach to the study of the *rationale* behind intellectual ideas. The latter is embedded in a—sociologically motivated—*pragmatist* framework, designed to scrutinize the *impact* of intellectual ideas, notably on behavioural, ideological, and institutional developments. The theoretical underpinnings of this paradigm shift have been elucidated, in some detail, in the previous sections. Rather than repeating the principal dimensions of Baert's plea for a paradigm shift at this stage, let us—for the sake of brevity—focus on some problematic aspects of his central claim that 'the solution lies in abandoning a *vocabulary of intentions* for a *vocabulary of effects*'[472].

Baert asserts that it is common—particularly in the writings of the Cambridge School of Intellectual History[473], epitomized in the conceptual framework proposed by John G. A. Pocock and Quentin Skinner[474]—'to take the *meaning of an intellectual intervention* within a given context to be *synonymous* with *the intent behind it*'[475]. Challenging this view, Baert advises 'to hold onto the *distinction* between the *purpose* behind an intellectual intervention and its *effect*'[476]. The validity of this proposition, however, suffers from a number of problems:

1. There is the problem of *conceptual confusion*. At first sight, it appears that Baert distinguishes *two* key levels of analysis; as a closer look at the previous statement reveals, however, he actually refers to *three* levels of analysis:

   a. the *purpose(s)* behind an intellectual intervention,
   b. the *meaning(s)* of an intellectual intervention, and
   c. the *effect(s)* of an intellectual intervention.

   Baert focuses on the alleged opposition between (a) and (c). We need to recognize, however, that (a), (c), *and* (b) constitute essential dimensions of intellectual realities.

   a. The *purpose (or purposes)* behind an intellectual intervention describes (or describe) the *intention (or intentions)* that an intellectual has when making an assertion. This intention (or these intentions) can express a concern with objective, normative, or subjective aspects of human existence (or with a combination of these elements).
   b. The *meaning (or meanings)* of an intellectual intervention designates (or designate) the *interpretation (or interpretations)* made in relation to it, both by its author him- or herself and by its recipients. This meaning (or these meanings) can articulate a concern with the objective, normative, or subjective dimensions of the intervention (by focusing on one, two, or all three of these elements).
   c. The *effect (or effects)* of an intellectual intervention refers (or refer) to its material or symbolic *impact* upon the intellectual field and/or other social fields. This impact can be assessed—if not measured—in objective, normative, or subjective terms (or in terms of a combination of these elements).

   The conceptual differentiation between these three levels of analysis would have contributed to the terminological precision, methodological rigour, and empirical usefulness of Baert's—otherwise formidable—account of intellectuals.

2. There is the problem of *analytical limitation*. *Baert's effect-centred approach runs the risk of understating the importance of intentions behind, and meanings attached to, intellectuals' interventions*. To be sure, these intentions and meanings can be classified in different ways:
   - in *constitutive* terms, they can be conscious or unconscious, explicitor implicit, blatant or subtle, obvious or hidden, basic or sophisticated;

- in *evaluative* terms, they can be selfish or altruistic, right-wing or left-wing, conservative or progressive, complicit or subversive, orthodox or heterodox, traditional or cutting-edge.

It is possible to develop a comprehensive *typology of intentions*, permitting researchers to identify and—if desired—to assess the rationale behind specific intellectual interventions. The aim of such a typological endeavour is not to negate the socio-ontological *significance* of the *effects* that intellectual interventions may, or may not, have. Notwithstanding the merits of such an undertaking, it draws attention to a crucial insight: *the pragmatist ambition to prove the socio-ontological preponderance of effects involves the danger of losing sight of the socio-ontological significance of the intentions behind, and meanings attributed to, intellectual interventions.* All three dimensions—that is, (a) purposes/intentions, (b) meanings/interpretations, and (c) effects/consequences—need to be taken into consideration, *without* asserting their respective socio-ontological preponderance in an *a priori* fashion. *Where there are human actions, interactions, and interventions, there are intentions, meanings, and effects*. All three levels of analysis deserve to be studied and to be given substantial diagnostic weight. If one of them is attributed more interpretive, or even explanatory, value than the others, then we end up providing a reductive account of social life in general and of intellectual life in particular. Intellectual interventions have effects because of, not despite, the fact that they are both intention-laden and meaning-laden.

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Regardless of their critical content, the purpose of the above reflections is to be constructive. As such, they should not draw attention away from the fact that Baert's *The Existentialist Moment: The Rise of Sartre as a Public Intellectual* has broken new ground and opened hitherto barely explored avenues for the study of intellectuals. The theoretical framework upon which Baert's inquiry is based is highly original, making a much-needed contribution to contemporary sociological thought. Baert deserves to be applauded for having taken our socio-historical understanding of the intellectual field to an unparalleled level. The challenge that remains when grappling with the role of intellectuals in society[477], however, is to push the debate forward by examining the impact of

recent and ongoing global developments on the sociological variables underlying the production of symbolic forms in general and of critical discourses in particular. This task is all the more pressing in light of the rapidly changing conditions of civilizational existence in the twenty-first century. One can only hope that intellectuals will play a largely positive role in shaping the development of society—that is, a role in which their *particular* interests, which they pursue when contributing to the power-laden construction of field-specific realities, are subordinated to the *universal* interests of humanity.

Notes

1. Baert (2015).
2. Ibid., p. 21.
3. Ibid., p. 21.
4. Ibid., pp. 21–22.
5. Ibid., p. 22.
6. Ibid., p. 22.
7. Ibid., p. 22. See also ibid., pp. 12, 78, 90, and 91.
8. Ibid., p. 22. See also ibid., pp. 20, 103, 110, 111, 112, 115, 116, and 134.
9. Ibid., p. 22.
10. Ibid., p. 22.
11. Ibid., p. 22.
12. Ibid., p. 1.
13. Ibid., p. 1.
14. Ibid., p. 1.
15. Ibid., p. 1.
16. Ibid., p. 1 (italics added).
17. See Sartre (1943) and Sartre (2003 [1958/1943]).
18. See Baert (2015), p. 2.
19. Ibid., p. 2 (italics added).
20. Ibid., p. 2. See also, for instance: Betz and Martens (2004); Spotts (2008).
21. Baert (2015), pp. 2–3.
22. Ibid., p. 2 (italics added).
23. Ibid., p. 3.
24. Ibid., p. 5.
25. Ibid., p. 5.
26. See Boschetti (1985) and Boschetti (1988 [1985]). See also Baert (2015), p. 5.

27. See, for example: Bourdieu (1979a); Bourdieu (1979b); Bourdieu (1993 [1984]-c); Bourdieu (1993a); Bourdieu (1993c); Bourdieu and Passeron (1964); Bourdieu and Passeron (1970).
28. Baert (2015), p. 5.
29. Ibid., p. 5.
30. On this point, see, for instance: Bourdieu (1979a); Bourdieu (1979b); Bourdieu (1993 [1984]-c); Bourdieu (1993a); Bourdieu (1993c); Bourdieu and Passeron (1964); Bourdieu and Passeron (1970). See also, for example: Beasley-Murray (2000); Bohman (1999); Brown and Szeman (2000); Codd (1990); Fowler (1997); Gartman (2002); Honneth (1984); Jurt (2004); Lash (1993); LiPuma (1993); Maigret (2002); Ostrow (2000 [1981]); Rigby (1993); Robbins (2000); Susen (2011b); Susen (2013c); Susen (2016a); Swartz (1997); Wagner (2003).
31. Baert (2015), p. 5.
32. Ibid., p. 5.
33. Ibid., p. 6.
34. Ibid., p. 6.
35. Ibid., p. 6.
36. On this metaphor, see Susen (2007), p. 189. On *the concept of 'rule' in Bourdieusian thought*, see, for instance: Bourdieu (1990); Bouveresse (1995); Fabiani (1999); Gebauer (2000); Lawler (2004); Nollmann (2004); Rigby (1993); Susen (2011a), p. 456; Susen (2011c), pp. 367, 385, and 408; Susen (2013c), pp. 203, 214, 220, and 221; Susen (2013d), pp. 329, 354, 360, and 372; Taylor (1995).
37. Baert (2015), p. 6.
38. Ibid., p. 6. See also ibid., pp. 148 and 156.
39. Ibid., p. 6.
40. Ibid., p. 6.
41. Ibid., p. 6 (italics added).
42. Ibid., p. 6.
43. Ibid., p. 6.
44. Ibid., p. 7.
45. Ibid., p. 7.
46. Ibid., p. 7 (italics added).
47. Ibid., p. 7.
48. Ibid., p. 7.
49. Ibid., p. 7.
50. Ibid., p. 7.
51. Collins (1998).
52. Baert (2015), p. 7.
53. Ibid., p. 7.

54. Ibid., pp. 7–8.
55. Ibid., p. 8.
56. Ibid., p. 8.
57. Ibid., p. 8.
58. Ibid., p. 8.
59. Ibid., p. 8.
60. Ibid., p. 8.
61. Ibid., p. 8 (italics added).
62. Ibid., p. 8.
63. Ibid., p. 8.
64. See Collins (1998), pp. 754–784.
65. Baert (2015), p. 8.
66. Ibid., p. 8.
67. On this point, see ibid., p. 9. In fact, it may be argued that the rise of existentialism—along with the popularity of hermeneutics and phenomenology—in French (and other 'national') intellectual circles cannot be understood without taking into account both the theoretical and the practical limitations of alternative candidates for paradigmatic adoption—notably, reductive versions of Marxism (such as 'orthodox Marxism', 'determinist Marxism', 'scientific Marxism', 'positivist Marxism', '*Vulgärmarxismus*', 'Soviet Marxism', and 'dialectical materialism'—to mention only a few). For a *critique of reductive forms of Marxism*, see, for example: Holloway (2002); Holloway (2005 [2002]); Holloway (2005); Holloway (2007); Holloway (2010); Holloway and Susen (2013); Susen (2012a); Susen (2015a), esp. pp. 18, 22, 26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 41, 70, 74, 87, 90, 91, 92, 99, 100, 101, 127, 141, 149, 165, 189, 226, 238, 239, 250, 262, 265, 286*n*126, 295*n*33, 294*n*22, 301*n*140, 314*n*81, 335*n*47, and 336*n*116. On the *relationship between Marxism and existentialism*, see, for instance: Archard (1980); Ley (1979); Lukács (1951); Novack (1966); Odajnyk (1965); Rauche (1970); Read (1949); Salvan (1967); Sartre (2008 [1974/1972]).
68. Baert (2015), p. 9.
69. On this point, see ibid., p. 9.
70. On this point, see ibid., p. 9.
71. Ibid., p. 10.
72. Ibid., p. 10.
73. Ibid., p. 10.
74. Ibid., p. 10.
75. Galster (2001a). See also Galster (2001b).
76. On *the concept of 'public intellectual'*, see, for example: Etzioni (2006); Etzioni and Bowditch (2006); Posner (2003 [2001]); Small (2002); Swartz (2003).

77. Baert (2015), p. 11 (italics added).
78. Ibid., p. 11.
79. Ibid., p. 11.
80. Ibid., p. 11 (italics added). See also ibid., pp. 1, 12, 22, 78, 87, 91–111, 112, 138, and 145.
81. Ibid., p. 11 (italics added). See also ibid., pp. 12, 78, 90, and 91.
82. See Sartre (1946). See also Sartre (2007 [1946]).
83. Baert (2015), p. 11. See also ibid., p. 103.
84. Ibid., p. 11.
85. Ibid., p. 11.
86. Ibid., p. 12.
87. Ibid., p. 12 (italics added).
88. Ibid., p. 12.
89. Ibid., p. 12.
90. Ibid., p. 12.
91. Ibid., p. 13 (italics added).
92. Ibid., p. 13.
93. Ibid., p. 13.
94. Ibid., p. 12.
95. Ibid., p. 13.
96. On this point, see, for instance, Susen (2012b), pp. 716–717, and Susen (2014 [2012]), 195–196.
97. Baert (2015), p. 13.
98. Ibid., p. 13.
99. Ibid., p. 13.
100. Ibid., p. 13.
101. Ibid., p. 14.
102. On this point, see ibid., pp. 13–14.
103. Ibid., p. 14.
104. Ibid., p. 14.
105. Ibid., p. 14.
106. Ibid., p. 14.
107. Ibid., p. 14 (italics added).
108. On this point, see, for example, Susen (2011e), pp. 58–60, 70, 76, and 77. See also Susen (2011b). In addition, see Baert and Shipman (2005).
109. Baert (2015), p. 14.
110. On *Habermas's notion of 'the colonization of the lifeworld'*, see, for example: Habermas (1987 [1981]-c), p. 332; Habermas (1987 [1981]-d), pp. 134, 140–143, and 148; Habermas (1987 [1981]-e), esp. p. 196; Habermas (1987 [1981]-f), pp. 333–335; Habermas (1982), pp. 226 and 278–281. In addition, see, for instance: Browne and Susen (2014), p. 217; Susen (2007), pp. 69, 71, 72, 97*n*47, 110, 177, 178, 190,

246, 252, 279, 296, and 305; Susen (2009), pp. 86, 106, and 109; Susen (2010), pp. 108 and 113; Susen (2011d), pp. 49 and 51; Susen (2012a), pp. 288, 289, 290, 305, 308, and 314; Susen (2013d), pp. 354, 360, 368, 383*n*352; Susen (2015b), p. 1034.

111. Baert (2015), p. 14.
112. Ibid., p. 14.
113. On this point, see ibid., pp. 14–15. See also, for instance, Susen (2011b), pp. 176–184.
114. Baert (2015), p. 15.
115. Ibid., p. 15.
116. Ibid., p. 15.
117. Ibid., p. 16.
118. Ibid., p. 16 (italics added).
119. Ibid., p. 16 (italics added).
120. Ibid., p. 16.
121. Ibid., p. 16.
122. Ibid., p. 16.
123. Ibid., p. 16 (italics added).
124. Ibid., p. 16.
125. Ibid., p. 16.
126. Ibid., p. 16 (italics added).
127. Ibid., p. 16 (italics added).
128. Ibid., p. 17 (italics added).
129. Ibid., p. 17 (italics added).
130. Ibid., p. 17 (italics added; except for '*vis-à-vis*', which appears in italics in the original).
131. Ibid., p. 17 (italics added).
132. Ibid., p. 17.
133. Ibid., p. 17 (italics added).
134. Ibid., p. 17 (italics added).
135. Ibid., p. 17.
136. Ibid., p. 17.
137. Ibid., p. 17.
138. Ibid., p. 17.
139. On this point, see Susen (2015a), pp. 34, 96, 98, 116, 117, 125, 227, and 229. On *the 'digital turn'*, see, for example: Athique (2013); Baym (2014 [2010]); Belk and Llamas (2013); Burda (2011); Junge, Berzina, Scheiffele, Westerveld, and Zwick (2013); Negroponte (1995); Runnel, Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Viires, and Laak (2013); Westera (2013); Zhao (2005).
140. Baert (2015), p. 17 (italics added).
141. Ibid., p. 17.

142. Bergson (1945 [1907]). See also Bergson (2007 [1907]).
143. Baert (2015), p. 18.
144. Ibid., p. 18 (italics added).
145. See, for instance, Cahm (1996 [1994]).
146. Baert (2015), p. 19.
147. Ibid., p. 19.
148. Ibid., p. 19.
149. Ibid., p. 19.
150. On *anti-intellectualism*, see ibid., p. 19; see also, for instance, ibid., pp. 161–162.
151. Ibid., p. 19.
152. Ibid., p. 19.
153. Ibid., p. 19.
154. Ibid., p. 19.
155. Ibid., p. 19.
156. Ibid., p. 19.
157. Ibid., p. 19.
158. See ibid., p. 19.
159. Ibid., p. 19 (italics added).
160. Ibid., p. 19 (italics added). On this point, see also, for instance: Baert, Koniordos, Procacci, and Ruzza (2010).
161. Baert (2015), p. 19.
162. Ibid., p. 19.
163. On this point, see, for instance: Kant (2009 [1784]); Kant (2003 [1785]); Kant (1979 [1798]). See also, for example: Susen (2010), esp. pp. 112–113; Susen (2013d), pp. 325–326 and 330–331; Susen (2015a), pp. 13, 57, 58, 105, 162, 197, 198, 210, 215, 216, 219, 234, 235, 236, 259, 260, 275, and 333*n*15; Susen (2016c), pp. 432–433.
164. Baert (2015), p. 19.
165. Ibid., p. 20.
166. Ibid., p. 20.
167. Ibid., p. 20.
168. See ibid., Chapter 7 (pp. 158–189).
169. Ibid., p. 158 (italics added).
170. Ibid., p. 158.
171. Ibid., p. 158. See also ibid., esp. pp. 97–99, 163, 165–173, and 177–183.
172. Ibid., p. 158.
173. Ibid., p. 159. See also ibid., pp. 7, 8, 13, 147, 159, 160, and 186.
174. Ibid., p. 159. See also ibid., p. 158.
175. Ibid., p. 159.
176. Ibid., p. 159.

177. Ibid., p. 159. In this context, Baert cites Charles Camic's account of Talcott Parsons's earlier writings as an example. See Camic (1987) and Camic (1992). See also, for instance, Parsons (1978) and Parsons (1991).
178. Baert (2015), p. 159.
179. See ibid., pp. 159–160. See also ibid., p. 174.
180. Ibid., p. 160.
181. Ibid., p. 160. See also ibid., pp. 90, 96, and 113.
182. Ibid., p. 160.
183. Ibid., p. 160.
184. On this point, see ibid., p. 160.
185. Ibid., p. 160 (italics added).
186. Ibid., p. 161 (italics added).
187. Ibid., p. 161.
188. On this point, see ibid., p. 161. See also Durkheim (1982 [1895]) and Durkheim (2010 [1924]). In addition, see Karsenti (2012 [2006]).
189. On this point, see Baert (2015), p. 161.
190. In this context, Baert mentions Neil Gross's biography of Richard Rorty. According to Baert, it is absurd to suggest, as—he claims—Gross does, that 'Rorty's social background predisposed him to be antagonistic to logical positivism and sympathetic to the project of metaphysics' (p. 161). On this point, see Gross (2008). See also Gross (2002).
In addition, Baert makes reference to Bourdieu's arguably reductive (that is, in this case, sociologistic) interpretation of Heidegger. See Baert (2015), p. 162 (italics in original): 'Pierre Bourdieu's otherwise sophisticated account of Heidegger when he argues that the latter's petty bourgeois background explained the anti-cosmopolitan and anti-modernism of his outlook and his predilection for a "*völkisch[e] language*". Just like Gross [,] whom he inspired, Bourdieu erroneously takes a sociological explanation of social facts for a sociological account of individual action.' On this point, see also Bourdieu (1975), Bourdieu (1988), and Wiechens (2002).
191. Baert (2015), p. 161.
192. Ibid., p. 162.
193. Ibid., p. 162 (italics added).
194. Ibid., p. 162.
195. Ibid., p. 162 (italics added).
196. On this point, see, for example, Morgan and Baert (2015).
197. Baert (2015), p. 162.
198. Ibid., p. 162.
199. On this point, see Susen (2007), pp. 158–167.
200. Baert (2015), p. 163 (italics added).
201. Ibid., p. 163 (italics in original).

202. On this point, see, for example: Bourdieu (1984); Bourdieu (1993b); Bourdieu (1993 [1984]-a); Bourdieu (1993 [1984]-b); Bourdieu (1993 [1984]-d); Gross (2002); Gross (2008).
203. Baert (2015), p. 163.
204. Ibid., p. 163.
205. Ibid., p. 163.
206. Ibid., p. 163 (italics added).
207. Ibid., p. 163.
208. Ibid., p. 163.
209. Ibid., p. 163.
210. Ibid., p. 163 (italics in original).
211. Ibid., p. 163 (italics in original).
212. Ibid., p. 164.
213. Ibid., p. 163 (italics in original).
214. On this point, see, for instance, Susen (2015a), esp. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. See also, for example, Susen (2016c) and Susen (2017d).
215. Baert (2015), p. 164 (italics added).
216. Ibid., p. 164 (italics in original).
217. Ibid., p. 164.
218. Ibid., p. 164 (italics added).
219. Ibid., p. 164 (italics added).
220. Ibid., p. 164.
221. Ibid., p. 164 (italics added).
222. Ibid., p. 165.
223. Ibid., p. 165.
224. Ibid., p. 165 (italics added).
225. Ibid., p. 165.
226. Ibid., p. 165.
227. Ibid., p. 165.
228. Ibid., p. 165 (italics added).
229. Ibid., pp. 165–166 (italics added).
230. Ibid., p. 166 (italics added).
231. Ibid., p. 166. See also ibid., pp. 103 and 162.
232. Ibid., p. 167 (italics in original).
233. Ibid., p. 167 (italics added).
234. See ibid., p. 167. See also ibid., pp. 125, 170, 174, 175, and 179.
235. Ibid., p. 167.
236. On this point, see ibid., p. 167.
237. Ibid., p. 167 (italics added).
238. See ibid., p. 167.
239. Ibid., p. 168 (italics added).
240. Ibid., p. 169.

241. Ibid., p. 169 (italics added).
242. Ibid., p. 170 (italics added).
243. Ibid., p. 170.
244. Ibid., p. 170 (italics added).
245. Ibid., p. 171.
246. Ibid., p. 171.
247. On this point, see Susen (2015a), esp. Chapter 4. See also, for example, Susen (2016c) and Susen (2017d).
248. Baert (2015), p. 171 (italics added).
249. Ibid., p. 171. See also ibid., pp. 2–3, 62, and 143–148. On this point, see also, for instance: Alexander, Eyerman, Giesen, Smelser, and Sztompka (2004); Eyerman, Alexander, and Breese (2011).
250. Baert (2015), p. 171.
251. Ibid., p. 172 (italics added).
252. Ibid., p. 173. See also ibid., p. 122.
253. On this point, see ibid., pp. 173–177.
254. On this point, see ibid., pp. 173–174.
255. On *the relationship between 'validity claims' and 'legitimacy claims'*, see, for example: Susen (2007), p. 257; Susen (2013c), esp. pp. 200, 207–215, 217–218, 219, 222, 225–230; Susen (2013d), esp. pp. 330, 331, 334, 335, 337, 339, 341, 342, 343, 344, 349, 363, 365, and 369; Susen (2015a), pp. 55, 200, and 324*n*195. Cf. Bourdieu (1982) and Bourdieu (2002).
256. On this point, see Baert (2015), p. 174.
257. Ibid., p. 174 (italics in original).
258. Ibid., p. 174.
259. On this point, see ibid., pp. 174–177.
260. Ibid., p. 174 (italics in original).
261. Ibid., p. 174.
262. Ibid., p. 175.
263. Ibid., p. 175.
264. Ibid., p. 175.
265. On this point, see ibid., p. 175.
266. In this context, Baert draws attention to Mead (1967 [1934]) as well as to Saussure (1995 [1916]) / Saussure (1978 [1916]). See Baert (2015), pp. 175–176.
267. In relation to this point, Baert remarks that *'analytic' philosophers* (such as Bertrand Russell and A. J. Ayer) commonly associate their own works—because of their concern with 'precision, logic and science'—with *liberal* forms of government, while accusing *'continental' philosophers* (such as Georg W. F. Hegel and Martin Heidegger) of 'muddled thinking' and, hence, of being causally related to, if not partly responsible for, the emergence of *totalitarian* regimes. See Baert (2015), p. 176.

268. Ibid., p. 177 (italics added).
269. Ibid., p. 177.
270. Ibid., p. 177 (italics added).
271. Ibid., p. 178.
272. Ibid., p. 178. See Farrell (2001).
273. Baert (2015), p. 178.
274. Ibid., p. 178. See also ibid., pp. 99 and 183.
275. Cf. *Erving Goffman's concept of 'team'*. See, for example, Goffman (1971 [1959]), esp. p. 85. In addition, see Susen (2016e), esp. pp. 120–121, 126–127, 131–133, and 136.
276. Baert (2015), p. 179 (italics added).
277. Ibid., p. 179 (italics added).
278. On this point, see ibid., pp. 179–184.
279. Ibid., p. 180 (italics added). See ibid., pp. 179–182.
280. Ibid., p. 180 (italics added).
281. Ibid., p. 180 (italics added).
282. Ibid., p. 180.
283. On this point, see ibid., p. 180.
284. Ibid., p. 181 (italics added).
285. Ibid., p. 181 (italics added).
286. Ibid., p. 181.
287. See ibid., p. 182. See also ibid., p. 181.
288. Ibid., p. 182 (italics added).
289. Ibid., p. 182.
290. Ibid., p. 183.
291. On this point, see ibid., pp. 182–184.
292. Ibid., p. 183 (italics added).
293. On this point, see ibid., p. 184. See also, for example: Harré (1993 [1979]); Ingold (1986), esp. pp. 368ff.
294. Baert (2015), p. 183.
295. Ibid., p. 183.
296. Ibid., p. 183.
297. Ibid., p. 183.
298. Ibid., p. 183 (italics added).
299. On this point, see ibid., pp. 184–189.
300. Ibid., p. 184 (italics added).
301. Ibid., p. 184.
302. Ibid., p. 184.
303. Ibid., p. 185. See also ibid., pp. 9 and 121.
304. Ibid., p. 185.
305. Ibid., p. 185.
306. Ibid., p. 185.

307. Ibid., p. 185.
308. Ibid., p. 185 (italics added).
309. Ibid., p. 185.
310. Ibid., p. 185.
311. Ibid., p. 185.
312. On this point, see ibid., p. 185.
313. Ibid., p. 185 (italics added).
314. Ibid., p. 185.
315. Ibid., p. 185 (italics added).
316. Ibid., p. 187.
317. Ibid., p. 187. See also ibid., p. 156.
318. Ibid., p. 187.
319. Ibid., p. 188.
320. Ibid., p. 188.
321. Ibid., p. 188 (italics removed from 'and acquired knowledge').
322. Ibid., p. 188.
323. Ibid., p. 188.
324. Ibid., p. 188 (italics added).
325. On this point, see, for instance: Burawoy (2005); Burawoy, Gamson, Ryan, Pfohl, Vaughan, Derber, and Schor (2004); Burawoy (2000). See also, for example: Baert (2015), p. 189; Baert and Silva (2010 [1998]-a), esp. p. 302; Baert and Silva (2013); Seidman (1994), p. 119; Susen (2011d); Susen (2013a), esp. p. 92; Susen (2015a), p. 7.
326. Baert (2015), p. 189.
327. Ibid., p. 189 (italics added).
328. Ibid., p. 185.
329. On this point, see Susen (2007), pp. 166–167.
330. On this point, see Baert (2015), pp. 185–186.
331. Ibid., p. 186 (italics added).
332. On this point, see Susen (2014a), esp. p. 23. See also Susen (2015a), pp. 10, 37, 43, 47, 70, 78, 108, 126, 152, 157, 174, 184, 218, 243, 245, and 274.
333. Baert (2015), p. 186.
334. Ibid., p. 186 (italics added—except for the preposition 'at', which is italicized in the original).
335. Ibid., pp. 186–187.
336. Ibid., p. 186.
337. Ibid., p. 187 (italics added).
338. On this point, see Susen (2015a), pp. 22, 26, 28, 30, 32, 74, 101, 189, and 250. See also, for example, Gamble, Marsh, and Tant (1999). In addition, see Holloway and Susen (2013) as well as Susen (2012a).

339. Baert (2015), p. 187 (italics added). On *the concept of fanaticism*, see Toscano (2010).
340. On this point, see Baert (2015), p. 187. On *Fukuyama's conception of 'the end of history'*, see Fukuyama (1992), esp. pp. 276–277. On this point, see also, for example: Blackburn (2000), p. 267; Boltanski (2008), p. 63; Bourdieu and Boltanski (2008 [1976]), p. 53; Fukuyama (2002); Hammond (2011), pp. 305–306, 310, 312, and 315; Horrocks (1999), pp. 7 and 13; Kellner (2007), p. 119; Osamu (2002); Paulus (2001), p. 745; Susen (2015a), pp. 170, 245, 271, and 317*n*207.
341. On this point, see Susen (2015a), esp. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. See also, for example, Susen (2016c) and Susen (2017d).
342. On this point, see Susen (2015a), esp. pp. 142, 187, 188, and 189.
343. See Hobsbawm (1994).
344. See Baert (2015), Chapter 7 (pp. 158–189).
345. See ibid., p. 182. See also ibid., p. 181.
346. Ibid., p. 1 (italics added).
347. Ibid., p. 5 (in this case, Baert draws upon Anna Boschetti's definition).
348. On *Bourdieu's conception of 'the field'*, see Susen (2007), esp. pp. 171–180.
349. On this point, see Baert (2015), p. 5.
350. Ibid., p. 5.
351. Ibid., p. 5.
352. See, for instance, ibid., p. 5.
353. See, for instance, ibid., p. 6.
354. Ibid., p. 6 (italics added).
355. Ibid., p. 6.
356. Ibid., p. 6 (italics added).
357. On this point, see, for example: Albrecht (2002); Bourdieu (1979a); Bourdieu and Passeron (1970); Passeron (2000 [1986]); Susen (2016a).
358. Indeed, Sartre's own *parcours* was far from smooth and problem-free. He was only two years old when his father, Jean-Baptiste Sartre, passed away, after suffering from a fever. Given the difficult domestic circumstances caused by his father's death, his mother, Anne-Marie (née Schweitzer), moved back to her parents' house in Meudon, located in the South-Western suburbs of Paris. Most commentators seem to agree that her father, Charles Schweitzer—who was a teacher of German—had a formative influence on the young Jean-Paul. He taught him mathematics and classical literature in the early stages of his life. At the age of twelve, Sartre's mother remarried; subsequently, the family moved to La Rochelle (in South-West France), where—according to some sources—he experienced bullying at school. Bourdieusian scholars will insist that, irrespective of the difficult domestic circumstances that he

experienced in his early years, Sartre enjoyed the benefits of a relatively privileged social background. (His father was an officer of the French navy, and his mother was the first cousin of Nobel Prize laureate Albert Schweitzer.)—On Sartre's life, see, for instance: Cohen-Solal (2005 [1987/1985]); Drake (2005); Leak (2006); McBride (1997); Sartre, Auster, and Davis (1978 [1977/1976]); Thompson and Thompson (1984); van den Hoven and Leak (2005).

359. Baert (2015), p. 7 (italics added).
360. Ibid., p. 7.
361. Ibid., p. 7.
362. Ibid., p. 7 (italics added).
363. Ibid., p. 7.
364. Ibid., p. 7 (italics added).
365. On *the centrality of the emphasis on 'the socio-historical conditions of production' in Bourdieusian thought*, see, for instance: Robbins (2010); Robbins (2013).
366. On this point, see Susen (2007), pp. 158–167.
367. Baert (2015), p. 183 (italics added).
368. There are numerous examples of *Bourdieusian (or Bourdieu-inspired) approaches to intellectual ideas and/or intellectuals* in the literature. See, for instance: Bautista (1987); Boschetti (1985); Boschetti (1988 [1985]); Collins (1998); Fritsch (2005); Gross (2002); Gross (2008); Kauppi (2000); Mahar (1990); Miller (2003); Nash (2005); Pecourt (2007); Pecourt (2008); Pels (1995); Picò and Pecourt (2013); Pinto (1991); Ringer (2000 [1990]); Schwengel (2003); Sintomer (2005); Sintomer (2011); Susen (2011e). On this point, see also, for example: Bourdieu (1984); Bourdieu (1993b); Bourdieu (1993 [1984]-a); Bourdieu (1993 [1984]-b); Bourdieu (1993 [1984]-d).
369. Baert (2015), p. 11 (italics added). On this point, see ibid., pp. 10–13.
370. Ibid., pp. 10–11.
371. Ibid., p. 11. On this point, see ibid., pp. 10–13.
372. Ibid., p. 14 (italics added).
373. See Luhmann (1995 [1984]) and Luhmann (2002). See also, for instance: Baraldi, Corsi, and Esposito (1997); Bohn (2005); Fuchs (1993 [1992]); Habermas (1987 [1985]-b); Mingers (2002); Viskovatoff (1999). For *detailed comparisons between Luhmannian systems theory and Bourdieusian field theory*, see, for example: Beer (2006); Bohn (1991), pp. 99–116 and 137–139; Bohn (2005); Hahn (1991), pp. 7–8; Kneer (2004); Nassehi and Nollmann (2004a); Nassehi and Nollmann (2004b); Nollmann (2004); Saake (2004); Susen (2007), pp. 177 and 199*n*28.
374. See Rupke (2006).

375. Baert (2015), pp. 16–17 (italics added).
376. Ibid., p. 17.
377. On this point, see Susen (2015a), esp. pp. 192–194. See also, for instance: Heywood (2007 [1992]); Susen (2014c); Susen (2016b).
378. On this point, see Susen (2015a), esp. pp. 140–143.
379. On this point, see ibid., pp. 21, 26–27, and 195.
380. On this point, see ibid., esp. p. 140.
381. Baert (2015), p. 17.
382. Ibid., p. 17 (italics added). Cf. Rosa (2016).
383. On this point, see, for instance: Browne and Susen (2014), pp. 217–223; Susen (2012a), esp. p. 307; Susen (2014c), pp. 96–109; Susen (2015a), esp. pp. 12, 35, 111, 124, 130, 134, 135, 140, 185, 194, 195, 201, 238, 250, 257, 273, 280, 295*n*23, and 306*n*304.
384. On this point, see Baert (2015), p. 172: '[…] the strength of a narrative often depends on what is *not* said […]' (italics added). On this point, see also Susen (2014c), esp. pp. 96–97 (see point on 'dominant ideology and distortion').
385. On this point, see Baert (2015), p. 17.
386. Ibid., p. 17.
387. Ibid., p. 17.
388. Ibid., p. 17.
389. Ibid., p. 17.
390. Ibid., p. 19 (italics added).
391. Ibid., p. 19. On *anti-conformist critiques of power*, see, for example: Browne and Susen (2014); Holloway (2005 [2002]); Holloway (2007); Holloway (2010); Holloway and Susen (2013); Susen (2008a); Susen (2008b); Susen (2012a); Susen (2014a).
392. In order to avoid making sweeping generalizations about the nature of the intellectual field, the aforementioned questions and reflections need to be examined on the basis of *historical analysis*. For instance, in her book *Economists and Societies: Discipline and Profession in the United States, Britain, and France, 1890s to 1990s* (2009), Marion Fourcade suggests that, especially since the demise of Keynesianism, *discipline* has produced overwhelming numbers of right-wing intellectuals (notably in the United States of America, Great Britain, and France). On this point, see Fourcade (2009). On *the relationship between politics and intellectuals*, see, for instance: Dreßen (1971); Etzioni and Bowditch (2006); Eyerman, Alexander, and Breese (2011); Greiffenhagen (1986); Hanuschek, Hörnigk, and Malende (2000); Herf (1984); Jennings and Kemp-Welch (1997); Kauppi (2010); Misztal (2007); Pecourt (2008); Reuter (1982); Scheuch (1974); Swartz (2003); Swartz (2013); Thijssen (2013); Wiehn (1971).

On *left-wing ideologies and intellectuals*, see, for instance: Dreßen (1971); Grunewald and Bock (2002); Hirsh (1981); Horowitz (2003); Khilnani (1993); Lloyd (1997); O'Brien (1977); Vogelgesang (1974). On *right-wing ideologies and intellectuals*, see, for instance: Deutsch and Dolkart (1993); Hoeveler (1991); Mergel (2010); Sanos (2013).

393. Baert (2015), p. 159.
394. Ibid., p. 159 (italics added).
395. Ibid., p. 159 (italics added).
396. On this point, see, for instance: Becker Lorca (2014); Berman (1968); Bethell (1996); Bourg (2004); Burguière (2009 [2006]); Ekirch (1963); Grant (1996); Maclean (1980); Salmon (1987); Sedgwick (2009 [2004]); Wish (1960).
397. Baert (2015), p. 159 (italics added).
398. See, for instance, ibid., pp. 2 and 162. See Bourdieu (1975) and Bourdieu (1988). See also Wiechens (2002).
399. Baert (2015), p. 158.
400. See ibid., pp. 158–163.
401. See ibid., pp. 158–163.
402. See ibid., pp. 161–162.
403. Ibid., p. 158.
404. See ibid., pp. 158–159.
405. See ibid., pp. 159–162.
406. See ibid., pp. 162–163.
407. On this point, see ibid., pp. 161–162.
408. Ibid., p. 161.
409. On this point, see ibid., p. 161. See also Durkheim (1982 [1895]) and Durkheim (2010 [1924]). In addition, see Karsenti (2012 [2006]).
410. Baert (2015), p. 161 (italics added).
411. Ibid., p. 161 (italics added).
412. Ibid., p. 161 (italics added).
413. On this point, see Durkheim (1966/1951 [1897]).
414. On these accounts, see Baert (2015), pp. 161–162.
415. Ibid., p. 161.
416. Ibid., p. 162.
417. Ibid., p. 162 (italics added).
418. Ibid., p. 162.
419. Ibid., p. 162.
420. Ibid., p. 162.
421. On this point, see, for example: Susen (2007), pp. 237 and 277; Susen (2013c), pp. 208–211. See also Kögler (1997) and Kögler (2013). It is beyond the scope of this essay to examine the significant contributions made by Karl Mannheim (1893–1947) to the social sciences in

general and to sociology in particular. It should be taken into account, however, that he is widely considered one of the founding figures—if not, *the* founding figure—of the sociology of knowledge. In essence, the sociology of knowledge is concerned with the study of the relationship between human thought and the social context within which it arises. To be exact, the sociology of knowledge explores the extent to which the constitution, development, and functions of cognitive processes—including their epistemic representations—are shaped by, and in turn shape, the spatiotemporally contingent settings in which they come into being. Irrespective of the question of whether or not his project can be regarded as worthwhile, contemporary debates on the nature of both ordinary and intellectual modes of knowledge production have been profoundly influenced by Mannheim's attempt to provide a comprehensive sociological understanding of epistemic processes and structures. On this point, see, for example: Mannheim (1991 [1936/1929]); Mannheim (1997 [1940/1935]); Mannheim (1997 [1952]); Mannheim (1997 [1980/1922–1924]); Mannheim (1997 [1986/1925]); Mannheim (1997 [1951]); Mannheim (2001 [1930]); Mannheim and Wolff (1971). See also, for instance: Baum (1977); Kettler, Loader, and Meja (2008); Kögler (1997); Longhurst (1989); Remmling (1975); Simonds (1978); Woldring (1987).

422. On *the problem of determinism in Bourdieusian thought*, see, for example: Gautier (2001); Inglis (2013); Quiniou (1996); Susen (2007), pp. 13, 14, 150, 151, 152, 156, 158, 206, 207, 225, 227*n*4, 239, 250, and 309; Susen (2011e), pp. 49, 51, 52, 53, 56, 57, 58, 59, 61, 65, 66, 67, 69, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, and 80; Susen (2011c), pp. 369, 373, 374, 377, 379, 381, 382, 385, 386, 387, 388, 392, 393, 394, 395, 397, 398, 399, 401, 402, 404, 405, 407, and 408; Susen and Turner (2011), pp. xv, xvii, xxv, and xxvi; Susen (2013b), pp. 197–198; Susen (2013c), pp. 200, 203, 204, 207, 209, 215, 216, 217, 218, 220, 221, 223, 225, 226, 228, and 229; Susen (2013d), pp. 328, 330, 331, 332, 333, 337, 338, 340, 341, 343, 344, and 364–374; Susen (2014 [2015]), pp. 316, 327, 339*n*23; Susen (2015c), pp. 158–159, 159*n*56, and 174. Cf. Habermas (2004) and Varela (1999).
423. On this point, see Susen (2007), Chapters 5–8.
424. See previous note on *the problem of determinism in Bourdieusian thought*.
425. Baert (2015), p. 163 (italics added).
426. Ibid., p. 163 (italics in original).
427. Ibid., p. 163.
428. Ibid., p. 163.
429. See Bourdieu (1972) and Bourdieu (1977 [1972]).

430. See previous note on *the problem of determinism in Bourdieusian thought*. See esp. Susen (2007), Chapter 7.
431. On this point, see ibid., Chapter 7, esp. pp. 171–192 (notably, the points on the *temporality*, *constructability*, *potentiality*, *indeterminacy*, *autonomy*, and *contestability* of field and habitus). On Bourdieu's emphasis on the *generative potential* permeating the objective, normative, and subjective dimensions of human existence, see ibid., esp. pp. 187, 189, 211, and 214.
432. On this point, see Bourdieu (2004).
433. On this point, see Baert (2015), esp. pp. 163–164.
434. See, for example: Habermas (1988 [1967/1970]); Habermas (1984 [1976]); Habermas (1987 [1981]-a); Habermas (1987 [1981]-b); Habermas (1987 [1985]-a); Habermas (1998 [1976, 1981, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1996]); Habermas (2001). See also, for instance: Baert (1998a), Chapter 6; Baert (1998b); Baert (2005b); Baert and Silva (2010 [1998]-a), Chapter 7; Baert and Silva (2010 [1998]-b).
435. See, for example: Rorty (1982); Rorty (1989); Rorty (1991a); Rorty (1991b); Rorty (1998); Rorty (2009 [1979]). See also, for instance: Baert (2003); Baert (2005a); Baert and Silva (2013); Baert and Turner (2004); Baert and Turner (2007).
436. Baert (2015), p. 163 (italics in original).
437. Susen (2013c), p. 236*n*121 (italics in original). See ibid. (italics in original): '(i) The most obvious examples of *foundational* fields are economic, political, cultural, artistic, linguistic and sexual fields, because no society can possibly exist without some degree of division of labour, small-scale and large-scale modes of action coordination, various forms of habitualization, diversified realms of aesthetic expression, everyday spaces of communicative interaction, and overt or subtle ways of regulating sexual reproduction. (ii) Contemporary examples of *contingent* fields are judicial, military, religious, scientific, academic and journalistic fields, because society may be organized more or less efficiently with, but can—at least in principle—exist without, legal arrangements, martial resources, sacred institutions, systematic forms of knowledge production, disciplinary divisions of cognition and media industries. (iii) Obvious examples of *ephemeral* fields are short-lived gatherings, political demonstrations, concerts, stage performances, parties, sport events, football matches, train journeys, lectures, seminars and classes; in short, an infinite list of collectively constructed situations and shared experiences.'—On this point, see also, for instance: Susen (2016d), esp. pp. 461–463; Susen (2017a), pp. 144–146; Susen (2017c), pp. 119–120; Susen (2017e), pp. 358, 365–367, and 372*n*70.

438. On *the concept of 'positioning'*, see, for instance: Davies and Harré (1990); Harré and Langenhove (1998); Harré, Moghaddam, Cairnie, Rothbart, and Sabat (2009); Montiel and Guzman (2011); Osbeck and Nersessian (2010); Ries and Trout (2001 [1981]); Schmidle (2010); Slocum-Bradley (2010); van Langenhove and Harré (1993).
439. Baert (2015), p. 164 (italics added).
440. On this point, see Susen (2007), pp. 192–198.
441. On this point, see ibid., p. 198.
442. Baert (2015), p. 169.
443. Ibid., p. 169.
444. Ibid., p. 169.
445. Ibid., p. 169.
446. Ibid., p. 169 (italics added).
447. Ibid., p. 178 (italics added).
448. Ibid., p. 178.
449. On *the relationship between the objective, normative, and subjective dimensions of human existence*, see, for instance: Susen (2012b), p. 712 (see point c); Susen (2014 [2012]), p. 192 (see point c); Susen (2014b), pp. 349–350 (see point 13); Susen (2015a), pp. 101–103; Susen (2017d), pp. 109–110.
450. It should be noted that there are multiple examples that illustrate the complexity, contentiousness, and contradictoriness of labelling and (re-) positioning processes taking place within the intellectual field. For instance, in John Eldridge and Lizzie Eldridge's *Raymond Williams: Making Connections* (1994), the validity of Raymond Williams's self-characterization as a 'Marxist' is called into question. This is indicative of the fact that labelling and (re-)positioning processes are far from straightforward, depending not only on intellectual scholars themselves but also on the ways in which they, and their works, are perceived and interpreted by others—notably, by their peers as well as by their commentators and critics. On this point, see Eldridge and Eldridge (1994). Considering Williams's numerous publications on both culture and society, both the label 'cultural theorist' and the label 'social theorist' appear appropriate to describe him in terms of his intellectual outlook; indeed, given his advocacy of historical materialism, the label 'Marxist theorist' may be equally suitable. On this point, see, for example: Williams (1958); Williams (1961); Williams (1977); Williams (1980); Williams (1981); Williams (1988 [1976]). See also, for instance: Eagleton (1989); Eldridge and Eldridge (1994); Higgins (1999); Jones (2004); Milner (2002); Milner (2010); Stevenson (1995); Tredell (1990). In short, the classification of intellectual 'team membership' is, in many cases, far from unambiguous, let alone uncontroversial.

451. See Baert (2015), esp. pp. 177–179.
452. Ibid., p. 179 (italics added).
453. See Susen (2013c), p. 236*n*121.
454. Baert (2015), p. 183 (italics added).
455. As suggested above, *radical repositioning* can lead to both *loss of credibility* and *increase in credibility*. Either way, intellectual repositioning has *reputational implications*. It can occur not only with varying degrees of denial, withdrawal, or recantation, but also with varying degrees of public interest in the reasons behind, and in the consequences of, repositioning. Prominent cases of 'repositioning' include Anglo-American interwar writers, such as Sidney Hook (1902–1989), as well as *Partisan Review* editors, such as Dwight MacDonald (1906–1982) and Philip Rahv (1908–1973). Looking at the other side of the Atlantic, notably Britain, one may mention the poets of the so-called Auden Group or Auden Generation, who were particularly active in the 1930s: Wystan H. Auden (1907–1973), Cecil Day-Lewis (1904–1972), Stephen Spender (1909–1995), and Louis MacNeice (1907–1963), but also the novelist Christopher Isherwood (1904–1986)—all of whom underwent processes of repositioning throughout their careers. I owe this observation to Bridget Fowler.
456. Baert (2015), p. 183 (italics added).
457. Ibid., p. 186 (italics added).
458. Ibid., p. 186.
459. Ibid., p. 186 (italics added).
460. Ibid., p. 186 (italics in original).
461. See previous note on *the 'digital turn'*.
462. Baert (2015), p. 188 (italics added).
463. Ibid., p. 188.
464. Ibid., p. 188.
465. Ibid., p. 189 (italics added).
466. On *the distinction between 'ordinary knowledge' and 'scientific knowledge'*, see, for example: Boltanski (1990); Boltanski (1998), esp. pp. 248–251; Boltanski (1999–2000), esp. pp. 303–306; Bourdieu and Eagleton (1992), esp. p. 117; Celikates (2009), esp. pp. 12, 25–28, 39–40, 56, 72–81, 89–92, 116–122, 138–152, 159–160, and 187–247; Cronin (1997), esp. pp. 206–207; Mesny (1998), esp. pp. 143–190; Susen (2007), esp. pp. 25, 102, 135–137, 138, 139, 140, 146*n*8, 153, 156, 157, 204, 205, 224, and 311; Susen (2011a), esp. pp. 448–458; Susen (2011e), pp. 8, 27, 33–36, and 40; Susen (2015a), pp. 282–283*n*30.
467. Baert (2015), p. 189 (italics added).
468. On this point, see Kühnl (1983) and Kühnl (1990 [1979]). See also Susen (2013a), pp. 99–100*n*29.

469. Cf. Jeffrey Herf's *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (1984). In this study, Herf provides an insightful historical analysis of the emergence of regressive modernism in Germany between the late 1920s and 1945; see Herf (1984). Any claims concerning the 'closeness' that some intellectuals appear to possess in relation to a particular '*Volk*' should be regarded with the greatest suspicion.
470. See, for instance, recent debates on 'Brexit'—notably, in terms of the normative role of discursive oppositions such as 'experts' versus 'laypersons', 'the elite' versus 'the people', and 'them' versus 'us'. On this point, see Susen (2017b).
471. On *the concept of emancipation*, see Susen (2015b). See also Susen (2009).
472. Baert (2015), p. 181 (italics added).
473. On this point, see ibid., pp. 159–160. See also ibid., p. 174.
474. See, for instance: Pocock (1985); Skinner (1969); Skinner (1978).
475. Baert (2015), p. 160 (italics added).
476. Ibid., p. 160 (italics added).
477. The literature on *the role of intellectuals in society* is vast. See, for instance: Ahearne and Bennett (2007), Bennett (2007); Baert and Isaac (2011); Baert and Shipman (2012); Becker Lorca (2014); Bennett (2007); Berger (1991); Berman (1968); Betz and Martens (2004); Bhoite (1987); Boschetti (1985); Boschetti (1988 [1985]); Bourg (2004); Bozóki (1999); Brym (1980); Burguière (2009 [2006]); Chebel d'Appolonia (1991); Collini (2006); Collins (1998); Debray (1979); Debray (1981 [1979]); Edwards (2015); Ekirch (1963); Eliæson and Kalleberg (2008); Etzioni (2006); Etzioni and Bowditch (2006); Eyerman (1994); Eyerman, Alexander, and Breese (2011); Fleck and Hess (2014); Frickel and Gross (2005); Fuller (2005); Fuller (2009); Furedi (2004); Furedi (2006 [2004]); Galster (2001a); Galster (2001b); Gella (1976); Goldfarb (1998); Gouldner (1985); Grant (1996); Gross (2002); Haney (2008); Head and Walter (1988); Jachec (2015); Jacobs and Townsley (2011); Jacoby (2000 [1897]); Jennings (1992); Jennings and Kemp-Welch (1997); Judt (1992); Julliard and Winock (2009 [1996]); Kaplan (1986); Kauppi (2010); Kelly (2004); King and Szelényi (2004); Lemert (1991); Long (2013); MacDonald (2000); Maclean (1980); Malik (1979); Miller (1999); Misztal (2007); Mohan (1987); Morgan and Baert (2015); Ory and Sirinelli (1992); Pecourt (2007); Pecourt (2008); Picò and Pecourt (2013); Posner (2003 [2001]); Rabinbach (1997); Rieff (1969); Rubenstein (1993); Sabour (2001); Sadri (1992); Said (1994); Salmon (1987); Sedgwick (2009 [2004]); Sirinelli (1988); Small (2002); Sowell (2009); Spotts (2008); Swartz (2003); Swartz (2013); Thijssen (2013); Traverso (1999); Wilkinson (1981); Winock (1997); Wish (1960).

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