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the state, philosophy, and the tyranny of the logos: an introduction to françois châtelet's "classical greece, reason, and the state"

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INTRODUCTION

Philosophy, it has been argued, is a form of friendship. To be a philosopher is necessarily to be a friend. It is with these assertions that Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari begin their book *What is Philosophy*?[1] At its very essence, philosophy-as-friendship entails a mode of thought wherein one thinks *alongside* another. Though Deleuze and Guattari speak of the philosopher thinking alongside the *concept*, it is not a stretch to imagine philosophers thinking alongside one another. To this end, if one looks at the 'friends' of a philosopher in a more material, less metaphorical sense—or the word friend as it is commonly understood to refer

to other human beings—it would not be surprising to find that they socialised primarily with other philosophers. This is certainly true for many of the theorists associated with post-World War II French philosophy and what is commonly referred to as 'poststructuralism'; if one looks at the friends of philosophers like Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Jean-François Lyotard, they will inevitably find the name François Châtelet.

Though his work has until now gone untranslated and been largely ignored in English scholarship, the historian of philosophy François Châtelet played a major role in the development of French thought that is on par with that of his more well-known contemporaries. Born in 1925, Châtelet was founding member of the University of Vincennes, Paris VIII's experimental department of philosophy alongside Michel Foucault in the aftermath of the 1968 student protests. In 1983, he would establish the *Collège Internationale de Philosophie* in Paris along with other prominent philosophers, an institution that in Alessandra Campana's words, is at "the forefront of militant and engaged critical thinking," in which it has sought to "relocate philosophy at the intersection of science, politics, psychoanalysis, art and literature, jurisprudence, and economy."[2] Châtelet's association with radical educational institutions and the interdisciplinarity of research undertaken at the latter both point to what can be understood to be the essence of his philosophical project: that the history of philosophy is also a *politics* of philosophy. *La Grèce Classique, La Raison, L'État*, which was first published in 1978 and appears here in translation for the first time under the title *Classical Greece, Reason, and the State*, is exemplary in this regard, providing a powerful critique of the history of philosophy and its purported Greek origins. As Deleuze argues, Châtelet reveals that "Athens was not the advent of an eternal reason, but the singular event of a provisional rationalisation. In this view, the essence of classical philosophy cannot be extended to the contemporary era—neither in its original form, or in a revised form that has been modified and updated across the passage of time. Therefore, by politicising philosophy and its history, Châtelet's work also shows philosophy to be indicative of a particular cultural moment, rather than as an

isolated discipline cut off from the influences of material life. He establishes a form of 'rational empiricism' for conducting a history of political philosophy that rejects universality for potentiality.[3] Said otherwise, his work is indicative of what might be called the poststructuralist critique of historical narrative surrounding the canon of western thought, a critique that Michael Hardt rightfully argues "has problematised the foundations of philosophical and political thought."[4] However, Châtelet has made important contributions to the poststructuralist approach to theorising the western tradition that remain novel and insightful to a contemporary audience, rather than simply being one of many to problematise philosophy's purported foundations.

The poststructuralist analysis of the history of western thought is well-known. It is an approach rejects the treatment of figures from the canon as historical icons, appeals to universality, and a fixed identity of nature.[5] It adopts a "strategic relation to the tradition" that is "ambivalent, playful, supplemental, while at the same time undermining the coherence and integrity of the modern narrative."[6] Though sometimes misinterpreted as anti-foundationalist, its approach to the canon can be better understood according to Foucault's notion of 'problematisation': the subjection of concepts and narratives to intense inquiry that reveals that things which one seemed stable, self-evident, natural, and universally agreed upon are anything but. Instead, the act of problematisation reveals that they are instead the biproduct of intense debates as well as social, economic, and political processes that render these objects contentious and contingent, as well as constantly evolving. In the case of the history of philosophy, this means showing that this history was not the result of an organic evolution according to a progressions in human thought. To the contrary, this narrative is constantly rewritten or rearticulated to conform to a particular objective; an objective whose resolution is presupposed in the initial impression one has prior to engaging in the analysis of problematisation.[7] There is no universal history of philosophy, but rather many different histories that are each contingent upon the image of western thought one wishes to paint. As such, Hardt argues that poststructuralism is oriented towards

"the exploration of new grounds for philosophical and political inquiry; it is involved not simply in the rejection of the tradition of political and philosophical discourse, but more importantly in the articulation and affirmation of alternative lineages that arise from within the tradition itself."[8] This orientation is found in Derrida's deconstruction, and Deleuze and Guattari's deterritorialisation of geophilosophy. It is mirrored in Foucault's charting of counter-histories, and Lyotard's rejection of grand narratives. However, the degree to which poststructuralist thought performed such an analysis of the history of philosophy is often overstated; often, it is implied in their work or is gestured towards. None of these theorists undertook the arduous task of engaging with the canon directly, dismantling the tradition, and allowing for its rearticulation.[9] Such a project was, however, undertaken by Châtelet. In doing so, he made what Alessandra Campana attests to as being "influential contributions to the debate on the politics, history, and institutionalisation of philosophy."[10] The author of an eight volume history of philosophy and alongside monographs and articles analysing figures from the canon of western thought, one might even be inclined to argue that Châtelet is the poststructuralist historian of philosophy *par excellence*, given the strength and breadth of his work in this area.

To say that Châtelet engages in an analysis of the canon from a poststructuralist lens broadly construed, however, does not do justice to the innovation inherent to Châtelet's project. At the core of his work is an engagement with what Brian Massumi refers to as "State philosophy" in his reading of Deleuze: that is, the notion that (western) philosophy and politics were born of the same gesture and have progressed in tandem with one another rather than as separate entities. What unites politics and philosophy in this view is a shared form of reason.[11] In truth, Châtelet may have inaugurated this line of inquiry rather than Deleuze. The twin birth of philosophy and politics was the subject of his first book on Pericles, who he argued was the founder of both western philosophy and the contemporary democratic system.[12] As such, Châtelet might provide a stronger account of State philosophy than Deleuze. Unlike Deleuze, ancient Greece was

central to Châtelet's political philosophy. In addition to his book on Pericles, Châtelet published a book on Plato, along with several articles and book chapters that provide a poststructuralist inquiry into the nature of Greek philosophy. *Classical Greece, Reason, and the State* is one such work. Here, he problematises our view of Greek philosophy in such a way that it also problematises the foundations of the State. As Deleuze and Guattari argued in a footnote found in *A Thousand Plateaus* (which is the sole mention of this text in English scholarship until now), "Chatelet questions the classical notion of the city-state and doubts that the Athenian city can be equated with any variety of State."[13] As such, it could be said that Châtelet provides a more engaged and direct intervention into the narrative of State philosophy, addressing it at the moment of its birth in order to attack it at its foundations.

Despite his attack on its roots, Châtelet's engagement with State philosophy is productive rather than destructive. What is ultimately of concern for him is the relationship between power and reason, rather than any given political system. In *Chronique des idées perdues,*[14] he explains:

> Political power does not attract me at all. Being against power, seeking to 'check' its activity—in my view, these are traps. What interests me is power as potentiality, that which makes power what it is. Now, potentiality is, strictly speaking, 'one for all'. I enjoy actualising my potential—doing what I can—in order to understand and disclose the mechanisms of the imprisonment of power, here and there, when I have 'information'... Potentiality was once a word for freedom.[15]

Power for Châtelet, then, can be said to refer to a particular action that brings something into existence. Rather than describing an excess of State power, he points to an imprisonment of this power-as-potentiality that exists within the

multitude that acts as 'one for all'. It is through the social nature of this power that one arrives at reason. In Deleuze's words, Châtelet shows that philosophy results from "a process of rationalisation" that emerges and is defined "each time we establish human relations in some material form, in some group, in some multiplicity." The implication of this relational and materialist understanding of rationality is as follows: "act, qua relation, is always political. Reason, as a process, is political."[16] No form of reason can exist above politics, operating according to universal principles that exist *a priori* their discovery by the human mind. Instead, reason is the production of a particular epistemological regime created through an ongoing interchange of power. The entirety of human thought is governed by politics. If Athens and the classical tradition—which continue to loom over contemporary society—are roots to which modernity is attached and from which it cannot free itself, then there is only one solution: to reclaim the potentiality of philosophy from the grips of the State and engage in *new* processes of rationalisation. This tactic boasts the possibility for creating a new politico-epistemological order.

This is the task undertaken by Châtelet in *Classical Greece, Reason, and the State*. Here, he seeks to liberate the Athenian City from the Platonic tradition, which has created a false equivalency between the *polis* and the modern State by virtue of the Platonic *logos*. Though the Greek City was *not* a proto-State, this is nonetheless how it has been treated in the history of philosophy. Demonstrating the inherent differences between the Greek City and the modern State, he shows that Athenian democracy was (using the ethnological work of Pierre Clastres as a conceptual point of reference[17]) a society *without* the State. Rather than operating according to the absolutism of sovereignty that is found in the State—which Châtelet treats as a biproduct of Platonism and its attempts to unify all knowledge claims under the singularity of the *logos*—Athenian democracy was constituted through power always remaining in 'the middle' of society, shared by all who participate in its administration. Moreover, he argues that Athens managed to avoid falling into

the traps of accumulation and commodity-fetishism set by the capitalist system. This reconstruction of Athens is not provided to convince Châtelet's readers that society ought to return to this model. To the contrary, he argues that societies must create their politics according to what they truly are. As such, it is up to those living in them to determine how they can create their own society without the State that is at once diverse while also unified. What Athenian democracy reveals is that accomplishing such a task is possible.

Classical Greece, Reason, and the State provides a powerful and succinct statement on the themes mentioned above, which are major currents running throughout the entirety of Châtelet's work. For these reasons, it can be thought of as a seminal text on poststructuralism and its relationship to the history of western philosophy. Its absence in anglophone critical theory is palpable, revealing a lacuna in the reconstruction of the poststructuralist project that has begun by way of translating the works of its theorists into the English language. This lacuna is now being filled. Châtelet joins the ranks of philosophers like Gilbert Simondon as a giant of post-World War II French philosophy whose work was first published in English in the pages of *Parrhesia*. Though some readers may be familiar with his name, few are likely to be familiar with Châtelet's work. Unfortunately, there are few resources for them to familiarise themselves; the absence of English translations of Châtelet's work has also created a dearth of commentary and critical reflection on his work for those unable to speak French. This introduction will be of interest to those seeking to understand *why* it is so important that his work be translated for an English audience. Lastly, it provides preliminary remarks and reflections on Châtelet's text that might serve as the catalyst for scholarship on his work in the anglophone academy. To provide such an introduction, I address two themes in Châtelet's text: first, alterity and genealogy; and second, rationality, logos and the State.

ALTERITY AND GENEALOGY

Châtelet's *Classical Greece, Reason, and the State* was first published in an edited volume titled *En Marge, l'Occident et Ses «Autres»*. As its name (which translates to "On the Margin, the Occident, and their 'Others'") would suggest, the contributors to this book are concerned with questioning and problematising the history of western thought and Occidental culture. Châtelet's contribution is no exception. His argument is hostile towards the reverence of ancient Greece and deference to its philosophy that is often found in work that examines this period, and within the history of philosophy at large. Taking issue with this difference, Châtelet's text performs a genealogy of the modern State that returns to ancient Greece. There, he finds a moment wherein the State first emerged, being born out of the Platonic tradition. Of course, western philosophy did not *begin* with Plato. As such, his genealogy also reveals a form of politics that existed prior to the emergence of Platonism, that of Athenian democracy, which has its own associated political philosophy that can be accounted for through a genealogical inquiry.

The philosophical notion of genealogy is derived from the work of Freidrich Nietzsche and would later be further developed into a total methodology for philosophical inquiry by Foucault. Châtelet does not explicitly state he is performing a genealogical analysis. Nonetheless, it is central to the text's methodology. It is alluded to in Châtelet's discussion of the 'temporal alterity' that is inherent to the relationship between classical Greece and the contemporary era. By this, he means that this relationship is constituted by the absence of the 'Other', understood as

> some sort of ancestor, so far in the past that he cannot appear, among obvious differences, with features that are no less obvious than those manifest in the identity of the one and the other... This genealogical relation is understood as the return to a beginning or the mark of a decisive

> inflection; it is heard under the category of the Good—the occurrence of a reality or an idea that, because of its excellence, lasted, a happy change inscribed strongly in progress, a white stone laid down by divine Providence or human ingenuity—or the category of the Evil—'original sin', irreparable illegitimacy, or 'the beginning of the end'.[18]

In short, Greece constitutes a beginning of sorts for those fundamental concepts that have governed human thought within the confines of the philosophical tradition. This is also construed to the beginning of the social and political order inherent to occidental civilisation. In this sense, Greece is thought of as

> a pre-formation of a present or future modernity, on the grounds that it is place of invention of the essential elements of the present-day reality, whether this modernity serves as an origin or, at the very least, as the chief moment of a becoming that is now being realised, whether its becoming is complete or has only just begun.[19]

No doubt, Châtelet describes philosophy in Platonic terms, with its appeals to higher categories mentioned above: Good, Evil, and all their offshoots that would be articulated within Christianity by way of theology inspired by Neoplatonic philosophy. Given the continued salience of these concepts, it is understandable why society might turn to Plato as the birthplace of the occidental worldview.

Châtelet's genealogy is ultimately a genealogy of State philosophy, and the variant of modernity it produces. For Châtelet, modernity is inflicted with a

> totalitarian disease to manufacture, for the sake of the cause, unified fields where anything is put anyhow in correspondence with current affairs... in

> vehement and abstract juggleries, where the Master, the Slave, the Law, the State, the Angel, the Rebel rapidly swirl... This time, the mawkish negation of Hegel and the abstract refutation offered by Marx that sees in Hellenism the beginning of our misfortunes: precisely because it invented 'the tyranny of the logos' and the despotic State.[20]

His distaste for the tyranny of the logos inherent to modernity echoes Max Weber's account of the disenchantment of society under the conditions of modernity and the processes of rationalisation it heralded.[21] Perhaps more importantly, though, it is worth noting Nietzsche's argument that "all things that live a long time gradually become so saturated with reason that their lineage out of unreason thus becomes implausible."[22] As Nietzsche shows, philosophical modes of reason are not truly natural, existing a priori according to a higher order.[23] This, in essence, is the goal of Châtelet's genealogy: what has come to be understood as 'Reason' (not to be confused with the uncapitalised) is not endogenous to ancient Greek society. Therefore, a philosophical or political tradition that claims its origins in the history of Reason is inherently suspect. What a genealogy therefore calls into question is the supposed naturalness of the narrative told about the history of western philosophy, and the preservation of its original form across time. As Châtelet argues, "the Greek world... is *designed* by histories of philosophy as the beginning." The question that must be asked is: what "modernisations and adaptations imposed by historical discoveries"[24] were required for the realities of the contemporary moment to emerge from a past that is fundamentally different from the present?

RATIONALITY, LOGOS, AND THE STATE

Answering this question leads Châtelet to an inquiry into the nature and origins of Reason, or what in ancient Greece was referred to as *logos*. Deleuze notes that Châtelet "always defined himself as a rationalist."[25] Though one might think

this would make Châtelet an advocate for Reason rather than its opponent, it is because of his particular mode of rationalism, rooted in immanence and actualisation, that leads him to its rejection. Whereas Châtelet's rationalism might ask questions like 'whose reason', 'what form of reason', or—best of all—'what is responsible for bringing this form of reason into being', Reason seeks to create a unifying discourse that is hostile to the pluralism inherent to immanent reason. Châtelet's form of reason contains what Jean Borreil refers to as a 'radical materiality' that occurs through the actualisation of reason, "not as *logos,* but as the very movement of the act of reason."[26] These two modes of rationalism are placed into conflict with one another in Châtelet's text. The Reason of logos is that which is associated with State philosophy, which Châtelet refers to as "the tyranny of the logos." As Châtelet shows, the philosophical premises for the State, despotic in nature, are found within the tyranny of the logos that was first established in Platonic thought.[27]

Châtelet begins the conclusion to his book on Plato by declaring that the latter had 'invented' philosophy. By this, he means that Plato "defines what culture will henceforth understand by *Reason*." In doing so, "he draws the framework within which 'Mediterranean-Occidental' thought will build its values and develop its progress."[28] Platonism does this by establishing a system of Reason that is *exclusive and* does not allow for competing knowledge claims. Instead, it seeks to subsume all philosophy and knowledge within its framework. As Jessica Moss notes, the concept of logos encapsulates a wide range of meanings but is most often translated into English as 'Reason' when discussing the works of Plato and Aristotle:[29] the two most prominent Greek figures found in the western canon. Both make explicit reference to the existence of "true Reason"[30] or "right Reason."[31] Moss explains the meaning of this phrase as follows: "the right *logos* is right Reason, and the virtuous person acts as Reason commands."[32] As such, logos soon crosses over from the realm of epistemology into the realm of ethics, wherein having virtue is to act according to the rationality prescribed by this philosophical system.

Logos then crosses over from ethics into politics, or political philosophy. In his *Republic,* Plato establishes the logos as the criteria for governing; the "true" philosopher—that is, the one who meets the ideals of wisdom set by Platonic philosophy rather that of the Sophists[33]—is said to be the ideal ruler in the perfect city.[34] As Châtelet shows, the ideals of Platonic political philosophy would later be re-articulated within the framework of sovereignty and the Hegelian State[35] and its similar emphasis on the need for uniformity and its appeals to universality and universal reason.[36] The reasons for which Châtelet declares logos to be tyrannical become clear, and why a State built upon its foundations would inevitably be despotic. Under such a regime that governs human thought and action, anything that does not conform to the principles of Platonic philosophy are deemed irrational or illegal by virtue of its not conforming to this imagined 'right Reason'. Accordingly, Châtelet argues elsewhere in an article titled *Sur le Concept du Violence (ou Non)* that violence becomes "a conceptual element which remains decisive, since thanks to it and to the alterity that it defines, the reality of Reason (or λόγος [logos]) is found to be manifest." Today, he says, philosophy is "designated as violence no matter what."[37]Said otherwise, the unifying of human thought into a single mode of thought is not peaceful or apolitical. In fact, Châtelet argues that philosophy is both fundamentally political, and has been political from the outset by virtue of its attempts to create unity out of multiplicity. Creating such an order is an inherently violent act.[38] As such, he asserts that philosophy's project is fundamentally the following:

> to present this violence, to name, to reveal its aspects, to bring to light what is active, actual, but which gets lost every time one tries to talk about it (as witnessed in the naively misleading τέχνη [techne] of politicians and rhetoricians); to reveal Reason, antithetical, and its modalities, to reveal what is active (on top of this), but which is hidden and which only imposes

> itself when one *simply tries* to speak or to determine what speaking means.[39]

Reason and violence are intimately related in Châtelet's philosophy. They may even refer to the same process or force. This argument can be carried over to *Classical Greece, Reason, and the State*, and helps emphasise the necessity for challenging the Platonic foundations of the modern condition, expressed in the modern State. Though Châtelet does not explain the progression from Plato to Hegel in detail[40]—much like it is assumed that the latter's model of the State describes contemporary society, rather than meticulously proven—he sees the violence of Platonic unification within Hegelianism as well. Rightfully so, given Hegel's assertion that the State

> requires a universal centre... in which the various powers, foreign relations, defence, and their relevant finances etc. are united, a centre which not only directs [the whole] but also has the necessary power to assert itself and its resolutions and to keep the individual parts in [a state of] dependence on itself.[41]

While the political dimensions of the logos may not be immediately apparent from the discussion thus far (though they are far more apparent when reading Plato's work itself), their manifestation in the Hegelian State is unmistakable. The function of Platonism, therefore, is exactly as Massumi says: to establish a tradition of thought that coincides with the ideals of the State. Problematising State philosophy and the tyranny of the logos on these grounds is the goal of Châtelet's text.

This goal is pursued in two ways. First, he challenges the purported necessity of the State. Pointing to Pierre Clastres' work,[42] Châtelet argues that ethnological anthropology has shown the existence of societies that lack the State, or anything that resembles it. Whereas such societies are conventionally thought of by the disciplines of ethnology and political science to be lacking something, Châtelet argues that nothing is missing from these societies. In reality, these societies do not lack their own discourse or refined thought, nor are they wanting of material goods. Rather than a lack, the difference between societies that live under the yoke of the State and those that do not is that the latter make a conscious "political" choice to "exclude the establishment of a central power embodied in an individual and exercised externally on the community."[43] Clastres' work, therefore, dismantles the assumption that humans *must* live under the yoke of the State-form, an assumption that situates the State as the point of departure for any social or political project. To the contrary, the State is contingent, rather than *a priori*. One must ask what causes it to emerge.

Second, Châtelet argues that Platonic philosophy is *not* actually indicative of ancient Greek society. In fact, Châtelet labels Platonism as "heterodox" in the context of Greek political ideology and argues that "the conception of *logos* expounded in the *Republic* was held by its contemporaries to be excessive, even aberrant."[44] We cannot, therefore, reduce ancient Greece, nor ancient Athens, to Platonic philosophy—which betrays the democratic ethos with which Athens is associated. Plato's critique of democracy found in his *Republic* is well known. Defining democracy as the "power of the mob," Plato argues that democracy inevitably leads to demagogy, which in turn leads to the installation of a tyranny.[45] Such an argument, Châtelet argues, undoes the work done by Cleisthenes, Ephialtes and by Pericles (as attested to by Thucydides) to transform this mob rule into the democratic system that is most commonly associated with ancient Athens: a society where the decisions of politics are made by an Assembly composed of all citizens as equals.[46] Such a society might then mirror the society without the State, whose existence and viability was proven by Clastres. However, such a society is

absent from the canon of Greek philosophy, despite its importance in classical history. This is because, in Châtelet's words, "Hellenism is reduced to Platonism, and Platonism restricted to its academic pedagogy; this is the kind of reduction required to make the classical Greeks the inventors—like it or not—of tyrannical Reason and the State's Reason."[47] As such, a philosophy of Athenian democracy must be reconstructed, which Châtelet is able to do by way of his genealogical method and reference to the works of classical Greek historians.

Châtelet's reconstruction of Athenian democratic theory is not done with the goal of advocating its society as a viable alternative to the contemporary State. As Châtelet notes, "societies must invent their politics according to what they are."[48] As his text emphasises, contemporary western societies cannot be characterised as the descendants of Athens. To try and emulate the model of Athenian democracy would be just as foolish as the political Platonism that Châtelet's chapter attacks. The purpose of reconstructing such a democratic philosophy is done only in furtherance of this attack, demonstrating exactly how the Athenian *polis* cannot be said to be the progenitor of sovereignty and the modern State. In fact, protections against the emergence of an apparatus of power that might produce something like sovereignty were woven into the fabric of Athenian democracy. Rather than adopting a true Athenian model of politics, the prescriptive dimension of Châtelet's text is instead to reject the linear-progressive histories that have made the State and its philosophical foundations appear natural, universal, and unavoidable. In doing so, societies are freed from thinking of themselves through the framework of the State and its apparatuses. Though he does not provide a particular image of what such a society might look like, liberating our thought from the yoke of the State will allow for the creation of new societies without the State (even if they might not look like that which existed in ancient Athens).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

When translating a work of philosophy, there is always the risk of the original meaning being inadvertently altered or weakened through the act of translation.

This is especially true for theorists who were deliberate in their use of language, vocabulary, and grammar, playing with the mechanics of writing and the meaning of words to create multiple layers of signification beyond that which is found within a factual and literal reading of the text. Châtelet, like many of his contemporaries, is among those writers. In response to the difficulties that come with translating such an author, certain choices were necessary that play an impactful role in shaping the English text that was produced. It is worth discussing these choices broadly.

In translating this text, attempts have been made to retain the style of Châtelet's writing as much as possible. This has meant retaining his fondness for the use of dashes to create lengthy sentences composed of several clauses that are at times confusing, and certainly defy the norms of scholarly writing in the anglophone world. The reader is encouraged to allow themselves to engage with the complexity of these sentences and find the intricate and detailed arguments found within. Châtelet's grammar and style have been retained for this very reason: to ensure that no meaning is lost for the sake of clarity or to conform to the conventional aesthetic of 'proper' English writing.

As the above would suggest, this translation is conservative in making changes to Châtelet's text. The only substantial modifications that have been made to his writing are cases wherein the meaning of the original text is better preserved by not adopting a literal translation, or when a literal translation is simply not possible. Most important to note is that at times, a translation that does justice to the original text is simply not possible. *Classical Greece, Reason, and the State* is rife with clever wordplay, wherein Châtelet draws upon the dual meaning of words, or the phonetic similarities between two terms. Because such a practice draws on the specificities of the French language, his wordplay often cannot be reproduced in English. In these instances, the original French term has been placed in brackets, followed by an endnote that explains the alteration in question. The reader is therefore encouraged to consult these notes, which give the translation a *metatextual* dimension. A term coined by Gérard Genette, metatextuality refers to

a relationship that "unites a given text to another."[49] In this case, the notes link the translation to the original text, allowing it to traverse the gulf separating the English and French language. It does so by offering an account of the rhetoric employed in the original text. Other notes link the translation to other texts, pointing the reader to the source of arguments and other scholarly work addressed or alluded to by Châtelet, both explicitly and implicitly. What motivates the writing of these notes, as well as this introduction, is a desire to provide readers with the opportunity to read and appreciate Châtelet's text fully, without any of its meaning or cleverness being lost. With these features preserved, the reader can experience the full power of Châtelet's rejection of Platonism, whose implications are so strong that they in turn reverberate through the entirety of the history of western thought, shaking all political theories that have been built on its foundation. They will also experience the ingenuity of Châtelet's reconstruction of Athenian democratic theory, showing a Stateless society that was able to achieve greatness without an invocation of sovereignty or the capitalist system. Lastly, if the translation and the text itself are successful in their aims, then the reader will head Châtelet's call to begin imagining a mode of politics that can adequately address the issues of the contemporary era, in a way that is fundamentally democratic, and emerges out of a social and political theory that is free from the yoke of State philosophy and the constraints it has put on human thought.

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NOTES

1. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 1–6.
2. Alessandra Campana, "From Pericles to Verdi (and Back Again): An Introduction to Gilles Deleuze's Pericles and Verdi," *The Opera Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (October 1, 2005): 713–14, https://doi.org/10.1093/oq/kbi101.
3. Gilles Deleuze, "Pericles and Verdi: The Philosophy of François Châtelet," trans. Charles T. Wolfe, *The Opera Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (October 1, 2005): 720.
4. Michael Hardt, "Introduction: Hegel and the Foundations of Poststructuralism," in *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), xi.
5. Benoît Dillet, Iain MacKenzie, and Robert Porter, "Introduction," in *The Edinburgh Companion to Poststructuralism*, ed. Benoît Dillet, Iain MacKenzie, and Robert Porter (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 4.
6. Simon Lumsden, "Poststructuralism and Modern European Philosophy," in *The Edinburgh Companion to Poststructuralism*, ed. Benoît Dillet, Iain MacKenzie, and Robert Porter (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 24.
7. Michel Foucault, "Problematics," in *Foucault Live: Interviews, 1961-84*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (New York: Semiotext(e), 1996), 418–21.
8. Hardt, "Hegel and the Foundations of Poststructuralism," ix–x.
9. The exception to this would be Deleuze, who did engage in such a history of philosophy in his early career for these very reasons. See Gilles Deleuze, "Letter to a Harsh Critic," in *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 6. However, Deleuze's history of philosophy is incomplete, providing only a partial analysis of the western tradition beginning with the Renaissance, apart from Duns Scotus (who occupies a central role in Deleuze's philosophy), and a few brief remarks on Plato.
10. Campana, "Pericles to Verdi (and Back Again)," 714.
11. Brian Massumi, *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), 4.
12. Campana, "From Pericles to Verdi (and Back Again)," 714; Also see François Châtelet, *Périclès et son siècle* (1960; repr., Brussels: Éditions Complexe, 1990).
13. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 565n16. See also Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Mille Plateaux: Capitalisme et Schizophrénie (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1980), 539n16 for this passage in the original French text.
14. In English, this title could be translated as "Chronicle of Lost Ideas."
15. François Châtelet, Chronique des idées perdues (Paris: Stock, 1977), 218, quoted in Deleuze, "Pericles and Verdi," 716.
16. Deleuze, "Pericles and Verdi," 717.
17. See Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology*, trans. Robert Hurley and Abe Stein (New York: Zone Books, 1990).
18. François Châtelet, "La Grèce Classique, La Raison, L'État," in *En Marge, l'Occident et Ses «Autres»* (Paris: Aubier Montagne, 1978), 197–98.
19. Châtelet, 199.
20. Châtelet, 200.
21. See Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. Hans

Heinrich Gerth (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), 129–56.and represents a reproduction of an important historical work, maintaining the same format as the original work. While some publishers have opted to apply OCR (optical character recognition

22. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Dawn: Thoughts on the Presumptions of Morality*, trans. Brittain Smith, vol. 5, The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 8. For a discussion of how Weber's notion of disenchantment can be brought into conversation with Nietzschean philosophy, see Adam Foster, "Heretic Gnosis: Education, Children, and the Problem of Knowing Otherwise," in *Childhood, Science Fiction, and Pedagogy: Children Ex Machina*, ed. David W. Kupferman and Andrew Gibbons (Singapore: Springer, 2019), 172–74.ed. David W. Kupferman and Andrew Gibbons (Singapore: Springer, 2019

23. Friedrich Nietzsche, "Twilight of the Idols," in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols. and Other Writings*, ed. Aaron Ridley, trans. Judith Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 166–70.

24. Châtelet, "La Grèce Classique, La Raison, L'État," 199–200.

25. Deleuze, "Pericles and Verdi," 716–17.

26. Jean Borreil, "François Châtelet, Ou Les Raisons De L'autre," *Le Cahier*, no. 8 (1989): 269-270. All translations my own.

27. Châtelet, "La Grèce Classique, La Raison, L'État," 200–201.

28. François Châtelet, *Platon* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 243. All translations my own. Reason has here been capitalised for the sake of consistency in discussing the term in the context of Platonic philosophy. It does not appear capitalised in the original French text.

29. Jessica Moss, "Right Reason in Plato and Aristotle: On the Meaning of 'Logos,'" *Phronesis* 59, no. 3 (2014): 182–83.

30. See Plato, "Theaetetus," in *Theaetetus and Sophist*, trans. Christopher Rowe (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 201c–202c.

31. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Roger Crisp (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 2.2, 1103b–1104a.trans. Roger Crisp (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014

32. Moss, "Right Reason in Plato and Aristotle," 183–84.

33. See Plato, *Republic*, trans. C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004), 491b–93 for an account of this dismissal of Sophist philosophy.

34. Plato, 428b-d; 502c-d.

35. Châtelet, "La Grèce Classique, La Raison, L'État," 205.

36. See Georg Wilhelm Fredrich Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), §270, §§275-276, §§278-281.

37. François Châtelet, "Remarques Sur Le Concept De Violence (Ou Non)," *Les Études Philosophiques*, no. 1 (1968): 31-32. All translations my own.

38. See Robert M. Cover, "Violence and the Word," *The Yale Law Journal* 95, no. 8 (1986): 1601–29, https://doi.org/10.2307/796468 for a discussion of interpretation as an act of violence by imposing a particular order upon the world.

39. Châtelet, "Concept De Violence," 34. Some punctuation has been changed from the original text for the sake of clarity. Specifically, dashes have been replaced with parentheses in the fourth line.

40. However, Châtelet does see a fundamental relationship between Platonism and Hegelianism. In his book on Hegel, he argues that every Hegelian must begin their philosophy with a reflection

on Platonism, given that Platonism established the criteria for which something can definitively be thought of as "philosophy." See François Châtelet, *Hegel* (1968; repr., Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1994), 54.
41. Georg Wilhelm Fredrich Hegel, "The German Constitution," in *Political Writings*, ed. Lawrence Dickey and H. B. Nisbet, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 12–13.
42. See Clastres, *Society Against the State*.
43. Châtelet, "La Grèce Classique, La Raison, L'État," 200.
44. Châtelet, 203.
45. Plato, *Republic*, trans. C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004), 562a–569c.
46. Châtelet, "La Grèce Classique, La Raison, L'État," 202–3.
47. Châtelet, 204.
48. Châtelet, 212.
49. Gérard Genette, "Five Types of Transtexuality, among Which Hypertextuality," in *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 4.