On the Politics of Aesthetic Education:
The Occupation of *L'École des Beaux-Arts,* May 14th - June 27th 1968.

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Abstract

This thesis uses the occupation of *L'École des Beaux-Arts,* May14th-June 27th 1968, as a limit case study to interrogate the power structures, ideologies, and discourses of the university, and higher education, via the lens of the philosophy of Jacques Rancière. My original contribution to knowledge is firstly that I forward a theoretical reading of the screen-printed agitprop of '*L'Atelier populaire de l'ex-École des Beaux-Arts*'; the name given to the spontaneous model of self-organised co-production and self-education which emerged from the '68 Beaux-Arts occupation. This reading departs significantly from all other anglophone discussions of *L'Atelier populaire* works in the secondary literature, in the attention given to these as aesthetic works with political effects, rather than as historical illustrations of '68 or merely political propaganda. Secondly, I situate Rancière's conception of the *le partage du sensible* within the broader tradition of the Marxist critique of ideology, specifically attempting to uncover a repressed Althusserian inheritance, and to read *L'Atelier populaire* as an instance of ideological struggle. Thirdly, I forward the art school 'in occupation' as a both Rancièrean politics of the *sans-part*, and a total 'redistribution of the sensible' within the university, which tests the autodidact hypothesis of Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991 [1987]) and, as heuristic, offers a theory of radically democratic education which can usefully be applied to the fields of education studies, especially the emerging field of 'critical university studies'. This reading forwards a Rancièrean aesthetics of art education, utilising an original concept of 'aesthetic practice'; a neo-Althusserianism which figures *subjectivation* as ideological practice, albeit radically heterological and dissensual, not interpellative. As an interdisciplinary art historical thesis, this also offers a variety of minor contributions to the academic disciplines of Politics and International Studies, French, Sociology, Political Philosophy, Education, and the Social History of Design.

Acknowledgements:

More parties have been involved in the formulation of this thesis than can be acknowledged here. Of those, I would like to thank everybody at Kingston School of Art, especially Prof. Martin McQuillan, with whom I started this research project, and Prof. Scott Wilson, with whom I finished it. The expertise and patient guidance of both has been invaluable. Similarly, special thanks should be extended to Prof. Simon Wortham and Prof. John Mowitt who examined my thesis. As well as their 'lessons', and those of Althusser and Rancière, I am grateful, in different ways, for the 'lessons' of everyone at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, the London Graduate School, and *Radical Philosophy*. I feel proud to have been associated, albeit at a distance, with this inspiring and radical research culture for the last six years. Outside Kingston, I would also like to thank Dr. Andy Stafford at Leeds University for invaluable assistance with the French translations, and everyone involved with the Social History of Art at Leeds. Also, the staff of the university libraries at Leeds, Leeds Beckett, and Huddersfield, and also the British Library, without whom I couldn't have written this thesis. From the publishing world, I would like to also thank the editors at Routledge and Punctum for their enthusiasm for different aspects of this thesis, which will hopefully bear fruit in the coming months. Personally, I would like to thank my family, especially my wife and children, and Percy, for their patience whilst I devoted time that should have been spent with them to completing this thesis. I would also like to thank everyone who has discussed this project with me over the last few years. On a more sombre note, I would also like to acknowledge the influence of my father, Raymond Miles, my uncle, Lance Hepple, and my student and co-researcher David Gasi, all of whom saw me start this research project but sadly didn't live to see its completion. Love and thanks to my mum, Shirley Miles, for everything. Finally, I would like to thank Graham Curling and Leeds College of Art for paying for my PhD. This thesis is inspired by the university struggles of the twentieth century and dedicated to all involved, past and present, in fighting the edu-factory. *La lutte continue.*

List of Abbreviations.

CDA	*Comités d'action* [Action Committees]. Political groups of university student groups, concerned with direct action, including factory and university occupations.
CDAL	*Comités d'action lycéens* [High School Action Committees]. Political groups of high school students primarily concerned with occupying their schools.
CFDT	*Confédération Française démocratique du travail* [French Democratic Workers' Confederation].
CGT	*Confédération générale du travail* [General Confederation of Labour].
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
CRS	*Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité*. A special squadron of French riot police.
CSE	*Centre de sociologie Européenne.*
ENS	*École normale supérieure.* One of the prestigious French *grandes écoles*.
GP	*Gauche prolétarienne*. Post-'68 continuity Maoist group.
JCR	*Jeunesse communiste révolutionnaire* [Revolutionary Communist Youth]. A Trotskyist student group.
ISA	Ideological State Apparatus (Althusser).
LRL	*Les Révoltes logiques.* French leftist journal (1975-85).
PCF	*Parti communiste Français* [French Communist Party].
RTS	Reclaim The Streets. Eco-activist campaign organisation.
RSA	Repressive State Apparatus (Althusser).
UEC	*Union des étudiants communistes* [French Communist Students' Union].
UNEF	*Union nationale des étudiants de France* [French Students' Union].
UJC-ML	*Union des jeunesses communistes marxistes-léninistes*. A Maoist student group.

Abbreviations of Frequently Cited Works by Jacques Rancière.

AD (2009a) *Aesthetics and its Discontents*, trans. Corcoran, S., Cambridge: Polity.

AIS (2013a) *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art*, trans. Paul, Z., London and New York: Verso.

AL (2011a) *Althusser's Lesson*, trans. Battista, E., London and New York: Continuum, 2011.

CC (2015 [1965]) 'The Concept of Critique and the Critique of Political Economy: From the 1844 Manuscripts to Capital', in *Reading Capital*, op. cit., pp. 73-174.

DA (1999) *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. Rose, J., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

DS (2010) *Dissensus*, trans. Corcoran, S., London and New York: Continuum.

FW (2004a) *The Flesh of Words: The Politics of Writing*, trans. Mandell, S., Stanford: Stanford University Press.

IS (1991) *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, trans. Ross, K., Stanford: Stanford University Press.

IP (2012a) *The Intellectual and his People: Staging the People, Vol. 2*, trans. Fernbach, D., London and New York: Verso.

MS (2011b) *Mute Speech*, trans. Rockhill, G., New York: Columbia.

OTI (1974b) 'On the Theory of Ideology: Althusser's Politics', *Radical Philosophy*, 7, Spring, pp. 2-15; AL, pp. 125-54.

NH (1994) *The Names of History; On the Poetics of Knowledge*, trans Melehy, H., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

PA (2004c) *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Rockhill, G., London and New York: Continuum.

PN (2012b) *Proletarian Nights: The Workers Dream in Nineteenth Century France*, London and New York: Verso.

PP (2003b) *The Philosopher and His Poor*, trans. Drury, J., Oster, C., and Parker, A., Durham and London: Duke University Press.

SP (1995b) *On the Shores of Politics*, trans. Nicholson-Smith, D., London: Verso.

STP (2011e) *Staging The People: The Proletarian and his Double*, trans. Fernbach, D., London and New York: Verso.

TBD (2006b) 'Thinking Between Disciplines: An Aesthetics of Knowledge', *Parrhesia*, 1, pp. 1-12.

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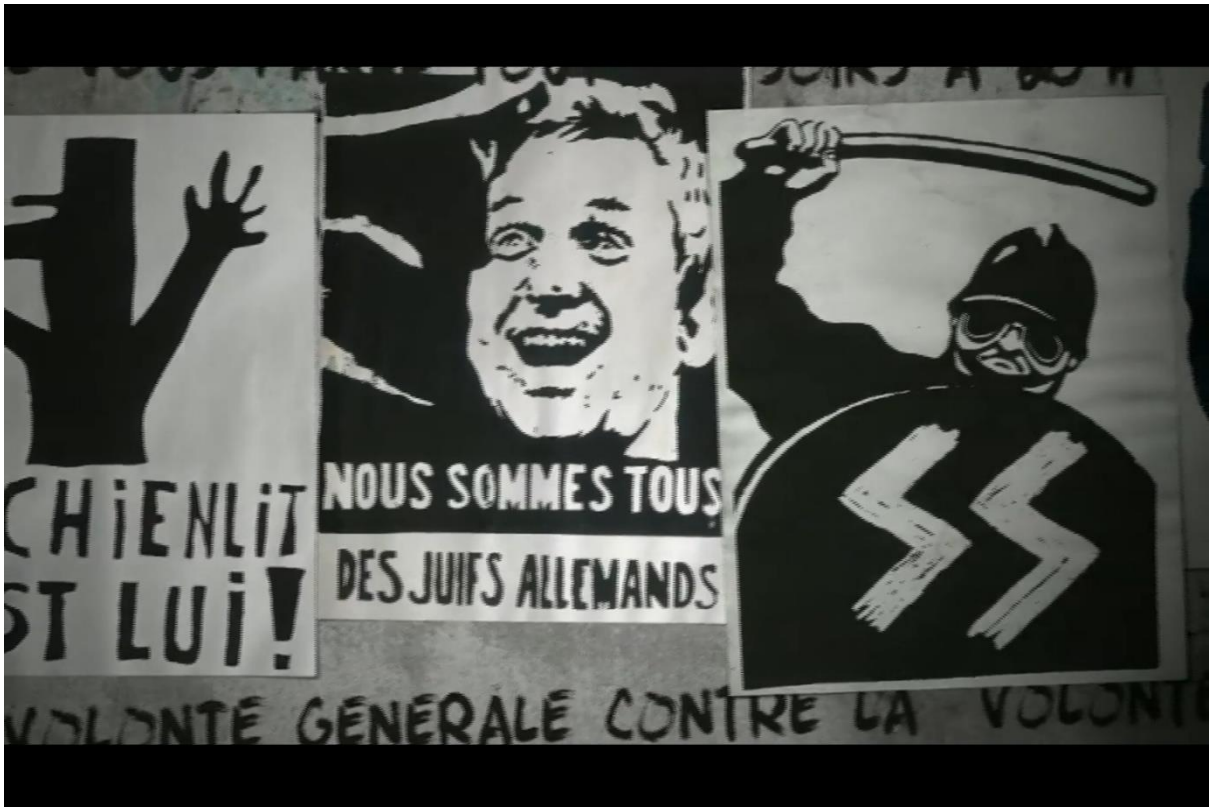

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Chapter 1: Introduction

> It's not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on the past; rather, image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is a purely temporal, continuous one, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: is not progression but image, suddenly emergent. – Only dialectical images are genuine images (that is, not archaic); and the place where one encounters them is language (Benjamin 2002: 462, n2a, 3).

> Human rights, dissidence, anti-racism, SOS-this, SOS-that: these are soft, easy, post coitum historicum ideologies, 'after-the-orgy' ideologies for an easy-going generation which has known neither hard ideologies nor radical philosophies. The ideology of a generation which is neo-sentimental in its politics too, which has rediscovered altruism, conviviality, international charity and the individual bleeding heart. Emotional outpourings, solidarity, cosmopolitan emotiveness, multi-media pathos: all soft values harshly condemned by the Nietzschean, Marxo-Freudian age... A new generation, that of the spoilt children of the crisis, whereas the preceding one was that of the accursed children of history (Baudrillard 1990: 223-24).

> The time is out of joint (Derrida 1994: 1).

As the title states, this thesis primarily concerns the political occupation of an elite Parisian art school by its students, just over fifty years ago, during the uprisings of May 1968. This titular occupation, which temporarily transformed *L'École des Beaux Arts* into *L'Atelier Populaire* [The People's Studio], is forwarded as a limit case study to raise wider questions about the structures, ideologies, and discourses of the art school, and more generally the hierarchical distribution of power with the institutional scene of higher education. More broadly, this is a thesis concerned with the politics of 1968, where the noun 'politics' will be considered in the most expanded possible sense. This expanded signification encompasses the commonplace understanding of politics as the structural organisation and management of antagonistic bodies within, or perhaps beneath, a representative or parliamentary democracy. At the same time, it also includes a more radical understanding of politics as the spectacular and visible staging of dissensus and disagreement by belligerents. This latter sense of the political is explicitly derived from the

thought of Jacques Rancière, a *soixante-huitard* whose philosophical system is inextricably wound up within both the 'politics' and the 'event' of '1968'. As such, Rancière's philosophy will be the primary lens through which both the occupation of *L'École des Beaux Arts*, and the specific historical conjuncture that determined it, will be assessed. At the same time, this thesis aims to retrospectively evaluate the philosophy of Jacques Rancière through reading the 'event' of '68, situating it *la pensée '68*, and demarcating it from the orthodox Marxist tradition from which it departs. The philosophical, political, and pedagogical relationship between Rancière and his mentor Louis Althusser will be the focal point from which these more general conclusions can be extrapolated.

As a formerly central member of the Althusserian circle, and original contributor to *Lire le Capital* (1965) / *Reading Capital* (2015) and the seminars which preceded its publication, the significance of Rancière's explicit rejection of his former mentor within *La Leçon d'Althusser* (1974) / Althusser's Lesson (2011a) extends beyond the philosophical. This thesis will argue that within the transition from Althusserian to Rancièrean thought, is inseparable from a radical disavowal of authoritarianism and hierarchisation *per se*, whether they manifest themselves in capitalist societal relations, Stalinism, theoreticism ('Theory, with a capital 'T''), or most importantly for this study, the pedagogical scene itself. The gambit of this thesis then is that by precisely interrogating the philosophical differences between Althusserian and Rancièrean 'politics', as a specific component of the schismatic conjuncture of '68 which separates 'old left' from 'new', 'orthodox left' from 'ultra-left', 'humanist marxism' from 'scientific', 'student' from both 'teacher' and 'worker' and so forth, an anti-authoritarian and emancipatory 'politics' of education can be extracted from the authoritarian 'lesson'. Going further, that this 'politics' of education can be understood as synonymous with, and in fact immanent to, democracy itself.

Though neither Rancière or Althusser were directly involved with *L'École des Beaux-Arts*, before, during, or after its occupation, the contention of this thesis remains that their respective philosophical systems, and their intersections, offer the best possible tools for its theoretical analysis. Though their personal and pedagogical histories do overlap with

L'Atelier populaire, the justification for the centrality of Rancière within this thesis is not simply historical coincidence. Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, the autodidact hypothesis at the heart of Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991 [1987]) lends itself particularly well to a reading of an anarchic university occupation. Indeed, both Davis (2010: 32-5) and May (2008) have suggested that Rancière's anti-authoritarian pedagogy of independent learning, 'equality of intelligences' (IS: 38-41), and ultimately emancipation, can also be situated within the theoretical tradition of anarchism. Therefore, this thesis will contribute to scholarship concerning the anarchist theory of education, and further clarify Rancière's anarchist inheritance.

Secondly, Rancière's reading of a famous *soixante-huitard* slogan, "*nous sommes tous des juifs-allemands*" [we are all German-Jews], within the pages of *La Mésentente* (1995a) / *Disagreement* (1999: 59), explicitly connects him to *L'Atelier populaire*, who immortalised the phrase in pictorial form and relayed it as a poster across the streets of Paris (Fig. 1). This passage of *Disagreement* aligns Rancière's own idiosyncratic conceptualisation of 'politics' with those of *L'Atelier populaire* through the aestheticisation of *subjectivation*. The impossible *juifs-allemands* subjectivity invoked by this image is a favourite example of Rancière's, and therefore not discussed at length in this thesis. However, its heterology, and Rancière's treatment of it, has inspired the reading of other *L'Atelier populaire* works developed within the final chapter, which therefore represents an original contribution to scholarship on the visual culture of '68. This reading also functions as a contribution to the scholarship on the Rancièrean theory of 'politics', in both the examples discussed and argumentative mode.

Thirdly, the unique alignment of political practice and artistic production embodied in the *L'Atelier populaire* works allows this concluding reading to demonstrate what Rancière considers the aesthetic character of politics in a manner that is not merely illustrative. In *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2004c: 13) Rancière distinguishes the 'aestheticisation of politics', which Benjamin (2007 [1936]: 241-2) recognised in the mass rallies and banners of Nazism, from the aesthetic character of politics, which resides in the extent to which political practices

'presuppose the sensible configuration of a certain world' (Rancière in Smith and Weisser 2011: 10). This *a priori* configuration is what Rancière refers to as *le partage du sensible*; the epistemic field which not only acts as a stage for political action, but which 'politics' either affirms or disrupts. Rancière has described this concept as the 'shibboleth' to his wider oeuvre (2004b: 180; Davis 2013: 157), especially his twofold claim for an 'aesthetics of politics' and a 'politics of aesthetics' (DS: 27-114; 115-204). Because of the expansive connotations of the French verb *partager*, following Chambers (2013: 70; 183n3) this thesis will leave *le partage du sensible* untranslated throughout, in an effort to maximise the intended 'literarity' of the phrase (Davis 2010: 179-80n54; Deranty 2010: 95-7).

This thesis will analyse the artistic production of *L'Atelier populaire* as instances of both the 'politics of aesthetics' and the 'aesthetics of politics' closer to the politicisation of art in the Benjaminian sense contra the populist aesthetics of fascism (2007 [1936]: 242). This reading will suggest that the political transformation of *L'École des Beaux-Arts* into *L'Atelier populaire* constitutes what Rancière would describe as a total 'redistribution of the sensible' (PA: 43) within the fabric of the art school and university; a 'politics' whose effectivity makes visible the stratifications, ideologies, and attendant subjectivities of these institutions, in order to radically difference them.

Finally, the Rancièrean theory of 'politics' essentially outlines a theory of ideological struggle formed in and against the sanctioned theories of ideology issued by the Communist Party, and modified by Althusser. The following reading of the occupation of an art school, by a student movement rebelling against both the Gaullist state and Stalinism, is not only politically sympathetic to Rancière but also works as a form of Rancièrean 'politics' against the Zhdanovist dismissal of art and art education as spaces of bourgeois ideology. The scene of an occupied Parisian *grandes école*, with all of its historical and ideological baggage, dramatises this 'politics' significantly. 'Theatocracy' [*la théâtrocratie*], meaning the spectacular dramatisation of a claim to equality through disagreement, is a neologism borrowed from Plato's *Laws* (III, 701; 1975: 154) and introduced in Rancière's *The Philosopher and His Poor* (2003b [1983]), as an essential characteristic of 'politics' (Hallward

2006: 109-29). As such, *L'École des Beaux-Arts* is read not simply as Althusserian ISA but also as a 'theatocratic' stage where the 'politics of aesthetics' and 'aesthetics of politics' can be demonstrated. This 'politics' relies on Rancière's specific reading of Kantian aesthetics 'as the system of *a priori* forms determining what presents itself to sense experience' (PA: 13). This *a priori* ordering essentialises subjectivities and knowledges according the distribution of social roles. However, the effectivity of aesthetic experience can make manifest the plurality of possible knowledges and subjectivities, rendered either invisible or impossible within *le partage du sensible*. Drawing upon Rancièrean aesthetics, this thesis will develop an original concept of 'aesthetic practice' from the reading of *L'Atelier populaire*, applicable to the fields of art history and political philosophy. This concept, connoting 'practice' in the Althusserian sense but exceeding 'ideological practice' or 'political practice' (Althusser 1979: 166-8), refers to a politics of aesthetic indeterminism capable of deconstructing *le partage du sensible* through its apparently impossible dualism, whilst rendering the authoritative claims of all would-be master discourses impotent. Linguistically, 'aesthetic practice' distinguishes Rancièrean 'politics' from Althusserian, whilst also acknowledging a shared inheritance, discussed in Chapter 4. The concept of 'aesthetic practice' also allows for a critical and conceptual assessment of the concept of ideology in both Althusser's work and the wider Marxist tradition. The concluding reading of the *L'Atelier populaire* will be the site where this concept is demonstrated and tested. The theoretical character of this reading represents a significant advance on all anglophone commentaries on the art of *L'Atelier populaire* to date, which are either historically oriented or treat the artworks as illustrations of the May struggles. The conclusions drawn will not only suggest a 'politics' of May '68, but hopefully sketch a 'politics' of the art school, which can work against the sociological pessimism of Marxian ideological critique, and remember the challenge of art (Beech 2014: 237-56).

1.1: Hauntology

By necessity, the exegesis of this 'politics' involves some historical analysis. As suggested above, this will involve demonstrating how Rancière's thought emerges from a political rupture of 1968. However, the central concerns of this thesis are far from historic. As will become apparent, the thesis aspires to bring past and present together in a Benjaminian 'dialectical image', wherein the 'French May' can be employed to illuminate the socio-politics of the current conjuncture. Going further, via the literary construction of the final chapter, the ambition is to move beyond the codes and strictures of a traditional art historical thesis and invoke a temporality close to what Benjamin has characterised as *Jetztzeit* [revolutionary messianic time].

To invoke the 'politics' of '68, *as politics*, especially fifty years after the 'event', runs the risk of appearing nostalgic, or even to be constructing an argument in memoriam. Derrida recognises as much when prefacing *Specters of Marx* (1993) with a 'dedication' to the assassinated South African Communist Chris Hani (xiv), and an 'exordium' (xvi-xx) which ventriloquises an pedagogico-ethical question from an unnamed third party, which will guide the rest of the volume; namely, "I would like to learn to live finally" (xvii). This question is not just introduced spectrally, as a rhetorical manoeuvre, but is essentially and irreducibly spectral. For Derrida, questions of 'living', which automatically imply the search for the 'way of the good' and an improved tomorrow, necessitate retrospection; the interrogation of, and counsel of, yesteryear's ghosts simultaneously with the imagined representation of a 'future-to-come'. More importantly, addressing such questions involves a responsibility to all the preceding generations who have done so before, especially those who invoke similar questions in the name of justice, politics, or humanity, but failed, for whatever reason, to witness the fruition of a world transformed. This 'being-with-ghosts' then, is not a matter of introspective melancholia, but a dynamic and non-linear 'politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations' (xviii), the power of which is equivalent to the 'weak-messianic' power

that Benjamin believed every generation was imbued (2007: 254).

The ghosts invoked by Derrida were, of course, those of Marxism and the Marxist revolutionaries who carried the torch for that ideology in the name of utopia and the Communist emancipation of society. The object of that spectral invocation was the triumphalism of neoliberal ideologues, epitomised by the argument of Fukuyama's *The End of History* (1992), following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. In this sense, this thesis proceeds in precisely the same manner as Derrida's text, posing the same questions, towards the same ends, and at the same target. The reprise of this invocation remains necessary because, despite the lustre of neoliberalism fading in recent years, on the back of a couple of notable global financial crises, and populist insurgencies, its hegemony remains more or less intact. Paraphrasing the famous quotation from Benjamin, Peter Osborne (2014) has recently pointed out that the lesson of the past generation is that capitalism is not going to die a natural death in our lifetimes, or possibly even that of our progeny. Despite this, the rise to power of Donald Trump on the back of the populist right-wing nationalism of the so-called 'Tea Party' movement in the US, and the similarly populist, though ideologically confused, self-immolation of 'Brexit' in the UK, have suggested, if nothing else, that widespread disaffection with neoliberalism is widely felt and deeply felt. In lieu of an organised workers' movement, a variety of different identity struggles across the globe, such as the 'Occupy' movement, #metoo, Extinction Rebellion, even the anarcho-punk band 'Pussy Riot', have succeeded in rattling the neoliberal establishment in their own ways, from the left, though without any of them singularly landing a fatal blow. Nevertheless, recent events are starting to suggest that the 'gravediggers of capitalism', at least in its neoliberal form, might not be Marx's revolutionary proletariat but the populist right (Schmidt 2017).

During his invocation of the *Specters of Marx*, Derrida was cautious to isolate a certain 'spirit of Marxism' from its translation into a political programme, and of course the economic disasters, totalitarianism, crimes, and other horrors of the Stalinist period. The strategy of this critical elision was to simultaneously safeguard the project of deconstruction from being tainted by association and frame it as the more politically radical of the two

approaches (Eagleton in Derrida et al 2008: 83-5). The purpose of this thesis is not to adjudicate between Marxism and deconstruction, though any analysis of the 'French May' necessitates demonstrating how *la pensée '68* breaks, politically and ideologically, with the orthodox Marxist canon. Famously, in the essay 'Structure, Sign and Play' (1978 [1966]: 351-71), Derrida recognised the occurrence of an 'event' in the conceptual history of structuralism which made its claims to totalising coherence seem dubious, if not implausible. This 'event' not only signalled the advent of the poststructural but also represented the gestation of a radical rebellion against dominant French intellectual fashion which has to be considered political. To speak of the politics of '68 then is inescapably to speak of this 'rupture' or 'redoubling', whether that be between structuralism and poststructuralism, or between humanist and scientific Marxism, or between students' unions and workers' unions. Like Derrida, this thesis invokes a certain 'spirit of Marxism' against the current conjuncture, and as a 'politics' contra populism, neo-fascism, neoliberalism, and even unreconstructed and sectarian Marxisms.

As Derrida recognises, questions concerning 'how to live' are always already educational questions. To learn to live better today, involves imagining those who cannot be here to influence the present conjuncture, and those who are not yet here. George Santayana's clichéd truism reminds us that those who forget history are doomed to repeat it. More pessimistically, Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* (2000: 329-56), insists that all events in history occur twice; firstly as tragedy, secondly as farce. Both imply that learning how to live is a matter of learning historical lessons and adapting strategy accordingly. However, what Derrida calls a 'hauntology' exceeds such linear teleology (1993: 10; 63), collapsing past, present, and future, in a critical constellation which aims not to extract lessons from history but to demonstrate the 'non-contemporaneity with itself of the living present' which is itself a heuristic. A 'hauntology' approaches an event as 'repetition and first time'; as such, it can be conceived as a 'staging of the end of history' beyond ontology, teleology, eschatology and in a sense containing them, rendering them comprehensible (1993: 10). For Derrida, the 'hauntological' staging of the *Specters of Marx* had two main targets (63-95). Firstly, the

hubris of neoliberal evangelists who construct the 'end of history' to exorcise the demons of their political others. This attitude is a reflex of a hegemony which goes beyond the organised political classes and is reproduced consciously and unconsciously by the discourses of academia and the mass media. In the face of such hegemony, summoning the ghost of Marx is both unthinkable and monstrous. Secondly, and more complexly, the 'spirit of Marxism' is invoked against the dominant discourse of Marxism itself, as ideology, whose hegemony coopts all rhetorics and ideologies of resistance, even haunting specific signifiers like 'discourse', 'hegemony', and so forth.

In staging the 'spirit of '68' then, this thesis attempts to renew Derrida's spectral invocation of Marx for the twenty-first century. Like Derrida, the target is simultaneously neoliberal hegemony and the hegemony of Marxism as the lingua franca of resistance. If 1968 can be held as the key moment where the latter's hegemony over anti-capitalist revolt was first critically tested, then restaging its dissensual, but still revolutionary, specters could perhaps reanimate debates concerning resistance in an age when neoliberal hegemony is even more entrenched. Furthermore, revisiting the specters of '68 could conjure a beyond of Marxism in an age which lacks an organised workers movement.

This 'hauntology' of the current conjuncture which could not be more timely. At the point of authorship, a 'certain spirit' of the *soixante-huitards* is currently being invoked by the *gilets jaunes* [yellow vests] economic protests in France (Cambier 2018). Once again, graffiti is being scrawled across the streets of Paris, this time shouting "*Macron démission*" [Macron resignation] (Collins 2018), threatening a return to regicide, and the imminent overthrow of the bourgeoisie (Rubin 2018); now lycéens are setting fire to their high schools (Willsher 2018). The UK street artist Banksy has made a new work on the streets of Paris, reworking one of his iconic Molotov cocktail images into a *gilet jaune*, citing the art of Paris '68 as a direct antecedent to his own. Branding the actions of *les gilets jaunes* as the new '68 is, of course, premature and it is certainly not the remit of this thesis to discuss whether a new '68 is possible, or even desirable. As suggested above, the primary motivation for staging such a 'hauntology' is to align the lesson of '68 with the current conjuncture, in order to see if

questions raised and conclusions drawn fifty years ago can be transformed into prognoses for resistance today. However, what unifies the two epochs is a certain attitude to popular dissensus by those in positions of power which renders the noun ‘populism’ into a sneering pejorative.

Writing recently in the French newspaper *Libération*, co-founded by Sartre following the rebellions of ‘68, Rancière has criticised the contemporary condescension towards so-called ‘populism’ by the establishment (2013b). For him, ‘populism’ cannot itself be an ideology, in the sense implied by the discourses of mainstream political commentators, as this would depend on a coherent, homogeneous, and stable organisation of social bodies, through which said ideology could be manifested. As suggested throughout his work, the proper name ‘The People’ actually disguises the diverse, antagonistic, and heterogeneous nature of the socius behind a normative figure. Frequently, ‘The People’ is used as an ideological construction by the media, employed as a pejorative to demonise mob mentality, and implicitly lay a judgement of incapacity, stupidity, xenophobia, or racism. Such ideology neutralises the populist political threat by firstly rationalising, in a patronising sense, their motivations, and secondly, belittling those foundations as deficient, thus lacking any validity or solid supporting ground. Rancière:

> Neither the 'populists' nor the people as presented by ritual denunciations of populism actually match their definition. But this is no worry for those who wave this phantom about. The essential thing for them is to amalgamate the very idea of a democratic people with the image of the dangerous crowd. And to draw the conclusion that we must all place our trust in those who govern us, any challenge to their legitimacy and integrity opening the door to totalitarianism (2013b).

The desire to combat this ideological recuperation of popular politics within the normative figure of “The People” or “The Masses” has motivated much of Rancière’s work, such as his essays developed with *Les Revoltes logiques* (1975-85) (IP; STP) which articulate a ‘history from below’ which revives marginalised workers’ identities to disrupt dominant historical narratives. Similarly, *Proletarian Nights* (2012b) unearthed forgotten worker-poets of eighteenth-century France to difference normative ideas of the worker. This

dissensual archival work was formative for his critique, in *Disagreement* (61-93), of the 'archipolitical', 'parapolitical', and 'metapolitical' undermining of 'politics' proper by political philosophy, or its condescension towards 'the poor' as its artificially constructed other. Recently, Rancière has even recognised the same recuperative logic at work within mainstream discourses concerning 'Brexit' in the UK (2016). The third chapter will specifically attend to the repressive effects of political discourse on 'politics', in the idiosyncratic Rancièrean sense. This reading will demonstrate the 'police' function of paternalist sociologist discourses which claim to speak for and interpret 'politics'. For Rancière, the discourses of ostensibly revolutionary writers, such as Marx, Althusser, or Bourdieu, contain the seeds of a repressive lesson, which silences genuine 'politics' as much as the so-called 'bourgeois' or dominant-hegemonic ideology they critique.

In contradistinction, this thesis not only outlines a 'hauntology' of 1968 which can be wielded against the current conjuncture, in the words of both *Benjamin and L'Atelier populaire*, 'as a weapon' (Benjamin 2007: 218), but also aspires to construct a 'hauntological' reversal of the 'lesson' of political philosophy above. This reversal necessitates not only close scrutiny of the respective 'politics' of Althusserianism and Rancièreanism (chapter 3) but also some attention to their models of political subjectification. This investigation will be undertaken through a study of the development and mediations of the concept of 'ideology' within the Marxist tradition (chapter 4). If, as Derrida suggests, all 'hauntology' is heuristic at its core, the 'lesson' of this hauntological construction supplements and politicises questions of education and identity with questions of resistance. Ultimately, the educational turn of this 'hauntology' is motivated by my personal experience of the conditions of labour within the current educational conjuncture, and the effects of neoliberal ideology on both the arts and higher education in the UK.

1.2: May 1968 - Politics, Ideology, and Delirium.

1968 has been cemented in Western cultural mythology as the year of revolutions; the ‘year that rocked the world’ (Kurlansky 2005). Alternately, it has been dismissed as a disconnected ‘ragbag of protests’ hardly deserving such appellations (Houghton 2008). Bleaker still, the German sociologist Lepenies denies any effectivity to ’68, arguing that ‘institutions didn’t change, the university didn’t change, conditions for workers didn’t change — nothing happened’ (Ross 2002b: 19). Which conclusion is drawn largely depends on the politicisation, or ‘ideology’, of the commentary, and any quick survey of the secondary literature reveals that its legacy remains contested. Kristen Ross accounts in detail for these ‘afterlives’ of ‘68, showing how the ‘event’ has been overtaken by its representations, and its political dimensions [...] dissolved or dissipated by commentary and interpretations’ (2002b: 1). Yet, as she acknowledges, the politics of ‘68 endures despite the monopolisation of its legacy by former student leaders such as Daniel Cohn-Bendit (1969) or André Glucksmann (1968). Both of these commentaries, in different ways, claim ‘68 for the *gauchiste* ideology, opposed to Soviet or Stalinism Communism which would depict them as ultra-leftist and infantile (Lenin 1920). Raymond Aron’s *The Elusive Revolution* [*La Révolution introuvable*] (1969) focused on the negative, rather than positive, aspects of ‘68 describing it as a psychodramatic ‘delirium without casualties’, ‘the event that turned out to have been a non-event’, ‘contributing nothing to the solution of the problem’ (1969: ix; 109). The most commonplace, and arguably patronising, media interpretation of ‘68 is that it was the ‘year of the students’ (Smith 2018). In this reading, the various protests were neutrally explained away as an intergenerational clash of cultural values, fuelled by a soundtrack of the Beatles, Hendrix, Dylan, and the Stones, and ‘based on a sudden fad for long hair, drug taking, and Che Guevara posters’ (Harman 1988: viii). Even though, as Fraser has recognised, the ‘May events’ in France were the apogee of the student 1968 and all it represented’ (Fraser 1988),

for writers like Aron 'the university revolution was even more "*introuvable*" than the social revolution' (Polin and Attanasio 1970: 110).

Neutralising the volatile 'politics' of youth culture by labelling it as quintessentially adolescent is a classic recuperative technique of the mass media and establishment it represents. However, Lenin's infamous charge of 'infantilism' also indicates its prevalence, as labelling strategy, amongst political discourses on the revolutionary Left. The sociologist Dick Hebdige, champion of the 'symbolic challenges' of popular culture as political resistance to hegemony, would later name this strategy as 'ideological incorporation' (1979: 92-9). This technique employs patronising or paternalistic discourse to domesticate the radicality of the political or cultural other. Hebdige regarded 'incorporation' as the inevitable fate awaiting all subcultures and countercultures that present a serious challenge to the status quo. Much 'Media Studies' scholarship, whose canonical text is probably Herman and Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent* (1988), has drawn similar conclusions.

This thesis is not primarily concerned with the role of the mass media in reproducing hegemony nor the cyclical reproduction of symbolic challenges to that hegemony by disaffected youth. As such, there is simply no room to include adequate surveys of the various texts from the disciplines of critical media studies and subcultural studies that doubtless could have enriched this thesis. However, in the final analysis, this thesis does describe a mediatised ideological struggle waged symbolically by the youth, so the omission of texts by Hall, Hebdige, Chomsky, et al can only represent a lack. Despite choosing Rancière's thought as the theoretical frame for this thesis, it is hoped that his emphasis on anarchic rebellion, revolt, and subjectification can align itself broadly with a 'certain spirit' of British cultural studies, which would celebrate the 'politics' of popular culture, against 'police order' reductions of the same to that of a mindless distractions, social palliatives, or social cement. The target of such an affirmative reading is simultaneously Leftist discourses of the Adornian type, which dismissed the student activism of '68 as 'pseudo-activity' (Adorno 1988: 291), and the conservative 'Culture and Civilisation' tradition epitomised by Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) and F R. Leavis' 'Mass Civilization and Minority

Culture' (1930) (Storey 2007: 12). Famously, the latter argues for the necessity of a 'minority culture' stewarding civilisation from the threat of cultural decline. The titular 'anarchy' of Arnold's famous text is a synonym for the political challenge to the bourgeois status quo embodied by a radicalised working class. By demanding the vote and 'marching where it likes, meeting where it likes, bawling what it likes, breaking what it likes' (Arnold 1869: 58) this 'anarchy' writes its own culture and history and refuses to continue as deferential servant of the so-called 'civilised' classes. By using Rancière, this thesis is deliberately attempting to invoke an 'anarchy' which not only celebrates the 'politics' of popular culture, but also constitutes the political other to statist Communism, and more generally the condescending attitude of cultural critics and political philosophers to 'the poor'.

Ideological dismissals of '68 as 'populist', 'infantile', or misguided are countered by radical socialist writers, such as Harman, who celebrate the year as a watershed (1998: vii-x). For him, global scenes of unrest and rebellion irresistibly overlapped and fuelled each other, such as ghetto uprisings and college protests in the USA, similar university struggles and occupations across the UK and Germany, the 'Prague Spring', the 'Tet Offensive' in South Vietnam, and the biggest general strike in French history. For him, these events gave a palpable sense, whether it be through civil rights activists protesting the murder of their leader, students facing up to soviet tanks, or peasant guerrilla fighters defeating imperial armies, that authoritarianism and imperialism could be resisted, and ultimately defeated, and society changed for the better. Events such as the Watergate scandal added to the sense that the old order was rotten, triggering a generational rejection of the values of the parent class. Even if they were motivated by the Beatles as much as orthodox Marxist-Leninism, the student movement was very much at the epicentre of all of these global struggles.

The 60s student movement then, be it through anti-Vietnam protests, civil rights demonstrations, or Bob Dylan concerts, could be argued to have gradually redefined the terms of the historical struggle between capital and labour and emerging as a new countercultural subject of history. Perhaps to their detriment, the student counterculture abandoned the discourses of organised labour and class struggle, and supplemented them

with the confused rhetoric of biology, sexuality, and psychedelia. Marcuse would define this new utopianism of the counterculture as 'the new sensibility' (1969: 31-54), claiming a radical revolutionary status for this generation that exceeded the industrial proletariat of the past. The 'burning questions' of this movement were framed less through the texts of Lenin (1969) or Marx (2008 [1848]), than the sexual liberation theories of Wilhelm Reich. During the Paris revolts, Reichian symbols of psycho-sexual repression were painted over the walls of the Sorbonne, and in 'Berlin student members of free-living-and loving communes pelted police with soft-bound copies of Reich's The Mass Psychology of Fascism' (Elkind 1971). The Parisian conjuncture of '68 was also strongly influenced by the critique of commercial image culture raised within the Situationist texts of Guy Debord (1992 [1967]) or Raoul Vaneigem (1983 [1967]). The more traditionally political elements of the student movement were closer to Maoism than Communist Party orthodoxy, largely out of sympathy with the struggles of the peasant fighters in Vietnam, which many of their number equated to the 'poverty of student life' (UNEF Strasbourg 1966). This informal political secession was characterised by Marcuse as a movement from 'causality by necessity' to 'causality by freedom' - 'a passing from Marx to Fourier; [...] from Realism to Surrealism' (Marcuse 1969: 30).

Marcuse's reference is to the two dominant figures of the French Marxist thought at the time, namely Louis Althusser and Jean-Paul Sartre. The former's turn to anti-humanism and 'Theoreticism', via a Spinozist emphasis on necessity, was in part motivated by a desire to distance his system from a subjectivist and humanist Marxism, dominated by the concept of freedom that characterised the philosophy of Sartre. As this thesis will argue, Rancièrean thought takes a different trajectory to either of these figures, yet retains an Althusserian inheritance, albeit in repressed form. Indeed, as part of the elite students of the so-called *Cercle d'Ulm* who were closest to Althusser, Rancière admits originally taking the side of 'Theoreticism' against the 'petit-bourgeois' ideology of the student movement, and their complaints about the misery of student life (AL: 43-6).

The concept of ideology is where the transition from 'early' Rancière politics to 'mature' can be most readily traced. Because of this, Chapter 4 of this thesis will undertake a survey of the use of this concept within the Marxist tradition, which is the shared inheritance of both Althusser and Rancière. Part of the reason for this is the fundamentally aporetic nature of the concept of ideology itself, resulting, in part, from the fact that it can be employed subjectively and objectively, often within the same system. It is also a result of the various subtle mediations to the concept which have been introduced over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Because of its titular pre-eminence in *The German Ideology* (Marx and Engels 1986), this concept is irrevocably associated with the thought of Marx, even though he inherits the term. As Rancière would explicitly demonstrate in his *Reading Capital* essay (Althusser et al 2015: 73-174, this inheritance gives the conception a different function in what Althusser characterises as Marx's 'early' and 'mature' works. For Stalin, Zhdanov, and ultimately Althusser, the concept of ideology represents the other to the Marxist science of dialectical materialism. In turn, under the authoritarian regime of Stalin 'dialectical materialism' deviated into an ideology; a strict synonym for an iron party orthodoxy against which the generation of '68 rebelled. Althusser, in his heroic, but perhaps futile, attempt to salvage the 'spirit of Marxism' from within the apparatus of Stalinism, strayed uncomfortably close to regurgitating this party line, refining a 'scientistic ideology that often, in the name of Science or Theory as Science, had attempted to unify or to purify the "good" text of Marx' (Derrida 1993: 40). Ideology, when critically bifurcated into the science / ideology, is a politicised concept. It is, at the same time, always already a normative value judgement. As Eagleton argues, 'ideology, like halitosis is in this sense what the other person has' (1991: 2).

At the same time as signifying philosophical partisanship or political fidelity, or implying critique or a value judgement, the concept of ideology also describes the field through which subjectivities are formed in struggle. E. P. Thompson's (1978) *The Poverty of Theory* and Rancière's 1974 disavowal (AL) have both contributed to the unfair reduction of Althusserianism to Stalinism. Yet, his work also revitalised the field of ideology studies as a

subject of merit for Marxist scholarship, and his re-readings of Marx pushed back against Stalinist dogma, albeit conflictingly. His introduction of the concept of the ISA (1971: 127-88) is an important legacy, as is the theory of the reproduction of capitalism and capitalist societal relations via the ISA. Despite the theoretical differences, one of the contentions of this thesis is that Rancière's work can be characterised as continuous with Althusser's conception of 'ideological practice', even if it can't be properly characterised as Marxist (Davis 2010: 9-10). The task of this central chapter on ideology will not just be to separate the different uses of the term 'ideology' within Marxist discourse, but also to try to figure Rancière's signature concept of *le partage du sensible* as a theory of ideology. Inversely, the concept of ideology will also allow the political and philosophical 'separations' and 'distributions' within the conjuncture of '68, especially those between Althusser and Rancière, to be made visible.

Althusser famously argued that the most effective ISA for the reproduction of capitalism was the 'educational ideological apparatus' (1971: 155-6). Given that, in the face of the university occupations of '68, Althusser would retreat into a surprisingly conservative defence of the university and its privileged professors (2011 [1964]: 11-15). This defence resided on what Althusser considered to be an unassailable truth within the pedagogic scene, that of the essential 'inequality between knowledge and a lack of knowledge' (14), necessary for its transmission. Herein, correctly committed professors were necessary for the salvation of the university and for the reproduction of the next generation of militants. In the face of this, Rancière would develop an educational philosophy of radical equality, which presumed the 'equality of intelligences' (IS: 45-6), and scandalously claim that one can teach what one doesn't know (IS: 100-5). Althusser regarded student demands for university reform as hopelessly ideological, born out of an 'anarcho-democratic conception of pedagogy' (2011 [1964]: 15). Rancière's pedagogy and wider philosophical system wear that label as a badge of honour. As this thesis will argue, this rejection exposes a violent will to

mastery at the heart of pedagogy, which one can trace across politics, philosophy, and political-philosophy generally.

Certain historical, social, and ideological conditions made 1968 in France unique, and it would be wrong to attempt to draw general conclusions without acknowledging this cultural specificity (Montag 2011: 8-10). For example, the very recent context of war, and popular resistance to French imperialism in Algeria, or the volatile triangular relationship between the Communist UEC [*Union étudiants communistes*], the Maoist UJC-ML [*Union des jeunesses communistes marxistes-léninistes*], and the more conservative national union UNEF [*Union nationale de étudiants de France*], underneath the PCF (*Partie communiste de Français*). Such dynamics give Paris '68 its own particular volatility. Outside of Paris, there were a number of university occupations in 1968. In the US there was an influential occupation of Columbia University, New York. In London, the London School of Economics was occupied, and a host of provincial art schools across the UK. Each occupation set a specific politics to work within a specific conjuncture, yet each were linked in a chain of ideological struggle. This theory will argue that university occupations, as practice, constitute a 'politics' in general which not only is transferable to the contemporary university struggles, but also invoke a mode of subjectivation which brings more general questions about the relationship of the university ISA, the state, and the individual can be raised.

Accordingly, Chapter 6 of this thesis undertakes a reading of the occupation of the buildings of the Sorbonne which lead directly to the formation *L'Atelier populaire*. As discussed above, this reading attempts to reinsert their poster-works back into what Husserl (1970) calls their 'life-worlds'. As much as possible, non-contextual images of these works are rejected both as an aid to contextualisation and as an implicit critique of the ahistorical treatment of artworks in the majority of art historical monographs, and indeed the hegemonic white-cube model of gallery display. This presentation legitimises the worst kind of formalist analysis, but also actively denies the political, social, or relational effectivity of art, outside of the connoisseurial reading. In the words of the painter Clyfford Still, this is the stuff of 'dust and filing cabinets' (Harrison and Wood 1992: 580), or in the words of *L'Atelier populaire* the

university as ‘dead festival of the spirit’ (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 207). It is also analogous to the disinterested space of aesthetic contemplation, which unites both Kantian and Greenbergian aesthetics, and which Bourdieu recognised as a denial of the social. The key here is to emphasise the effectivity of these works, as ‘politics’ within a specific conjuncture, and to develop an analysis in excess of the conjunctural, which incorporates layers of experience, myth, culture, and ideology within the reading. This reading also grants an agency to the photographers of these scenes, Philippe Vermès, Guy le Querrec, and Bruno Barbey, instead of imagining them as objective ‘invisible eyes’. When documentary ‘in-situ’ images were not available for essential *L’Atelier populaire* works, images have been presented which include watermarks, institutional barcodes, or other such evidence of the institutional recuperation.

To complement this ‘political’ treatment of the artworks themselves, the form of this final reading pushes at the codes of academic writing as a form of ‘politics’ itself. The ambition here is not only to begin to demonstrate Rancièrean ‘literarity’, which this thesis will argue is one of the defining features of the *L’Atelier populaire* works, but to perform a deliberate display of ‘ignorance’, which Rancière recognises as the stultifying invention of the master explicator, within the form of this thesis itself. In addition, this final reading will also adopt a mode of art historical writing which effects a transition from the constative to the performative. This performative mode of writing will not only begin to invoke the ‘spirit’ of what has variously been called the ‘carnival’ or ‘festival’ of May, against the dead festival of the university, but also hopefully reanimate the original works themselves. In the final dialectical image of this reading then, a weak-messianic power of these fifty-year-old works can be turned towards the present conjuncture.

To this end, this final reading is separated into four movements and a coda which brings the thesis to an end, and indeed up to date. This musical analogy is also an attempt to invoke the spirit of the original occupation of the Sorbonne, May 13th, 1968, which was soundtracked to live jazz music played on a grand piano hauled into its historic courtyards. The first of these movements concerns the occupation as carnival and attempts not only to

capture the euphoria or delirium of May, but also suggests how recent political movements, following May '68 have neutralised protest into spectacle. In contradistinction to the 'protestival' or state sanctioned and time limited carnival, via Bakhtin's (1984) reading of Rabelais, a more critical function of the carnivalesque is revealed in these *L'Atelier populaire* works. As 'grotesque realism', the satirical and anti-authoritarian function of these works, as well as the collective and egalitarian bodiliness they evoke in opposition, is revealed as complementary to a Rancièrean understanding of *subjectivation*. The second movement develops this sense of the *Beaux-Arts* occupation as collective *subjectivation* through Rancière's figure of 'literarity'. Here, subjectivation is understood not as a capacity of individuals but as a practice within the 'excess of words' and *le partage du sensible* which precedes them; the schizophrenic month-long stream of image-works produced by *L'Atelier populaire* being thus understood as both cause and effect of the above. Developing this notion of *subjectivation* further, the third movement focus on the mode of production of *L'Atelier populaire*, which it argues is an example of militant *conricerca* that collapses distinctions between the subjects and objects of the research process. The collective and apparently impossible subjectivities imagined by their works are read as 'politics' which renders visible le partage du sensible, which separates workers from students, and manual from intellectual or creative labour. The final movement draws upon the figure of the border or *barrières* from Rancière to represent the liminal 'politics' he shares with *L'Atelier populaire* and that this thesis aspires to replicate via this reading. Like *le partage du sensible* this Rancièrean figure, following Chambers' example (2013: 70; 183n3), is also left untranslated to avoid 'policing' the 'political' multivalency of the concept through translation. This mutivalency is therefore offered as synonymous with the 'politics' of *L'Atelier populaire*, and in opposition to the various political discourses which claimed them, then and now. Following the formal conclusion to this thesis, a coda is included which is inseparable to this reading. This seeks to align the 'politics' of *L'Atelier populaire* with the current conjuncture in a dialectical image of ideological struggle within the university. Glucksmann suggested that the children of May were Diderot's nephew's rather than Lenin's children (Posner 1970: 187).

Almost as if to perform these rival subjectivities, when occupying the Sorbonne, students scrawled a reworked Diderot aphorism over the walls. Instead of “men will never be free until the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest” this text work now declared ‘Comrades! Humanity won’t be happy till the last capitalist is hung with the guts of the last bureaucrat [*Camarades! l’humanité ne sera heureuse que lorsque le dernier capitaliste aura été pendu les tripes du dernier bureaucrate*]’ (Fig. 2). This is a dialectical image itself, of French revolutionary culture, past and present, and also of the synthesis between art and politics within which Rancière’s work operates. As such, the hauntological figure of Diderot, and the evasive and indeterminate authorial subjectivities of *Rameau’s Nephew* (1966), will operate throughout this final reading.

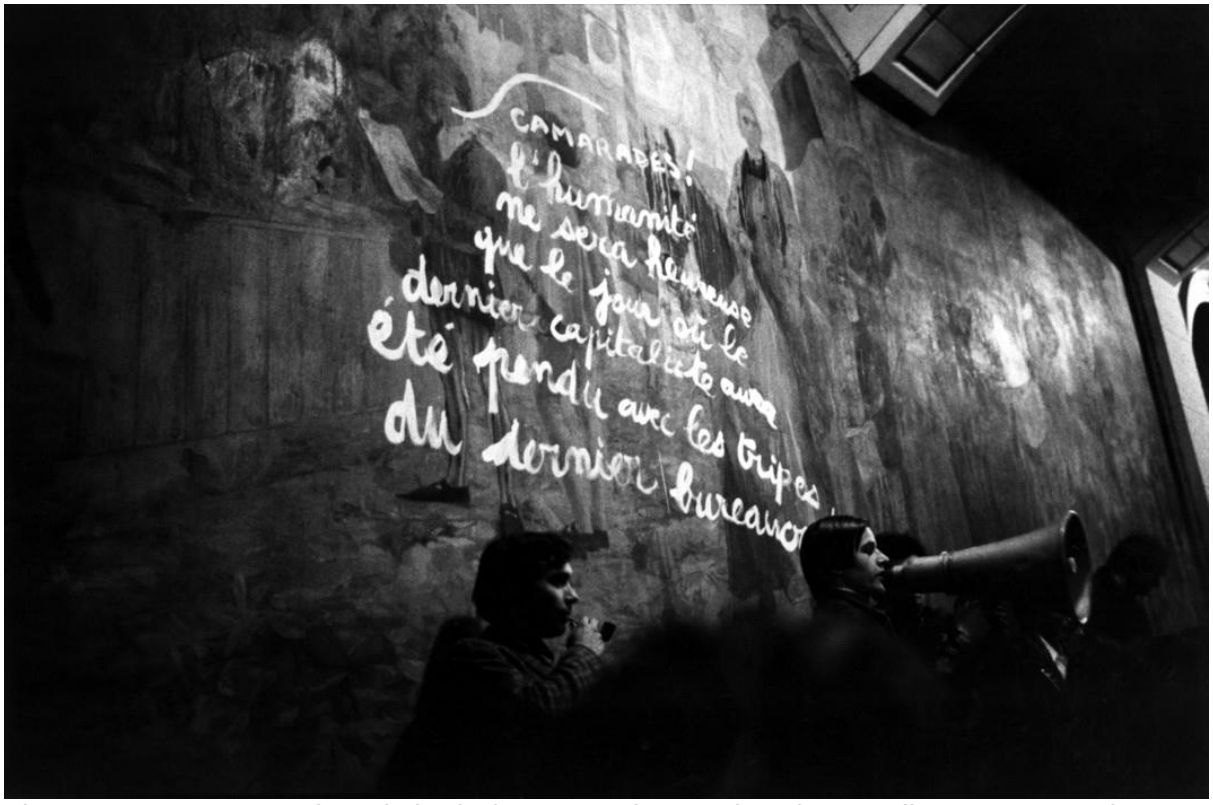


Fig. 2: Guy Le Querrec (1968) *Ile-de-france Region. Paris. 5th Arrondissement. Monday, May 13th 1968. Meeting In A Lecture Hall Of The Sorbonne University*. © Magnum Photos.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This thesis has an interdisciplinary methodology, or 'indisciplinary' following Rancière (2000b), drawing upon scholarship from political philosophy, continental aesthetics, the social history of art, sociology, media studies, literary studies, French, and cultural studies. As such, it makes a small contribution to knowledge in each of these disciplines. This methodology has necessitated a broad amount of general research which can only be summarised here.

At its core, its argument has three general movements, each of which has generated its own specific bibliography. The first of these situates the thought of Rancière within the conjuncture of '68 and against the theory and politics of Althusserianism, demonstrating its implicit 'lesson' and the counter-hegemonic 'lesson' of the 'lesson' of Rancière. The second surveys historic mediations within the concept of ideology, particularly from the Marxist tradition, in order to read Rancière's concept of *le partage du sensible* as a theory of ideology, and develop the original concept of aesthetic practice. The final movement reads the works of *L'Atelier populaire*, through the photographic documentation, as a Rancièrean mode of political subjectivation, through which a theory of democratic education, specifically the occupation as heuristic, is developed.

Chapter 3 focuses on the so-called 'Althusser-Rancière controversy' (Montag 2011); a pedagogic, political, and philosophical 'disagreement' which could be held as metonymic for the general trajectory of *la pensée '68* away from the structuralism which dominated the French intellectual scene, typified by the work of Jacques Lacan (2006 [1966]) Claude Lévi-Strauss (1977), the earlier Roland Barthes (1993), among others, all of which drew upon and reworked the methods outlined in the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure (1983 [1916]). In contradistinction, Rancière's work was synchronous with a theoretical and political challenge to structuralism, *à la mode*, typified by a new generation of heterogeneous thinkers such as Jacques Derrida 1997 [1967]; 1978 [1967]; 1973 [1967]) and Michel

Foucault (1972), called ‘poststructuralist’ as a retrospective label of convenience (Angermuller 2015).

2.1: Louis Althusser

Like Barthes, Althusser's work spans the structural and poststructural. The most comprehensive and critical overview of Althusser's work to date is Gregory Elliott's *The Detour of Theory* (2015 [1987]), which Elliott immodestly, but probably accurately, claims as the foremost work on Althusser to date (ix). The strength of this text is its self-avowed 'anti-anti-Althusserianism' (x); a backlash triggered by both the critique of Rancière, and the controversial death of his wife Hélène. Outside of salacious media reports, probably the best account of this tragedy is Althusser's 'hauntobiography' *The Future Lasts A Long Time* (1993 [1985]). This text is generally useful also for its recollections of the theoretical and political conjuncture of the 60s. A reticence of the academy to engage with the work of Althusser, is acknowledged by the editors of the recent volume *Encountering Althusser* (Diefenbach 2013), who tried in vain to find female commentators on Althusser's recent work on 'aleatory materialism'. Like Rancière (AL: xiii), this thesis also ignores the late-Althusserian 'aleatory materialism' (2006). Whilst emphasising the Rancièrean critique it also hopes to contribute to Elliott's 'anti-anti-Althusserian' project. A similarly sympathetic assessment is Callinicos' *Althusser's Marxism* (1976), even though it ultimately rejects Althusserianism as a deviation from the class struggle. Warren Montag's *Louis Althusser* (2003) is similarly even-handed, as is Ted Benton's *The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism* (1984: xi-xiv). All three have informed the sections of this thesis on Althusser, especially those sections which take an 'anti-anti-Althusserian' position. Other secondary literature consulted on Althusser are Ferretter's *Louis Althusser* (2006), Lewis' *Louis Althusser and the Traditions of French Marxism* (2005), Assiter's *Althusser and Feminism* (1990), and Smith's *Reading Althusser* (1984). The latter's challenge of reading Althusser, in the same way that Althusser read Marx has hopefully been continued in this project.

The focus of this thesis has been on the Althusserian texts explicitly related to the Rancièrean position. Of these, the quintessential 'high-Althusserian' position is laid down in

his two texts of 1965, *Reading Capital* (2015), and *For Marx* (1979). The recent Verso edition of *Reading Capital* (2015) has been used throughout this thesis, as the most comprehensive edition to date, and the only one which includes the Rancière essay omitted from the original translation (Althusser and Balibar 1970). Earlier editions have been cited only when necessary.

The Althusserian theory of ideology, central to Chapter 4, is famously outlined in 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', published in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (1971: 121-76). This essay introduces the concept of the ISA, as well as a theory of the reproduction of ideology via the concept of 'interpellation' (162-5). These concepts supplement the theory of 'ideological practice' outlined in *For Marx* and *Reading Capital*. Ideology is also central to Althusser's 1965 essay 'Marxism and Humanism' (1979: 220-47), which in turn is specifically critiqued by Rancière in his 1970 essay 'On the Theory of Ideology: Althusser's Politics' (1974b). For him, Althusser's conservative defence of the structural necessity of ideology, is a proxy attack on the ascendant left-humanism and Stalinism, following Khrushchev's 'Secret Speech'(1956) to the Twentieth Congress. Althusser's 1965 essay 'Theory, Theoretical Practice, and Theoretical Formulation: Ideology and Ideological Struggle' (1990: 1-42), further supplement the theory of ideology as recognition [*connaissance*] and misrecognition [*méconnaissance*] (Resch 1992: 212) outlined in the texts above. *Méconnaissance* is a concept borrowed from Lacan to describe the subjects desire to identify with dominant-hegemonic ideology, rather than the grim reality of their actual social conditions.

Generally, Althusser's aesthetics and cultural criticism are underdeveloped and inconsistent, and his position is pieced together from three different short essays. The first, a 1962 essay entitled 'The Piccolo Teatro: Bertolazzi and Brecht' (1979: 129-52), attempts to forward a materialist theory of the theatre. 'A Letter on Art in Reply to André Daspre' (1971: 203-6), and 'Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract' (1971: 209-20), both from 1966, are short but important contributions to the Althusserian conception of art as ideology. Other important texts by Althusser that have influenced the reading of Althusser contained in this thesis are

his essay ‘The Crisis of Marxism’ (1978a), and his ‘Essays in Self-Criticism’ (1976). The latter text marks a revisionist retreat from theoreticism in favour of a renewed political commitment. It also includes a republished version of the infamous ‘Reply to John Lewis’ of 1972 (1976: 34-72), recognised by Rancière (AL: 1-21) as an Althusserian ‘lesson’ in Marxist orthodoxy to Marxist-Humanism. The specific character of this ‘lesson’ is the main focus of Chapter 3. Yet, what is also remarkable about these self-critical texts, against stereotype, is their uncertainty about the ‘pure heritage’ of Marxism, which is instead understood as containing ‘difficulties, contradictions, and gaps’ (1978a: 218), and their conciliatory embrace of the ‘liberatory’ challenge of ‘68 to the ‘closed history’ of Marxism (217-8). The final influential Althusserian text for this thesis is his late essay ‘What Must Change in the Party?’ (1978b: 19-45). This essay represents an elegant, if somewhat desperate, attempt to salvage the Communist Party from its ruinous complicity with the repressive Soviet state, outlining a complex balancing act between strategy and organisation and revolutionary emancipation. These questions not only animate the reading of Chapter 5 but arguably are key to the entire Althusser-Rancière conflict.

This dissertation focuses on the pedagogic relation and theoretical inheritance between Louis Althusser and Jacques Rancière. However, almost all the students at the ENS who participated in the *Reading Capital* seminar have gone on to influential careers in the fields of philosophy or the social sciences. A work tracing the influence of Althusser and this seminar on all their work would be hugely important, but also a formidably gargantuan task. In tracing the direct link between Althusserian and Rancièrean thought though this thesis is a small contribution to the beginnings of such a project. In order of their arrival at the ENS, the list includes Alain Badiou (1957), Pierre Macherey (1958), Étienne Balibar, Jacques Rancière, Yves Duroux (all 1960), Jean-Claude Milner (1961), François Regnault (1962), Jacques-Alain Miller (1962), and Robert Linhart (1963). According to Althusser, the *Reading Capital* seminar was instigated at the request of three of these students, Macherey, Balibar, and Regnault, in 1963 (Althusser 1993: 208-9). Many of these figures were active in the radical theoreticist-communist faction of the ENS, known colloquially as the *Cercle D’Ulm*

(AL: 41; 171n43). As central actor, Rancière admits complicity with the *Cercle d'Ulm's* general theoreticist condescension towards the emphasis on spontaneity and 'lived experience' within the politics of the broader student movement of '68, represented in the pages of the journal *Clarté*. It also describes how the debates within this group and Althusser's seminar at the ENS led to the formation of the research group and journal *Cahiers-Marxistes-Léninistes* (1964) to the split enacted by the *Cahiers pour l'analyse* project, a journal produced by ENS philosophy students, 'which was first and foremost concerned with working out a theory of the subject, and the other by Althusser's faithful followers, who were keen to remain within the Party' (AL: 52). An exhaustive overview of the ten issues of *Cahiers pour l'analyse* (1966-69) has been compiled by Peter Hallward (2011). A combination of Althusser's autobiography, Rancière's retrospective account, and this *CRMEP* resource have been relied upon for much of the historical information contained within this thesis. Indeed, the latter represents the most comprehensive attempt to map the influence of the ENS on contemporary thought to date. Rancière's proximity to the Althusserian circle meant that he didn't contribute at all to the *Cahiers pour l'analyse* project, though a project linking the later Rancière concept of *subjectivation* to these subject-oriented analyses would benefit this thesis, whilst being beyond its current remit.

2.2: Jacques Rancière

Obviously, a central text for this thesis has been *La Leçon d'Althusser* (1974) / *Althusser's Lesson* (2011a), relied upon throughout to define Rancière's position *vis-à-vis* Althusser, and as evidence of the socio-historical specificities of 1968 discussed in Chapter 3. Furthermore, this text also reproduces in abridged form an important earlier essay, 'On the Theory of Ideology: Althusser's Politics' (AL 125-54), representing the earliest sustained critique of Althusserianism by Rancière. One of the original contributions to knowledge offered by this thesis is its conceptual mapping of the concept of ideology as it develops from Rancière's 'early' to 'mature' work. As this critique is mounted through the concept of ideology, this essay has been pivotal in isolating the differences between the Althusserian and early Rancièrean conception of ideology in Chapter 4. The only other substantial commentary on this theoretical relation, offered by Hirst (1979), is used to complement this reading. The pedagogical relation between Althusser and Rancière, metonymic in this thesis for the '68 uprisings, has also necessitated close focus on Rancière's key educational treatise *Le Maître ignorant* (1987) / *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991). As discussed in Chapter 3, Rancière's text brings the French student movements of 1968 and 1986 into alignment. In this thesis the text is employed similarly in solidarity with contemporary university struggles. As such, its central idea of an 'explicative order' of university teaching is not just used to critique 'the lesson' of Althusser but also the neoliberal university ISA generally. Rancière's claim for 'the equality of intelligences' problematises all pedagogies, even critical ones, which remain centred on the pedagogue. His theory of educational emancipation then can be considered as exceeding those like Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1996 [1970]), and *Pedagogy of Hope* (2004 [1992]), or bell hooks' *Teaching to Transgress* (1994). Whilst being student-centred, these retain a privileged, and therefore unequal role, for progressive educators. This aligns Rancière's work neatly with anarchist theories of education, the key work from this tradition being Judith Suissa's *Anarchism and*

Education (2010). The key rebuttal to the anarchist reading of Rancièrean pedagogy is Biesta's essay 'Don't be Fooled by Ignorant Schoolmasters' (2017). These debates are dealt with in Chapter 3, which alongside the case study of Chapter 5, represents an original contribution to anarchist educational research and critical pedagogy.

Chambers periodises Rancière's works from the 1970s and 1980s as 'historical', and the 1990s as 'political' (2013: 23). Since the millennium, Rancière's work has focused on 'aesthetics', though these themes overlap in each period. *La Mésentente* (1995a) / *Disagreement* (1999), and *Dissensus* (2010), are Rancière's key political works; the former introducing the concepts of 'politics' and 'police' (1999: 21-42) developed in the essays (2001-9) collated in the latter. The opening two essays of *Dissensus*, 'Ten Theses on Politics' (2001; DS: 27-44), and 'Does Democracy Mean Something' (2007; DS: 45-62), have been cited directly within this thesis. The former helps distinguish between Althusser's idea of interpellation and Rancière's conception of *subjectivation* (37), and the latter helps situate the idea of 'democracy' as a form of practice (59) within the fifth chapter.

Disagreement and *Les Philosophe et ses pauvres* (1983) / *The Philosopher and His Poor* (2003) represent the key Rancièrean challenges to political philosophy. *Disagreement* then signifies a pivot away from the critique of political philosophy as 'police' towards the later emphasis on the 'politics' of art and aesthetics. *Le Partage du sensible: esthétique et politique* (2000a) / *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2003b) is the text which popularised the concept of *le partage du sensible* (PA: 12-13, 42-5), and also contains philosophical discussions on aesthetics, and the relationship between art, politics, and labour that have been generally useful for this thesis (PA: 42-6, 60-66). However, *le partage du sensible* appears earlier in *Disagreement* (DA 57-60, 124-5), and Rancière claims, in *The Philosopher and His Poor*, that 'this dividing line has been the object of my constant study' (PP: 225). *The Philosopher* was also where Rancière introduces the concept of 'theatocracy' [*la théâtocratie*], which has been recognised by both Davis (2010: 86-8) and Hallward (2006) as central to Rancièrean politics and is indeed central to this thesis. Chapter 3 demonstrates how this thesis is stolen from Plato to critique Platonic 'archipolitics', laying the groundwork

for the reading of Chapter 5 which should be considered as a contribution to the limited existing research on 'theatocracy' as political or subjective mode.

The original concept of 'aesthetic practice', introduced in Chapter 4, is developed from Rancière's terminology in *The Politics of Aesthetics* (PA: 13). However, the most significant recent text of Rancière's on aesthetics is *Aisthesis* (2013a), whose impact merited an edited volume of secondary essays, *Rancière Now* (Davis ed. 2013) immediately following its English translation. *Aisthesis* is imagined by Rancière (AIS: xv-xvi) as the companion piece to the earlier *Proletarian Nights* (2012b), his doctoral thesis, originally published as *La Nuit de prolétaires* (1981), and then later in English as *The Nights of Labor* (1989). Both texts are testament to Rancière's idiosyncratic and enduring preference for archival research above dominant theoretical debates; a methodological approach epitomised by his essays for the journal *Les Revoltes logiques* (1975-85), written during a period where the French intellectual scene was dominated by poststructuralism and/or debates concerning the viability of political struggle inside or outside the Communist Party. All of these essays have been subsequently translated and published in the recent companion volumes *Staging the People* (2011e), and *The Intellectual and his People* (2012a). These four texts collectively outline a series of aberrant historical subjectivities, each of which resist the presumed causality between social role and socio-intellectual capacity to which *le partage du sensible* subjects them. As such, these archival subjectivities are also political dramatisations of the *sans-part* [*'il n'y a pas de part des sans-part'*] raised originally in *La Mésentente* (1995a: 34). The reading of *L'Atelier populaire* as mode of *subjectivation*, outlined in Chapter 5, is a contribution to this project of defining the *sans-part*, especially within the university.

The structural separation of *Dissensus* into 'The Aesthetics of Politics' (27-114) and 'The Politics of Aesthetics' (115-204) has informed the argumentative structure of this thesis. Other Rancièrean works on aesthetics cited include *Aesthetics and its Discontents* (2009a [2004]) and the recent essay 'Thinking Between Disciplines: An Aesthetics of Knowledge' (2006b), both of which explicitly address his understanding of the aesthetic as dualism or

rupture, which he draws from the work of Immanuel Kant. This sense of artistic practice as intervention within 'the general distribution [*partage*] of ways of doing and making' (PA: 13) guided the reading contained in Chapter 5. The original neo-Althusserianism 'aesthetic practice', introduced in Chapter 4, synthesises this sense of aesthetic effectivity within the framing concept of 'an aesthetics of knowledge'. The reading of the 'politics' of *L'Atelier populaire* has also been implicitly guided by Rancière's concept of 'literarity' [*La Littérarité*], raised initially as 'literariness' in *The Names of History* (1994: 52), and then developed within *La Parole muette* (1998b) / *Mute Speech* (2011b), and *La Chair de mots* (1998a) / *The Flesh of Words* (2004a). This quick survey demonstrates that Rancière's ongoing interest in literature, which culminates in *Politique de la littérature* (2007) / *The Politics of Literature* (2011d), was developed in tandem with the gestation of his specific conceptualisation of the political. As such, this work on the politics of literary aesthetics has resonance beyond the discipline of literature. Though these texts remain secondary in this thesis to Rancière's explicitly political writings, it should be emphasised that the reading of Chapter 5 explicitly concerns the 'literarity' of the *L'Atelier populaire*, as writing which 'destroys every legitimate foundation for the circulation of words, for the relationship between the effects of language and the positions of bodies in shared space' (PA: 13). Rancière's key work on cinema, *La Fable cinématographique* (2001a) / *Film Fables* (2006a), and *Le Destin des images* (2003a) / *The Future of the Image* (2009b), extend this politics of literary aesthetics to new media. The emphasis in both on the capacity of new media work to dramatise the partage between the representative and aesthetic regimes of art could usefully extend the reading of the mechanically produced works of *L'Atelier populaire* in a longer study.

This survey should also demonstrate the acceleration of interest in Rancière since the turn of the century, but also the deluge of English language translations in the same period (Chambers 2013: 22). The insistence of leaving key Rancièrean concepts untranslated within this thesis, in part, is to guard against reductive or hasty translations which have appeared as a result. As well as providing essential context concerning the

anglophone reception of Rancière, the inclusion of the francophone publications better situates his work within its specific conjuncture.

The current appetite for Rancière has also generated a boom in the secondary literature, with many critical commentaries and introductions produced during the last decade. Similarly, numerous interviews have been conducted with Rancière, the best of which have been collated by Emiliano Battista as *Dissenting Words* (2017). Arguably pre-eminent among the scholarly secondary monographs is Samuel Chambers' *The Lessons of Rancière* (2013), whose structural and conceptual emphasis on the Rancièrean 'lesson' has been adapted for this thesis. Another excellent source is Oliver Davis' *Jacques Rancière* (2010), which at the time of its publication was the only book to directly address the entirety of Rancière's published works, including those untranslated. Though this task was attempted by Davis (2010: 142-52, 155-6), this thesis extends on both volumes through its mapping Rancièrean thinking onto the close reading of specific artworks in Chapter 5.

The ramifications of Rancière's pedagogic anarchy have most seriously been addressed in Todd May's *The Political Thought of Jacques Rancière* (2008), an appropriation followed by this thesis, but whose legitimacy is disputed by Chambers in his essay 'The Politics of The Police' (2011). This essay was published in Bowman and Stamp's *Reading Rancière* (2011: 18-43), alongside two essays, 'The Limits of Sociology' (217-37) by Alberto Toscano and 'Paul de Man and Art History' by Martin McQuillan (163-84). Both have helped establish a critical position towards Rancière's political philosophy. May's wider work on anarchism, especially *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism* (May 1994), and *Contemporary Political Movements and the Thought of Jacques Rancière* (May 2010), have helped frame the critical comparison between Althusser-Rancière dispute, as well as the anarchic character of the *Beaux-Arts* occupation. May's text also helps to defend the Rancièrean obsession with the subject position of the oppressed against charges of binary thinking from critics such as Žižek (2008), or Badiou (2006). Badiou's critique is contained within an important volume of critical essays, *Jacques Rancière: History, Politics, Aesthetics* (Rockhill and Watts eds. 2008), co-edited by Gabriel Rockhill, one of the

preeminent translators of Rancière's work. This volume also contains Peter Hallward's essay 'Staging Equality' (2006), whose translation and explanation of the neo-Platonic Rancièrean concept of 'theatocracy' has directly informed its use throughout this thesis. The reading of the 'theatocratic' politics of *L'Atelier populaire* can thus be considered an original supplement to all of the above. Deranty's *Jacques Rancière: Key Concepts* (2010) and Deranty and Ross' *Jacques Rancière and the Contemporary Scene* (2012), have been generally useful throughout. Paul Bowman's *Rancière and Film* (2013), and James Harvey's *Jacques Rancière and the Politics of Art Cinema* (2018), have opened up the field of Rancièrean film studies in a manner which this thesis similarly wishes to do for the reading of the applied or graphic arts.

2.3: 1968

As the key actor within the student movement of '68, Cohn-Bendit's *Obsolete Communism: A Left-Wing Alternative* (1968) has been central to this thesis, not simply as testament but as evidence of the schism between the authoritarian and libertarian left in 60s France. Of the general historical accounts of the 'event' of '68, the least academic, though probably the most readable and useful, was Kurlansky's *1968* (2004), a journalistic account of the divergent libidinal energies of the year, as they played out globally. A central chapter synchronically links the Sorbonne occupations to solidarity demonstrations at Columbia, (222), Berkeley (234) and Frankfurt (236), whilst drawing neat comparisons between the prevarications and political misjudgements of Lyndon B. Johnson and De Gaulle (214-5). Similarly internationalist, though explicitly Leftist in ideology, is Tariq Ali and Susan Watkin's edited precis of news articles *1968: Marching in the Streets* (1998), many of which come from the underground newspaper Ali edited, *Black Dwarf* (1968-72), which has also been cited in this thesis as primary evidence. Ronald Fraser's *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt* (1988: 374-90) was similarly useful, but written diachronically and organised nationally, rather than the synchronic internationalism of Kurlansky (2004) and Ali and Watkins (1998). The synchronic global narration of '68 inspired the attempt by this thesis to align the struggles of '68 in a dialectical image. The general euphoria resulting from the synchronic presentation of both these historical texts also informed the collaged structure of the reading of Chapter 5. Less central to the thesis, though still relevant, were Kutschke and Norton's *Music and Protest in 1968* (2013), Gildea's *Europe's 1968: Voices of Revolt* (2013), and Tismaneanu's *Promises of 1968: Crises, Illusion and Utopia* (2011). Cornils and Waters' *Memories of 1968: International Perspectives* (2010) contains a powerful testimony by one of the key protagonists of Paris '68, Daniel Bensaïd, which has been cited directly in the third chapter (181-98). Also cited in the same chapter is Chris Harman's *The Fire Last Time* (1998), whose incendiary narrative has proved generally inspirational, beyond the thesis

itself. Cited previously in Chapter 1, Ross's *May '68 and its Afterlives* (2002b) has been an invaluable source on the conjuncture of '68, and its legacies, as well as the relationship of Rancière and *L'Atelier populaire* to both.

The internationalist outlook of many of these historical accounts synthesised with the original ambition of this thesis was to draw equivalences between the university protests in Britain, the US, and Europe generally, not just the Paris of *Nanterre* and *L'École des Beaux-Arts*. Edited from the final draft, but still influential on its arguments, were two accounts of the 1968 occupation of *Hornsey School of Art*, London; the collectively authored *The Hornsey Affair* (AMHCA 1969), and Tickner's retrospective *Hornsey 1968* (2008). Both texts contain the usual strengths and weaknesses of reliability common to oral history, given that they are largely based upon testimonies from the historical actors of '68. Neither offers the theoretical or political account of the art school 'in occupation' developed within this thesis. However, the chosen *nom de guerre* of Hornsey, the 'Association of Members of Hornsey College of Art' [AMHCA], reveals an immanent desire for the non-hierarchical restructuring of the art school shared by the *Beaux-Arts* occupation. Given that no other substantial research exists on the UK art school occupations of '68, though the educational and cultural contexts of London and Paris in 1968 were quite different, the fact that the two occupations were in dialogue (AMHCA 1969: 54) suggests further comparative study would extend this thesis and contribute usefully to existing scholarship.

More research exists on *L'Atelier populaire* than Hornsey, with relatively few offering the philosophical or political accounts outlined by this thesis. The only full-length English language volume on the topic is Kugelberg and Vermès' *Beauty is in the Street* (2011). Though exemplary as archival research, this is predominantly a visual record. Documenting over 400 original poster-works form *L'Atelier populaire*, and numerous related communiques and CDA pamphlets, this is the nearest thing to their catalogue raisonné, but contains very little academic commentary. Considine's short essay 'Screen Politics' (2015) is one of two English language attempts to give art historical attention to these posters, though his primary ambition is formal, to situate the posters of the *L'Atelier* within a Pop-Art tradition. Similarly,

Siegelbaum's 'The Riddle of May '68' (2012), on which Considine relies, usefully focuses on the influence of Althusserianism on young French artists following '68. However its primary ambition is to demonstrate this context as the preconditions for the conceptual poster-works of Daniel Buren. Beyond both analyses, this thesis situates *L'Atelier populaire* as cause and effect of the conjuncture of '68, reading their artworks more closely and more critically than any other anglophone study to date.

Understandably, there is more francophone literature concerning this topic than anglophone. Of these, numerous visual records of '68 have influenced this thesis, particularly regarding photography, such as Bruno Barbey's *Mai 68 ou l'imagination au pouvoir* (1998), and Walter Lewino and Jo Schnapp's *L'imagination au pouvoir* (2018). Though work by both photographers is included within this thesis, the treatment of these photographic works, as artworks not documents, is more serious and sustained in this thesis. The nearest to this approach is Tesson and Barbey's May '68 (2018), though this relies on Tesson's autobiographical account, not scholarship, for this synthesis. Other francophone texts informing this thesis include Perussaux's *Les affiches de Mai 68* (1982), and the original collectively self-produced record of the occupation, *L'Atelier Populaire présenté par lui-même* (1968). Within, the original manifesto of *L'Atelier*, first published in English in *Posters from the Revolution*, and subsequently reprinted in Kugelberg and Vermès, was the starting point for all the analyses contained within this thesis.

2.4: Ideology, Aesthetics, and the University Struggles.

Many other research themes have been marginalised by the editing process but were nevertheless inseparable from the production of this thesis and its 'politics'. For example, the 60s emergence of conceptual art as a specific form of dematerialised anti-capitalist politics, accounted for in Buchloch's long form essay 'Conceptual Art 1962-69' (1990) and Lucy Lippard's justifiably famous *Six Years* (1997). Similarly, the wealth of secondary literature tracing postructuralist thought from the 'event' of '68, such as Bourg's *From Revolution to Ethics* (2007) and the chapter on '68 from Boltanski and Chiapello's *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (1999: 167-217). In particular, the latter's focus on a synthesised social and artistic critique (169) immanent to '68 informed the approach of the fifth chapter, if not the entirety, of this thesis. Baudrillard's *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (1981) contains an essay entitled 'Requiem for the Media' (164-84) which addresses the symbolic value of the events at Nanterre, including explicit reference to the screen-printed media produced by the *L'Atelier populaire*. Whilst generally regarding the 'mediatization' of the mass actions of the *soixante-huitards* as a capitulation to the spectacle, or gradual descent into simulation, he still contends that the *L'Atelier* works were the 'real revolutionary media during May' (176-7). The final chapter of this thesis has been an attempt to develop Baudrillard's otherwise passing comment in this text. Baudrillard's *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (1981) has also been generally relevant as a text discussing ideology. In particular, the chapter 'Fetishism and Ideology: The Semiological Reduction' (88-101), has been useful in bridging Chapter 4's Althusserian-Rancièrean discussion of ideology.

Against the pessimism of the Baudrillardian (1983) or Debordian (1992 [1967]) reading of a media-saturated society governed by the alienated exchange and superficial sign-value, this thesis forwards an idea of 'aesthetic practice' as ideological struggle. A contemporary counterpoint to this reading would be the recent accounts of 'meme-warfare'

in the age of digital reproduction, such as Kalle Lasn's *Culture Jam* (2000), Naomi Klein's *No Logo* (2001). McLuhan's (1964) ideas on the influence of new media on culture, especially typography (1962), have informed the approach of this thesis to the *L'Atelier* works. Recent work by Mirzoeff (2012) has drawn attention to the visual politics of the 'Occupy' movement in a manner complementary to this thesis. Similarly, Yates Mckee's *Strike Art* (2016) synthesises aesthetics and politics within both contemporary art and protest movements. Following Ross, Antigoni Memou's *Photography and Social Movements* (2013) discusses the role of photography in generating the afterlives of '68, amongst contemporary global struggles. The case study of *L'Atelier populaire* within this thesis exists as a complementary original contribution to this recent tradition of radical cultural studies. On the contemporary university struggles specifically, Cassie Earl's *Spaces of Political Pedagogy* (2018) aligns the 'Occupy' movement with radical pedagogy and recent university occupations, and as such is the contemporary counterpoint to this thesis. A formative influence has been the work of Mike Neary, Joss Winn, and Sarah Amsler at the recently closed experimental co-operative university, *The Social Science Centre*, Lincoln, (Neary 2016; 2014; Neary and Amsler 2012) as well as the now defunct Edu-Factory Collective (2009). In its own way, this thesis is a continuation of these divergent university struggles.

Aside from Marx, Althusser, and Rancière, Terry Eagleton's *Ideology: An Introduction* (1993) and his edited reader *Ideology* (1994), have both been key sources for developing the nuanced concept of ideology in Chapter 4. The latter volume also includes an edited selection of citations form Althusser's various texts (87-112), alongside important essays concerning ideology by Rancière (141-61), Hirst (112-25), and Poulantzas (126-40). Other secondary sources on ideology essential to Chapter 4 are as follows. David Hawkes' *Ideology* (1996); Michael Freeden's *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* (2003); Petri's *A Short History of Western Ideology*. Slavoj Žižek's *Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989), *Mapping Ideology* (2012), and cinematic introduction to the topic, *The Pervert's Guide to Ideology* (2013), have informed this thesis but sustained focus on Žižek's psychoanalytic-

Hegelian problematic would have taken this thesis on too much of a detour for critical cohesion.

Eagleton's *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990) was central to the development of this thesis. Research undertaken on aesthetics and aesthetic ideology which has been deemphasised during the editing process, but still complementary to its arguments includes work from the 'social history of art' tradition, whose advent was announced by T. J. Clark in *Image of the People* (1973) and continued in Janet Wolff's *The Social Production of Art* (1981). This thesis stands extends the project of Wolff's, and prior to that John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* (1972), to demystify artistic production. Both Berger and Wolff have an explicitly Benjaminian inheritance in their arguments, drawing upon his artwork essay and 'Author as Producer' (1998 [1966]: 85-104). As suggested, this thesis stands in the same tradition, outlining a 'politics' of Benjaminian 'exhibition-value' which hopefully affects the transformation of the capitalist educational apparatus in a small way. Wolff's work also owes a great deal to the neo-Althusserian work of Pierre Macherey, notably *A Theory of Literary Production* (1966). Macherey's long essay therein, 'Lenin as a Critic of Tolstoy', exemplifies a scrupulous, conjunctural method of reading art, in all its aporetic complexity, which arguably finds its nearest equivalent the project of T. J. Clark. Both reject the idea of art 'reflecting ideologies, social relations, or history', just as it rejects the reading of 'history as 'background' to the work of art' (1973: 10). Yet, the scientistic character of Macherey's reading would presumably be rejected by Rancière, like he rejects Althusserianism, as 'the hermeneutics of suspicion'. An early ambition, which proved beyond this thesis, was to align the precise reading method of Althusser, Macherey, and Clark, with the 'lesson' of Rancière (Chapter 3) contra the master-reading to develop an original and radical art historical mode.

Finally, 'aesthetics' had greater thematic prominence in earlier drafts of this thesis, therefore a variety of texts on the subject lay behind its current arguments. Herbert Read, in the influential book *Education Through Art* (1961), has argued that many of the confusions, limitations, and problems of modern art pedagogy emerge from misreadings of the term 'Art' in Plato. Similarly, Howard Caygill's (1982) doctoral work shows how the presumed neutrality

of the category of the aesthetic disguises numerous historic socio-cultural mediations. This approach parallels the task of mapping mediations in ideology in Chapter 4 and inform references to the aesthetic throughout. The presumed neutrality of 'aesthetics' is reproduced uncritically and ahistorically in the meta-concept 'art'. Paul Oskar Kristeller's two-part essay *'The Modern System of the Arts'* (1951; 1952) convincingly locates the genesis of the concept to the eighteenth century. Terry Eagleton makes much the same argument in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, Pierre Bourdieu in *Distinction* (1984), Larry Shiner, more recently, in *The Invention of Art* (2001). Specifically, Kristeller demonstrates how the *Beaux-Arts* [Beautiful or Fine Arts], the disciplines of painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry, were elevated to a transcendent status above other forms of applied arts and crafts at this time. The common thread in all the above is that they describe the emergence of what Rancière would term a 'regime' governing the reception and production of art, and visibility or invisibility of artforms. Rancière's work since the 90s has been concerned with mapping the singularity of artistic practices against this *partage du sensible*. The final reading of this thesis is a contribution to this project, demonstrating the transition from representative to aesthetic regime through the occupation, as practice, of *L'École des Beaux-Arts*, emblematic of the institutional protective apparatus of both bourgeois culture and the representative regime of art.

Chapter 3: Rancière's Lesson

> [Socrates] Well, it is obvious that the elder must govern, and the younger be governed.
> [Glaucon] That is obvious (Plato, *The Republic* IV, 412c; 1979: 178).

> The Liberation missed a great opportunity, and soon the cold war froze everything [...] You had to choose your side. 1968 was an attempt to create a space between those sides, which is why the communists opposed these 1968 movements (Geismar in Kurlansky 2004: 220).

> A spectre is haunting Europe - the spectre of student revolt (Cohn-Bendit 1968: 23).

Over a dozen English language translations in the last two decades have cemented Rancière's reputation within the critical humanities, particularly in the anglophone artworld, where his texts are now ubiquitous in the souvenir shops of most of the major galleries in this country. It is a testament to this artworld popularity that two of the three endorsements on the back of his recently translated *Staging the People* (2011e) are from the artists Liam Gillick and Thomas Hirschhorn. This populism has been read by sceptical commentators as demonstrable evidence of the accessibility, by implication limitations, of his philosophy in comparison to some of the more abstruse elements of post-structuralist French philosophy (McQuillan in Bowman and Stamp 2011: 163). On the other hand, sympathetic readers have suggested that Rancière's current popularity results from the affirmative emphasis his thought places on 'subjective commitment' (Hallward 2006: 122) in an epoch of disorientation and retrenchment for the radical left (Wolfreys 2008: 69-82). Even McQuillan concedes, perhaps sarcastically, the 'stirring' quality of Rancière's work (2011: 177).

The current artistic and curatorial enthusiasm almost certainly has something to do with Rancière's insistence on the political potential of art, literature, and aesthetics, and his repeated focus on the singularity of artworks, given the artworld's preference for philosophers who philosophise through concrete examples. Perhaps his broader work, which focuses on democracy, education, emancipation, and the common, also chimes with the

zeitgeist of a populist movement which, in the UK and France, is tiring with the recent European regimes of austerity, or seeking alternatives to 'the age of no alternatives' (Fukuyama 1992).

However, Rancière's centrality within this thesis is not solely a result of his ongoing rereading of the canon of aesthetic theory, particularly in the recent volumes *Aisthesis* (2013a) and *Aesthetics and its Discontents* (2009a). Alongside his idiosyncratic work on the aesthetic, his similarly dissensual readings of educational theory and political philosophy, and his personal history as a (non-activist) *soixante-huitard*, make him a pivotal and indispensable reference point. Furthermore, the expansive nature of his project, which Rockhill has suggested is genuinely unclassifiable (PA: 1), has explicitly influenced the methodological approach of this dissertation. Crossing literary theory, philosophy, history, sociology, politics, and aesthetics, whilst employing the unfashionable use of archival evidence and historical testimonies to spectrally co-author his arguments, Rancière's work defies any disciplinary specific method or boundary. He defines it as 'indisciplinary' (2008), distinct from and exceeding the signifiers 'transdisciplinary' and 'interdisciplinary', both of which suggest a similar pluralism yet tacitly remain committed to the problematic of disciplinary specialism and segregation. As will be argued, this methodological 'anti-disciplinarity' is a deliberate form of politics, set to work against *le partage du sensible*, especially as it effects the humanities and the academy. In a similar fashion, this thesis forwards an 'indisciplinary' reading of the works of *L'Atelier populaire* as politics against an 'artworld' (Danto 1964) *partage du sensible* which logocentrically divides fine art from applied, avant-garde from popular, aesthetics from politics, and so forth.

In short, *le partage du sensible* refers to the *a priori* ordering of the sensible and intelligible worlds, and receives its most famous, if not clearest, articulation within *The Politics of Aesthetics* (12-13; 42-5). However, the concept operates, implicitly or explicitly, in most of his texts and has been described as the 'shibboleth' to his wider work (Davis 2013: 157). Therefore, a primary aim of this chapter is to introduce and critically interrogate the concept in and against the related Rancièrean motifs of 'politics', 'police', 'disagreement',

and ‘democracy’, whilst also situating the above within the conjuncture of May ‘68. A related aim then, is to demonstrate how the exposure, revelation, and subsequent differencing, of a prevailing *partage du sensible* constitutes an emancipatory ‘politics’ applicable to any field, but in Rancière’s case particularly the philosophic, aesthetic, and pedagogic.

A secondary aim is to demonstrate how this ‘redistribution of the sensible’ (PA: 43) has a heuristic function. The ‘lesson’ each time this deconstructive process is enacted is that whilst the ideological status quo is carceral, once cognised, its hegemony can be resisted and ultimately overturned. This ‘lesson’ is the central revolutionary content of all of Rancière’s work. Therefore, this chapter will demonstrate how this emancipatory ‘lesson’ manifests itself in a number of Rancière’s important texts, from his philosophy of education within *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991), his rejection of the self-serving paternalism of sociology and political philosophy in *The Philosopher and His Poor* (2003b) and *Disagreement* (1999), to his archival rediscovery of the forgotten worker-poets and *goguettes* of mid-nineteenth century France within *Proletarian Nights* (2012b) and *Staging the People* (2011e). His various investigations into the field of aesthetics, especially the recent ‘alternate media archaeology’ (Panagia 2014) *Aisthesis*, also proceed from a similar redistributory logic.

However, the historical gestation of Rancièrean political thought is articulated most clearly within the polemic of *Althusser’s Lesson.* As the title implies, this text describes the effectivity of a political ‘lesson’, specific to Althusserian theoreticism, within the conjuncture of ‘68. At the same time, it also describes the socio-political pre-conditions for a quite different ‘lesson’, based on an anti-authoritarian, non-hierarchical, and emancipatory philosophy of equality, contra dominant-hegemonic ideology and *le partage du sensible*. Therefore, this is the single text that ties Rancière’s work most directly to the occupation of *L'École des Beaux-Arts*. It is also the text where Rancièrean thought can most clearly be evaluated against Althusser’s, as its political, ideological, and philosophical other. Because of this, Rancière’s recollections of the Althusserian ‘lesson’ will be cited frequently throughout this chapter; the aim being to retrieve a spectral Rancièrean ‘lesson’ which can

reinterpret the politics and pedagogy of ’68 and can also be turned towards the current political and educational conjuncture. That the relationship between Rancière and his former tutor Althusser was fundamentally pedagogic, as well as personal, political, and philosophic only further intensifies the validity and relevance of this text as the theoretical lens onto the student uprisings of the ‘French May’.

In a French society of the 1960s, dominated by what Debord characterised as the spectacular recession of the socio-political into image-worlds (1992 [1967]: 7), this analysis can hopefully lay the groundwork for the politicisation of the aesthetic, and the ‘aesthetics of politics’ which Rancière champions as the antithesis of the ‘sun that never sets over the empire of modern passivity’ (Debord 1992 [1967]: 10). The ‘lesson’ of all of the above will contribute to the conceptual formulation of what I will call ‘aesthetic practice’, discussed in detail in the following chapter.

Fig. 3: Martine Franck (1968) *Paris. 1968.* © Magnum Photos.

3.1: The Lessons of May 1968

As suggested above, Rancière's philosophy and politics were formed within the tumultuous events of May 1968, Paris. According to Kurlansky, these began 'with sex, back in January when France was still bored' (2004: 218). Protests within the depressing concrete brutalism of the University of Nanterre campus (Fraser 1988: 171), described by Kurlansky as 'exceptionally ugly' (218), escalated when student requests for coeducational dormitories were patronisingly dismissed by the French government (219). Two years previously, similarly disaffected students at the University of Strasbourg publish a paper entitled 'On the Poverty of Student Life' (1966), which outlined an impassioned critique of French university culture. Relying on rhetorical force rather than scholarly rigour, this paper concluded that 'the student is already a very bad joke'. This conclusion was drawn after all manner of critical self-loathing, which attacked the schizophrenic nature of student existence, their ignorance of the reality of their social conditions, the decline of the university and its transformation into a production line, the collapse of high culture and its substitution by compensatory commercial culture, and the blind perpetuation of the above by the student generation. Even the libidinal energy of a frustrated and alienated youth was damned as politically impotent within this pessimistic reading. UNEF Strasbourg: [On the student bohemian] 'Where sex is concerned, we have learnt better tricks from elderly provincial ladies. His rent-a-crowd militancy for the latest good cause is an aspect of his real impotence' (1966).

However, the main target of the UNEF Strasbourg manifesto was the 'totalitarian control of the spectacle'. The use of this specific language reveals the extent to which the radical fringes of the student movement were held under the sway of the Situationist International, (Rainer-Horn 2007: 5-16) which would find its theoretical peak in 1967-8 with the publication of Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1992 [1967]) and Raoul Vaneigem's *The Revolution of Everyday Life* (1983 [1967]). Rainer-Horn (2007: 12) even identifies the UNEF Strasbourg text as being authored by the Situationist International's

Mustapha Khayati. Debord's vision of a society governed by a 'language of generalised separation', where all life is no longer 'directly lived' but 'mediated by images' (1992 [1967]: 7), clearly resonated with an alienated generation socialised by globalised consumer culture and its spectacular apparatus of advertising, radio, and television. Testament to this alienation, Vaneigem's text repeatedly employs anti-Republican imagery such as its reference to the 'humiliation' of Rousseau (29), or expressions of sympathy for the fate of Durutti's anarcho-syndicalists, (59) and countless phrases like 'all we have in common is the illusion of being together' (39).

Accordingly, the French election of 1965 was played out via television, which had only begun broadcasting in France in 1957, yet had already relayed coverage of the American war in Vietnam, the civil rights struggle, and the French war in Indochina into the homes of those who would be otherwise ignorant of global geopolitics. A year earlier, Marshall McLuhan (1964) had predicted, in his techno-utopian global village thesis, that advances in telecommunications would extend 'our nervous systems in a global embrace', making us acutely aware of the international consequences of our actions, and thus 'heightening human awareness of responsibility to an intense degree'. For McLuhan, this would 'render individualism obsolete' and make 'corporate interdependence mandatory' (1-5). History has clearly shown that the path of technological globalisation did not lead to utopia, cooperation, and interdependence. Already in the 60s it was possible to suggest that a society mediated by images was more alienated than integrated. For Debord, the more an individual contemplates the seductive images of the spectacle 'the less he lives; the more readily he recognises his own needs in the images of need proposed by the dominant system, the less he understands his own existence and his own desires' (1992 [1967]: 7). The French televised elections of '65 were an exemplar of the Debordian disconnect between the use-value and sign-value of political images. Their televisual novelty created a popular excitement that something about the crumbling old order, particularly the 'hopelessly old-fashioned geriatric' (Kurlansky 2004: 218) president Charles de Gaulle, was being exposed in the face of challenges from the relative 'youth' of François Mitterrand and Jean

Lecanuet. Though apparently democratic, the whole spectacle was carefully stage managed by de Gaulle via the state-controlled television station *ORTF*, described at the time sarcastically as 'the government in every living room'. De Gaulle consequently won a comfortable victory (Kurlansky 2004: 216).

However, the state management of growing student unrest was far less adroit. Seemingly every action or sanction taken against the student protests compounded the popular perception that the presiding government was hopelessly out of touch with its young citizens. Already suspicious that the conservative politics of the parent class, evidenced by their recent collaborationist past, were preventing the social revolution promised by the *Libération*, this generation had become gradually more sympathetic to militant politics (Hamon in Hanley and Kerr 1989: 12-13). However, as the sociologist Edgar Morin recognised at the time, the 'pop generation' of passive docile consumers preferred the 'standardisation' and 'pseudo-individualisation' (Adorno in Storey 1998: 197-209). of American rock 'n' roll to coherent political ideology (Morin in Gaffney and Holmes 2007: 79) Edgar Morin coined the term *yé-yé* to refer to this new culture; a term which appropriates the "yeah-yeahs" of popular music like The Beatles or Johnny Hallyday to connote acquiescence, docility, and obedience in the face of the spectacle. Yet, within them stirred a 'new form of class consciousness based not on socio-economic status but of age' (Loosely 2003: 87). This 'new sensibility' was fomented in Nanterre's concrete jungle, where suburban ennui on the peripheries of Paris, and the growing sexual frustrations of an alienated cohort of students, segregated into single sex dormitories, gradually coalesced into a politicised 'alternative university' of militancy. Hamon suggests that this alienation was exacerbated by increased university failure rates, growing student numbers, which caused overcrowding in lecture theatres and dormitories, and an aloof lecturing class (1989: 15).

In this pressure cooker, the small scale actions of tiny Trotskyist groups like the JCR [*Jeunesse communiste révolutionnaire*], or the Maoist UJC-ML [*Union des jeunesses communistes marxistes-léninistes*], replicating the actions of radical student movements they saw on TV, such as those in Rome, Berlin, and Berkeley, were quickly swelled into a full

blown mass movement, subsequently named *Le mouvement du 22 mars* [March 22nd Movement]. This name was taken from the date the university building at Nanterre was initially occupied. This action was called by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who would later become the reluctant leader of the student movement, in response to the 'blacklisting' of JCR militants by the university Chancellor (Fraser 1988: 188). Symbolically, *le 22 mars* was significant because it represented the first moment when students symbolically controlled the institutional and ideological space of the university authorities. As with all events which subsequently become mythologised, accounts of this occupation are contradictory. Kurlansky suggests that the students merely made it as far as the faculty lounge (2004: 21). As an image of ideological struggle, this is obviously somewhat underwhelming. Cohn-Bendit, cited in Fraser (1988: 188), remembers differently. He argues that they not only made it to the Chancellor's office, but alongside members of the JCR, acted as a pacifying force against an 'extremist' anarchist fringe who were set to smash the office to pieces.

Whichever is truthful, *le 22 mars* succeeded in unifying a fragmented and sectarian student Left under a common ideology. Though they lacked 'formal leaders [or] common theoretical positions', the movement was united by a 'common will to act' against sanctions or repression (Fraser 1988: 189). In response to overzealous policing and authoritarianism this movement committed to an ideology of horizontality, where all strategy was democratically agreed via general assemblies.

This movement coalesced around the emotive collective subjectivity of *Les Enragés* [the angry ones], a name was popularised during the French Revolution and therefore carrying high degrees of symbolic and cultural capital, which accordingly swelled numbers exponentially. The instigation of disciplinary procedures against Cohn-Bendit also radicalised many. Roughly five hundred outraged *enragés* attended the general assembly of March 22nd, compared to a meagre three dozen at a January 26th rally (Kurlansky 2004: 221). Likewise, the panicked decision to close the rebellious Nanterre campus on the 3rd May, in fear of its occupation 'by what Pierre Grapin, the Dean of the Faculty of Letters at Nanterre called 'a foreign army' (Fraser 1988: 204), and the antagonistic recourse to police protection

for the Sorbonne, only escalated the dispute, provoking students into meeting the threat of violence with violent direct action of their own.

Student activist Hélène Goldet recalls this spontaneous revolt as both a 'great battle' and a 'festival', which restored something to the student movement which was previously absent (Ibid.). That these two seemingly contradictory images could be held together simultaneously in the act of violent struggle is perhaps testament to the extent to which the sensibilities of this pop generation were formed through the spectacle, where movies and TV shows frequently collapse violence into entertainment, presenting both as heroic. However, it is also demonstrative of the euphoric and affirmative power of what Rancière will call *subjectivation*, the transformative political potential of identity formation through the act of dissensual political or ideological struggle. Cohn-Bendit's defence to the police for his involvement in printing construction diagrams for Molotov cocktails was that 'violent revolt is in the French culture' (Kurlansky 2004: 226); a defence which relies on a shared interpellative *connaissance* between state agent and subject.

Therefore, the ideological othering of the *enragés* as a 'foreign army' became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Denying access to the university via RSAs only increased its symbolic importance as site of ideological struggle. Closing Nanterre only resulted in relocating violence from the peripheries to the very centre of Paris, where hundreds more potential *enragés* awaited. These numbers included hundreds of *lycéens* [high school students] eager for political practice after being radicalised by the creation of the *Comités d'action lycéens* [CAL] two years earlier (Fraser 1988: 205).

Also, in wait were the world's media, who were in town hoping to report on the conclusion of peace talks regarding the ongoing Vietnam war (Kurlansky 2004: 222). In a 'society of the spectacle', it was natural that French television, broadcasting from '67 onwards in glorious technicolour, should be the medium that relayed the events of '68 nationally and globally, drawing hitherto un-politicised moderates and non-students into the struggle. The spectacle of Paris '68 became global. Images of fresh-faced and long-haired youth throwing paving stones at the armoured police of the CRS [*Compagnies républicaines*

de sécurité] was far more seductive to an international news media than hard-nosed bureaucrats arguing inconclusively about Vietnam. Thus the processive, accumulative logic of the spectacle catapulted unwitting actors into global superstardom.

Cohn-Bendit would become famous, in part, because of the rhetoric of his personal account of the events, *Obsolete Communism: A Left-Wing Alternative* (1968), published shortly after their conclusion. He would also gain notoriety as the most vocal and visible proponent of *gauchisme* (Reader 1962: 56), the political strategy of spectacular direct action loved by the student movement and dismissed as 'ultra-leftist' by the PCF. However, as Cohn-Bendit retrospectively recognises, it would be the accumulative apparatus of the spectacle, particularly television, that fuelled the student movement and guaranteed his fame. Cohn-Bendit:

> We met through television, through seeing pictures of each other on television. We were the first television generation. We did not have relationships with each other, but we had a relationship with what our imagination produced from seeing the pictures of each other on television (Kurlansky 2004: 224).

Almost inevitably, Cohn-Bendit and his lieutenants Jacques Sauvageot and Alain Geismar were eventually invited to debate *gauchiste* politics with state employed journalists on television. Prime Minister Georges Pompidou introduced them as 'horrible revolutionaries' (Ibid. 229). De Gaulle had previously dismissed them as 'abusive students [that] terrorize the others: one percent of *enragés* to 99 percent sheep who are waiting for the government to protect them' (223). The patronising attitude of the authorities at the time, and the demotic tone of their edicts, were hopelessly untelevisual. Not only did they reveal the contemptuous attitude of government towards both dissidents and regular citizens, they also revealed the authorities to be politically out of touch. Needless to say, these kinds of personality traits did not go down well with the television audiences and the children of the spectacle soon became media darlings (229).

The enthusiasm generated by this 'common stream' of televisual images across the continent caused a paranoid de Gaulle to suspect a pan-European conspiracy, coordinated

by the CIA and Mossad, to overthrow the French republic (224). As well as generating conspiracy theories, this image-stream had very real political effects. May 6th saw over one thousand students repeatedly charge the armoured CRS. This process was repeated day after day in an increasingly chaotic frenzy. Other signifiers of rebellion, such as the black flags of anarchy, and red flags of communism, were flown throughout the Latin quarter. Barricades were erected, simulating those captured in the surviving photos which of the Paris Commune of 1848, and the workers anthem *L'Internationale* echoed through the streets. Kurlansky (2004: 29) recounts the spectacle of right-wing republicans trying to drown it out with a rival chorus of *Les Marseillaise* from the other side of the street.

Given the demonstrable political currency of the image within the spectacle of '68, it was perhaps natural that the art schools of the Sorbonne, *L'École des Beaux Arts* and the *L'École des Arts Décoratif* were seized as the means of image production. Their print rooms were occupied and transformed into *L'Atelier Populaire* [The People's Studio]. From here over four hundred individual screen-printed images were produced at an industrial rate, translating Situationist graffiti and political slogans into simple one colour protest images, whose simple aesthetic connoted seditionary propaganda and nightclub publicity simultaneously. Suddenly covering the walls of the Left Bank, these images became inseparable from the struggle on the streets. Indeed, these images constituted a specific form of politics, now understood as 'meme-warfare' (Lasn 2012; 1999), which is parasitically dependent on, but not reducible to, the techniques of propaganda and the spectacle.

One of the most galvanising posters depicted a shadowy figure, obviously De Gaulle, silencing a young boy, above the slogan *Sois jeune et tais toi* [Be young and shut up] (Fig. 3). Even more iconic was another image, this time depicting a smiling Cohn-Bendit facing down an armoured CRS guard (Fig. 4). Both of these images employ similar visual rhetoric, which juxtaposes the faceless state RSA to the smiling, human vitality of youth; simultaneously demonising the enemy and interpellating subjects to the cause. This othering strategy is echoed in the textual slogan underneath, which repurposes the legalistic language used to justify Cohn-Bendit's eventual expulsion and exile from France as an

‘undesirable’ [*indesirable*], into a subjective label of anti-authoritarian solidarity. So effective was this image that Pierre Bourdieu would later refer to the power of the ‘laughter of May’ [*le rire de mai*] (Jackson et al 2011: 3) in his analyses.

Frequently, multiple images were pasted together in an ad-hoc montage, generating intertextual dialogue between neighbouring posters and the architecture which they hijacked. Martine Frank’s photograph (Fig. 3) shows the effectivity of this montage strategy. Here, the *sois jeune et tais tois* poster adorns the walls of the *Beaux-Arts*, next to Eros, the Greek god of love, passion, and creativity, disobedient child of Aphrodite, and occasional bringer of maddening destruction (Morford and Lenardon 2003: 53, 171-200). In a domineering juxtaposition, Eros stands above a series of posers referencing the state media ISAs which the students desired deposed. To the left, “*La police a l’ORTF; ORTF c’est la police chez vous”* [The police have the ORTF; ORTF is the police in your house]. To the right, “*la police vous parle tous les soirs à vingt heure”* [the police speak to you every night at eight o’clock]. In shorthand, this photograph narrates the student image 'struggle against the Gaullist cancer [“*lutte contre le cancer Gaulliste”*] and its attendant RSAs and ISAs. Equally, the image captures the dynamic interplay of what Rancière calls ‘politics’ and ‘police’.

Paraphrasing Marx’s camera obscura metaphor, Debord (1992 [1967]) argued that the spectacle presents a ‘separate pseudo-world’ (7) which ‘is really upside down, [wherein] the true is a moment of the false’ (9). As images of *détournement*, these posters intervene within the spectacle and expose its inversions. At the same time, as specific sign-values within a system of simulation, they are not completely autonomous from the spectacle’s effects. Indeed, its ‘concrete inversion of life, the autonomous movement of the non-living’ (7), the capacity to recuperate all social and ideological practice, even those which explicitly challenge its apparent autonomy. The strategy of spectacular image-warfare stakes an exponential increase in political visibility against the dilution of that politics into its partial apprehension as ‘an object of mere contemplation’. Nowhere are the stakes of this gambit more clearly played out than in the *denouement* of the ‘French May’.

Relayed via countless pamphlets, posters, and televisual broadcasts, to an audience of millions, "*Dany le rouge*" became the smiling poster boy for the revolution and an abstracted symbol of youthful rebellion, divorced from both its referent and specific socio-political context. Following this separation, the *L'Atelier populaire* posters, produced initially as 'weapons in the service of the struggle', quickly generated new markets for their commodification. According to Kurlansky (2004), *L'Atelier* received an offer for their work of $70,000 from two major European publishers (229). Though their righteously angry manifesto distanced themselves from this process, incorporation via commodification (Hebdige 1979: 94-6) was always the risk of an image-politics mounted against a spectacular society whose energy and existence depends on the production and consumption of novel and seductive images. Despite the *L'Atelier's* protestation that these images should be kept outside of 'bourgeois places of culture', they are now routinely exhibited and traded online. The Hayward Gallery held an exhibition of these prints, 'May 68: Street Posters from the Paris Rebellion', apparently unironically in May 2008. A similar process of recuperation followed Alberto Korda's famous black and white photograph *Guerrillero Heroico* (1960), of the Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara, which was subsequently abstracted into a mass-produced, all-encompassing icon of student positionality.

The vulnerability of the image-politics of '68 to incorporation in many ways mirrors the fragility of its actual political practice, especially the alliance between workers and students. Chris Harman's excellent book, *1968: The Fire Last Time* (1998) chooses a photograph of a large banner wielded at a mass rally which carried the slogan 'Workers and Students United, We Shall Overcome' [*ouvriers étudiants unis nous vaincrons*]. The reproduction and international dissemination of this and similar images has done much to mythologise the worker-student solidarity. In reality, the sides were quite removed from one another. Though the general strike of May 13th, which briefly incapacitated the country, was clearly inspired by the spectacle of the student struggle, the imagined unity of student and workers struggle was easily picked apart by the divide and conquer tactics of Pompidou and de Gaulle at the

negotiating table. The myth of workers and students united in struggle was actually quite far from the reality. The student battle cry was *Liberté, Egalité, Sexualité*; for the workers it was simply improved pay and conditions. The strategic alignment of the trade unions and the PCF [*Parti communiste français*] with the student movement was always opportunistic, motivated by the palpable sense of a weakened government. This precarious alliance split as soon as the right offer was on the table for the workers.

May '68 was eventually settled after the government offered the workers a staggering 35% wage increase, and De Gaulle called a surprise tactical election, in search of mandate from the public as the self-styled saviour of French 'democracy' from 'totalitarian communism' (Kurlansky 2004: 235). Cohn-Bendit was deported to Germany, and the Sorbonne occupation fizzled out on June 17th, with many of the occupying *enragés* exiting into generous publishing contracts for their stories. Almost a week later, on 23rd June, the Gaullists claimed 43% of the vote, stealing large numbers of assembly seats from the Left.

In an act of spite against journalists who were critical of him, a triumphalist De Gaulle cut one third of the staff from state funded TV stations and, presumably to introduce some comedic bathos to counter journalistic hubris, introduced commercial advertising before the evening news. In between detergent adverts and distant images of riots in Berkeley and napalm in Vietnam, May 68 ended in complete capitulation to the commercial televisual spectacle that had initially energised and sustained it.

Numerous lessons can be drawn from the events of May '68. Firstly, that an authoritarian parent culture will always generate rebellion; a rebellion which is exacerbated by any attempt to police that authority through repression. Secondly, that authority maintained through RSAs is relatively powerless against the ideological struggle it generates as reflex. Thirdly, that counter-hegemonic struggle at the level of ideas and image can quickly generate a street level politics of the actual with revolutionary potential. As part of this, the occupation of sites of ideological significance, physical and mental, was key to the success of the student movement. As image-politics, the 'occupation' of material sites, such

as the universities and streets of the Left Bank, and immaterial sites, such as the radio and television airwaves, should be regarded as identical and co-determinate. Finally, perhaps the most important lesson for this thesis, that the apparent precarity of image-politics, centring around the separation between the real and its representation, disguises an immanent critical function which Debord recognises in the general character of the spectacle. As he argues, 'social practice, which the spectacle's autonomy challenges, is also the real totality to which the spectacle is subordinate' (Debord 1992 [1967]: 8). The various images of ideological struggle, in the most expanded possible sense, produced by the *soixante-huitards* can be read pessimistically as reflections of this 'general separation' or duality. However, as the final chapter of this thesis will discuss in detail, they can also visibly demonstrate the inner logic of the spectacle and, in this sense, carry a political and propaedeutic function.

Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 4: L'Atelier populaire (1968) *Nous sommes tous "indesirables"*. © Bibliothèque nationale de France.

3:2: The Lessons of Althusser.

As suggested above, the lessons of '68 had a profound influence on Rancière's philosophy and politics. The perceived betrayal of the youth movement by both the PCF and trade unions left him deeply suspicious of organised politics, especially those forms of political authority which would claim to speak for their presumed subalterns. Like many other *soixante-huitards*, he would subsequently associate all instantiations of the Communist Party, especially the PCF, with a repressive paternalism. By the 1960s, repressive structures were evident throughout the Soviet Union, which Stalinism had deformed from utopian project into a brutal and oppressive police state, to which the PCF was complicit. Its interventions in Algeria, which under the banner of anti-imperialist struggle ended up propping up a similarly oppressive regime, had radicalised many long before 1968 (Montag 2011: 9).

Louis Althusser's critical support for the PCF throughout the 50s and 60s was motivated, in part, by the misguided belief that his philosophical project could operate as a form of entryism within the PCF apparatus and salvage Marxism from its deviations. Paradoxically, as Rancière recognised later in *Althusser's Lesson*, this helped prop up the PCF by recruiting students who associated the personal charisma and critical rigour of 'Althusser the academic' with the Party (Fox 1992). In addition, it helped create a schism in the radical student left between the PCF's student wing, the UEC, and the Maoist UJC-ML (AL: 23). Therefore for Rancière, Althusserianism was doubly reactionary and became synonymous with Party authoritarianism, despite its radicality.

Yet, as one of Althusser's star students at the elite *École Normale Supérieure* [ENS], Rancière directly contributed to the seminars which would culminate in the publication of *Reading Capital* (2015; 1970 [1965]), which alongside *For Marx* (1979 [1965]) constitutes the canon of high Althusserianism. Famously, these texts forwarded a new kind of reading of Marx's work, which would recognise *Capital* (1995 [1867]) not only as an epistemological

break from Marx's earlier work, but also as containing a latent abstract theory of the development of history (dialectical materialism). This style of reading, which looks for hidden, latent, or underlying structures beneath the surface of a text is called a 'symptomatic' reading. Its equivalent is the psychoanalytic scene, where the analyst looks for the repressed causes of a patient's symptoms. The latent structure animating a text is its 'problematic'. For Althusser, Marx's early work is determined by a pre-scientific, humanist-idealist 'problematic', resulting from his Hegelian education, whereas the replicable, theoretical character of *Capital* is 'symptomatic' of genuine science.

Althusser's idea of the epistemological break is informed by the philosophy of science of Gaston Bachelard (2002 [1938]), who argued that inferior scientific enquiry always starts out from subject-centred humanism; the world understood in relation to subject position. In contradistinction, true scientific knowledge is objective, rigorous, abstract, and replicable. All disciplines begin in a pre-scientific, ideological phase, which is transcended by a paradigm shift of methodological scientific awakening. Though Bachelard speaks of 'rupture' [*ruptures*], not 'break' [*coupures*] (Hallward 2011), Althusser nevertheless develops a theory of the clean epistemological break. 1963's 'On the Materialist Dialectic' which proceeds by outlining a schematic of social practices (political / ideological / theoretical), each of which work on their given raw materials (social relations / ideology and consciousness / representations, concepts, facts) (1979: 167), to transform them into determinate products; 'practice' being the 'determinant moment' or 'labour of transformation' (Ibid: 166). The epistemological break is the consequence of a theoretical practice, specific to a social practice, which transforms that practices pre-scientific ideological beliefs into scientific 'knowledges'. Confusingly, 'theoretical practice' has its own attendant 'theory' as much as the other practices. Therefore, it is necessary for Althusser to outline a taxonomy of theory: *theory*, the general term for scientific theoretical practice, 'theory' '(in inverted commas) which is the determinate theoretical system of a real science' and 'Theory (with a capital T) [...] the Theory of practice in general' (168), which produces the epistemological

break between ideology and science. For Althusser, ‘Theory (with a capital T)’ is a synonym for dialectical materialism.

Althusser found the strict partitioning of pre-scientific and scientific Marx difficult to defend in his later career (Hallward 2011). Others argued that elements of both aspects of exist in both Marx’s early and late work; the British philosopher John Lewis even insisting that Althusser’s ‘break’ was a complete myth (1972: 17). However, Althusser situates the genesis of his reading within and against the dogmatism of his formative years in the Communist Party, where ‘intellectuals in arms’ sliced ‘up the world with a single blade’ [...] the period summed up in caricature by a single phrase, a banner flapping in the void: bourgeois science, proletarian science’ (1979: 22). For Althusser, this binary logic reflected the political disorientation of the late 40s; a time where the consequences of the choice between commitment and silence were clear and acute (Ibid.). The ‘void’ in his metaphor refers to both the absence of one coherent political hegemony, and the poverty of a French theoretical tradition (23-4). The ‘banner’ of polarising commitment thus leading uncritically to the ‘delirium’ of Stalinist dogma.

It is ironic then that the fate of Althusserianism would be to descend into its own dogma. In his revisionist essay ‘Elements of Self-Criticism’ of 1974 (1976: 101-62), Althusser admits that his desire to defend Marxist science from bourgeois ideology resulted in the deviation which he labels ‘theoreticism’, meaning the ‘primacy of theory over practice; one-sided insistence on theory; but more precisely: s*peculative-rationalism*’ (124n19). The speculative side of this conjunction refers to the misguided transposition of the method of rationally separating truth from falsehood onto a ‘General Theory of Science and Ideology’ (Ibid.). In the 60s, the threat of bourgeois ideology, to which ‘theoreticism’ opposed, manifested itself in two forms; the Humanist-Marxist tendencies growing within the Party and Leftist tendencies without, particularly amongst the student movement. Both of these were consequences of the forced liberalisation of the CPSU following the Twentieth Congress (1956).

This liberal period, as Althusser (1979: 30) and Rancière (AL: 24) both acknowledge, brought with it a freedom to reread Marx with 'fresh eyes', beyond Party dogma, and to write the Marxist philosophy which had yet to be constituted (Althusser 1979: 31). This space of 'freedom of investigation' (Ibid.) created the preconditions for *Reading Capital*. Yet, Althusser's writing of the 60s often seems caught in a double-bind, overdetermined by a desire to simultaneously denigrate the dilution of the 'science' of Marxism by the New Left whilst denouncing the Stalinism to which Marxist science had degenerated at the hands of the Party. It is for this reason that, in the same sentence in *For Marx*, Althusser can celebrate the 'end of Stalinist dogmatism' whilst insisting the theoretical problems of the Stalinist period '*are still our problems*' (Ibid.).

Rancière characterises this quality of Althusserian thought as a 'double denial' formed from a 'double exclusion'; the seemingly paradoxical denials at work being the refusal to recognise the politics of the masses, despite their emancipatory potential, at the same time as disavowing the repressive function of party politics, 'as the set of operations of one *power*', over the same masses (AL: 29). This 'double-denial' also disguises the specific political effects of Althusserianism which bolstered the party with its theoreticism, at the expense of the student movement, which it repressed with the same (AL: 22). Though the 1968 essay 'Philosophy as a Revolutionary Weapon (1971: 11-22) saw Althusserianism turn away from theoreticism and rediscover politics through 'partisanship in philosophy', for the student left it was always already political. It is for this reason that Rancière treats the claims of Althusserianism to speak to shared theoretical problems with scepticism.

For Rancière, Althusser's 'banner flapping in the void' was not simply a metaphor for the Zhdanovian period, but a veiled critique of the utopian politics of the student movement, who plastered the Sorbonne in actual banners calling for student control of the university (AL: 29). The 'void' would take on special significance in late Althusserian writing (2006), but for Rancière, the implication of Althusser's phraseology here is that the void is the absence of science (Ibid.) and consequently where political sloganeering, ideology, and student politics all reside. The problem with the supposed science of theoreticism was that it

attempted ‘to find the rationality of political practice outside that practice’ (AL: 30) and invent solutions to problems which it believed political practice incapable of struggle. As such theoreticism gradually became not just an opposite, but oppositional, force to the political practice developing in the streets outside the university. At this point, paraphrasing Marx’s eleventh thesis, Rancière claims that Althusserianism ceased being a tool to ‘change the world, but one more tool to interpret it with’ (31). The significance of this epiphany on Rancière’s later philosophy cannot be understated. Though his contribution to *Reading Capital* reflects a fidelity to Althusserian theoreticism in its content and structure, his subsequent work would reject the hermeneutic ‘notion of “critique as suspicion”’, epitomised by the symptomatic reading, in favour of a philosophy which remains perpetually affirmative of the socially reconfigurative possibility of ‘politics’, in the most expanded sense (Panagia 2000: 115). Though Rancière’s conceptual articulation of the dialectical relationship between the affirmative ‘politics’ and its negation by the ‘police’ would not be published until much later, in *Disagreement*, it should be noted that, like the death of Althusserianism, these concepts were formed on the barricades of ‘68. Before the discussion of ‘politics’ and ‘police’ below, the negative or reactionary ‘police order’ effects of Althusserianism on the student politics of ‘68 can be demonstrated in a short, and relatively obscure essay ‘Student Problems’(2011), published in the Marxist journal *Nouvelle Critique* in 1964.

Ostensibly, this essay was a response to the growing ultra-leftism of the UEC, whose actions reflected a general student disillusionment with Party policy and its increasingly reactionary or negative consequences. In *Althusser’s Lesson,* Rancière would recognise, post-hoc, that the argumentative structure of this text anticipated the repressive role of Althusserianism, and the Communist Party, within the uprisings of ‘68. In turn, Rancière’s response reflected the anti-authoritarian attitude of the wider ‘*gauchiste*’ student movement towards the political paternalism of all forms of the Communist Party, not to mention de Gaulle and the Fifth Republic.

Althusser’s position in this short essay proceeds as an explication effectively of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy. In this sense it delivers the same ‘lesson in orthodoxy’ (AL: 1-21)

which would be enacted in the more famous 'Reply to John Lewis' (1972). In summary, this lesson employs the letter of Marxist-Leninism as a corrective to three theses, written as a critique of Althusserianism by the British Marxist philosopher John Lewis. These theses in turn are 1) 'it is man who makes history'; 2) 'man makes history by transcending history'; 3) 'man only knows what he himself does' (26). These theses are corrected by (Althusserian) Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy into 1) 'It is the masses which make history', as 'masses' signifies a situated and exploited class of people, rather than the transhistorical and abstract concept 'man'; 2) 'the class struggle is the motor of history', which substitutes the similarly abstracted and immaterial idealism of 'making' history by 'transcending' it with a materialist emphasis, as in *The Communist Manifesto*, of the class struggle driving socio-historic change; 3) 'one can only know what exists' which, unlike Lewis' original, insists on the basic materialist thesis as the point of departure for all philosophy (27-8).

Althusser declares the purpose of this corrective to be the defence of committed philosophy as the 'class struggle in the field of theory' against its institutional dilution, distortion, and depoliticisation at the hands of what Lenin called the 'graduated flunkies of the bourgeois state'. Part of this defence is the insistence that the 'working class *needs philosophy* in the class struggle' (24). For Rancière, an oppressive logic is at work within this 'lesson' which positions philosophy not as the theoretical form of the class struggle but 'the control bureau for proletarian statements' (AL: 12). In his reading, the consequences of conceptual or semantic distinctions between 'man' and 'the masses' are less important for politics in the street than they are for professional philosophers. In any case, Rancière claims that the conceptual paternity of the concept of 'the masses' is to be found in Mao's, not Marx's, insistence that 'it is the oppressed who are intelligent, and the weapons of their liberation will emerge from their intelligence' (AL: 14). Althusser's prescription that the working class *need philosophy*, and by implication also its institutional experts, is a quite different thesis; one that could be recognised as 'the betrayal of everything that the revolt of May '68 and the Cultural Revolution stood for with their attempts at reshuffling the

hierarchies between students and workers, between manual and intellectual labour, or between militants and cadres' (Bosteels 2011: 28).

This perfidiousness is especially evidenced in 'Student Problems', which stages a clandestine defence of the Party metonymically through an analysis of the teacher-student relationship in the university. Here the mastery of the university professor is equated with the greater theoretical acumen of Party intellectuals; a manoeuvre which also brings the defence of the university and its hierarchies into line with the defence of the authoritarianism necessary to manage 'democratic centralist bureaucracy and the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' (AL: 15). Inversely, both proletariat and students are unified by their presumed ignorance and theoretical and political incompetence. The conclusion of Althusser's paper is that both student and proletariat need experts in Marxist science to guide them (2011: 15).

Published one year before the *Reading Capital* seminar, this essay also bears the hallmarks of the 'philosophy of the break' which would be formally announced a year later. This is particularly evident in its foregrounding of distinct ideological and scientific modes of education, which presupposes a general distinction between scientific and ideological knowledges, necessary for the validation of the epistemological break. As a consequence, the essay has an insistent binary structure, particularly evident in the following key passage.

> Is the knowledge distributed a true *science*? If yes, then its distribution really corresponds to *technical* necessity, and then the pedagogic function is essentially healthy, even if its *forms* are relatively 'old' and need reforming. Is the knowledge distributed a pure ideology? As in certain subjects and courses? If yes, then education is in the service of an ideology, and therefore of a class policy, *even if the forms of teaching are very 'modern'*. Is the nature of the knowledge that is taught doubtful, are the 'sciences' that are taught still uncertain, problematic, without definite status, hesitating between ideology and science, and generally settling at the level of techniques shot through with ideology? Then the pedagogic function is itself ambiguous, with two uses, one part technical, the other politico-ideological, *whether the forms within which this half-knowledge is distributed are 'outdated' or 'modern*' (2011: 13).

Aside from the excessive italicisation and ironic apostrophes, typical of Althusser's haughty and occasionally patronising prose style, the argument above is initially convincing due to its solid structural elegance. However, there is also a sense that this binary structural

logic limits his thinking to a degree. The chiasmic structure of Althusser's rhetoric is impossibly solid. On the one hand, there is science which, when taught by correctly minded professors, validates the university project. On the other hand, there is ideology, which the university will reproduce and disseminate in perpetuity as ISA without the intervention of Marxist science. This neat structural chiasmus centres the professor at the heart of the struggle for the soul of the university, imagining that its salvation lies in a simple either/or decision concerning individual ideological commitment. This parallels Althusser's self-appointed role as theoretical saviour of the PCF, perhaps explaining its optimism in comparison to the pessimistic reading of the schoolteacher's agency in 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus' (1971: 157). Herein, even committed teachers are apparently powerless to prevent the descent of the school into the most effective ISA in capitalist society.

The passage above also demonstrates how Althusser's defence of the university rests on another binary, purporting to be extracted from a reading of Marx, which this time insists that the division of labour within society can be understood as either technical or social. The former is a reflex of the economic necessities of the dominant mode of production, which quite clearly will demand different types of labour, at different levels of expertise. The latter is quite different, referring to the social stratification reproduced 'in the forms of class structure and domination' (2011: 11) common to dominant-hegemonic ideology. Under this formulation the technical necessity of the university appears self-evident; a technocratic, class-based society will always need institutions like the university to produce the bureaucrats, managerial classes, and skilled workers for its upper stratas. Similarly, this argument suggests it is self-evident that the university will reflect or reproduce technical class division; it inevitably has to, otherwise it would be useless for capitalist society. The real question concerns the class consciousness of the subjectivities produced therein, given that the social division of labour is predominantly reproduced through ideology. Again, the question of the university is reduced to the proper commitment of its faculty.

Rancière condemns this as a ‘thesis for scientists’ - a thesis which preserves ‘philosophy - ‘Marxist philosophy’ in particular - as the exclusive business of academically trained specialists by upholding a division of labour that safeguards its place’ (AL: 11). He is even sceptical about whether the concept of the ‘technical division of labour’, distinct from the social, can even be correctly found in Marx (Ibid.). For Rancière, this is a self-serving thesis whose political effects are not merely the maintenance of ‘the hierarchical order of the university’ (Ibid.). As suggested above, the technicist problematic of Althusserianism reduces questions of politics to figuring out the correct programming of subjectivities; a model of ‘enlightened despotism’ which can be recognised as much in the philosophy of educators as Party leaders (53-4). This model of pedagogy imagines that ‘there are no effects of power, only the effects of the education of the powerful’; a technicist instrumentalism which therefore disguises its own power effects (53). Within the conjuncture of ‘68, the effect of Althusserianism was to reduce the political down to a choice between rationality or irrationality, science or ideology, creating a false ‘opposition of revolutionary scientists to petit-bourgeois students whose spontaneous ideology delivered them into the trap of bourgeois domination’ (Ibid.). A secondary effect was to cause a split between the theoreticist UJC-ML and the rest of ‘the petit-bourgeois student body that [they presumed] it was their mission to educate’ (Ibid.).

For Rancière, this solidarity between the ‘professorial repression of the illiterate and the *ouvriériste* repression of the petit-bourgeois’ was the true legacy of Althusserianism (Ibid.). The depiction of the student movement as manipulated ‘blind subjects of social practice’ (Ibid.) was translated into a mode of pedagogy and ossified as an ‘academic ideology’ itself (147). In the final analysis, this ideology of authoritarian Left pedagogy reproduces and legitimises inequality despite its progressive rhetoric. As Althusser insists,

> the pedagogic function has as its object the transmission of a determinate knowledge to subjects who do not possess it. Therefore the pedagogic situation is based on the absolute condition of an inequality between a knowledge and a lack of knowledge (2011: 14).

For Althusser, a teaching scene which does not admit this fundamental inequality is a fallacy. No pedagogic question 'can be settled on the basis of pedagogic equality between teachers and students', which is, in the final analysis, dismissed as an 'anarcho-democratic conception of pedagogy [which] can only lead students to disappointment' and the relay of 'half-knowledge' which the reactionary bourgeois or technocratic governments will infinitely prefer than scientific Marxism (14-15). The transference of revolutionary educational content, which could ultimately threaten the status quo, supposedly mitigates against the violent inequality of the pedagogic encounter, which is tolerated as a necessary condition of teaching and learning. Yet, as Rancière recognises, an imagined 'class struggle in theory' can easily collapse into the defence of an actual ruling class within the university.

Unlike his student contemporaries, who scrawled "*A quoi sert Althusser*?" [What use is Althusser?] over the walls of the Sorbonne, Rancière recognised the pedagogical and political uses of Althusserianism. For him, 'fundamentally, Althusserianism is a theory of education, and every theory of education is committed to preserving the power it brings to light' (AL: 52). From this revelation, and his first-hand experience of the political effects of Althusserian in the conjuncture of '68, it was a short distance to the conclusion that all theories of education 'safeguard the privilege of the possessors of knowledge - a form of class domination' (147). In summary, the lessons of Althusserianism are that explications of orthodoxy can descend into dogmatism, self-criticism can disguise revisionism, lessons in history can disguise ahistoricism, and politics can be quickly turned into its opposite (154). Rancière recognises each of these lessons in the didacticism of Althusser's 'Reply to John Lewis'. Furthermore, Rancière's subsequent critique of Althusser's concept of ideology, 'On the Theory of Ideology: Althusser's Politics', revealed that its formed out of both revisionist and metaphysical assumptions. It will be the task of the next chapter to demonstrate the epistemological foundations of this critique, and Rancière's counter formulation of ideology.

Here, it is enough to suggest that Rancière regards the intervention of the 'academic ideology' of Althusserianism as a counter-revolutionary and 'opportunistic' political intervention within the conjuncture of '68. Also, that this 'academic ideology' reflects the

politics of the authoritarian Left in microcosm. The direct experience of the power effects of this ‘academic ideology’ resulted in Rancière’s formulation a pedagogic philosophy not dissimilar to the ‘anarcho-democratic’ conception dismissed by Althusser. More generally, it would inform the anti-authoritarian conception of politics, which argues incessantly for the equality of pedagogical and political subjects, and against their infantilisation and repression by their respective master discourses, which would characterise all of Rancière’s subsequent work. This ‘anarcho-democratic’ caricature is helpful in understanding the polar oppositions between Althusser’s and Rancière’s interpretations of Marxism, if it is possible to characterise Rancière’s later work as Marxist at all. In fact, it would be more accurate to situate Rancièrean pedagogical thought within the broader traditions of classic anarchist theory (Davis 2010: 31-5), given its emphasis on the rejection of authority, autodidacticism, and the principles of deschooling (Illich 1973). However, as Bosteels (2011: 27) has recognised, and the next chapter will discuss, there are more continuities between the two thinkers than the incendiary rhetoric of *Althusser’s Lesson* would suggest.

Fig. 5: Bruno Barbey (1968) *Paris. May 1968. Exterior of L'École des Beaux-Arts.* © Magnum Photos.

Fig. 6: Bruno Barbey (1968) *Paris. May '68 events. Wall of the School of Fine Art.* © Magnum Photos.

3.3 The Lessons of Political Philosophy.

Famously, the Rancièrean theory of education, which extends into the theory of 'politics' evident in his wider work, is outlined in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991 [1987]) and revisited and clarified in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009). Both these texts were critically gestated on the barricades of '68 and formulated against the 'lesson' of authoritarian Left pedagogy. To fully understand the theory of education contained within these texts, it is necessary to situate them historically, against French educational debates from the 60s onwards, and also Rancière's ongoing critique of political philosophy, culminating in *The Philosopher and His Poor* (2003b [1983]).

The Ignorant Schoolmaster was written in the context of a failing French school system (Rockhill in IS: vi), and a national culture still haunted by the spectres of 1968. The universities were also caught up in a similar malaise, with a third of graduates finding themselves unemployed (Ross 1991: 57). The educational policy of François Mitterrand's government was often made reactively, out of a paranoid anxiety to look different to previous regimes. A classic example of the disastrous consequences of such reactive policy-making would be the implementation of increased fees and selection for places to try to improve graduate employability. Such policies merely acted as the catalyst for a reprise of '68 in a 300,000 strong student street revolt in November 1986 (Ibid).

To appear progressive, Mitterrand employed many social-democratic reformers to construct educational policy, and public forums interrogating that policy were commonplace. Most of these discussions became polarised into two distinct camps; the socialist position on the one hand, including both radical sociologists such as Pierre Bourdieu and Centre-Left reformists, and a more conservative Republican position on the other. The former was characterised by a drive towards inclusive education, as the system was perceived to be failing the socially marginalised. The latter sought to resist what it viewed as the dumbing down of educational standards under the guise of liberalisation, and suggested it was the

state's duty to teach a universal curricula to all, regardless of background (Davis 2010: 31). Rancière argues that the Republican critique blamed cultural and financial impoverishment of the parent class, not the school system *per se*, for the educational underachievement of working-class children (PP: 171). Inversely, 'the Young Turks of the Student Union' (Ibid.) saw the whole educational ISA as rotten and wished to tear it down.

From the 60s onwards, Bourdieu's work, alongside his collaborator Passeron, had become increasingly influential in French educational discourse, to the point where he became the theoretical figure to which almost all other discourses needed to be measured. Alongside Raymond Aron, he established a research group in 1960, which came to be known as the *Centre de sociologie européenne* (CSE). A number of Bourdieu's most important works emerge during this period, and it is possible to retrospectively locate the emergence of a specific logic within his work to this period (Robbins 2008: 1-8). These works include *The Inheritors* (1979 [1964]), *Photography: A Middle Brow Art* (1990 [1965]), *For the Love of Art* (1990 [1966]), *Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture* (1990 [1970]). Pre-empting '68, yet analogous (1979 [1964]: vii-x), the first of these a demarcates the schism between the organic culture of students and hegemonic French national culture. The second utilises a case study of photography, simultaneously a hobbyist and avant-garde artform, to interrogate the way that institutional discourses can be politically employed to separate cultural artefacts from everyday social practice. The third addresses the institutional role of the museum, and other such apparatuses of the artworld, in perpetuating a rarefied and normative idea of culture. The fourth powerfully outlines the 'symbolic violence' of educational and cultural institutions, and their role in the 'reproduction' of the status quo. A much later text, *Distinction* (1984 [1979]), which explicitly outlines a sociological critique of 'taste' (by implication aesthetics), is worth mentioning within this list as it is a repeated target of Rancière's critique in *The Philosopher and His Poor*. Rancière would have been aware of the formulation of Bourdieu and Passeron's questionnaire and statistics driven 'sociology of education' through a seminar delivered by them at the ENS in

1963. Though invited by Althusser, their work was introduced critically and sarcastically (Robbins 2015: 741), perhaps formative for Rancière's later criticisms.

All of these Bourdieusian texts are concerned with the extent popular social practice and its related habitus is silenced by dominant-hegemonic discourse, particularly within its institutional apparatus. As such, they share a commonality with French educational theory, post-68, which questioned the extent to which educational or cultural institutions could produce a genuinely participatory social-democratic state. As Robbins reflects, the key question of this era was

> how far can institutional contexts in education and culture be developed which allow learning and creativity to be self-expressive in such a way that people construct the framework of the state within which they live in opposition to the status quo in which the politically dominant determine the curriculum by which citizens are judged and determine what constitutes the proper taste for art? (2008: 8).

This precis of the Bourdieusian oeuvre works equally well for Rancière's educational theory. It also begins to suggest the critical thread tying *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* to Rancière's wider work on 'politics' and the 'politics of aesthetics'. The rest of this chapter will explicitly attempt to demonstrate this theoretical continuity.

Perhaps as a hasty governmental answer to such questions, but also explicitly as a propitiatory sop to the *soixante-huitards*, the *Université de Paris VIII* had been founded in Vincennes, shortly after the 'French May'. In *Althusser's Lesson*, Rancière would characterise the inaugural year of *Paris VIII* as a moment of recuperation, rather than triumph (AL: 127). Here, the resistant discourses of the May movement were institutionalised within the university as 'academic and cultural novelties' (Ibid.). This uneasy truce was always likely to collapse. According to Rancière's account, within two years distinct and violently opposed factions were evident. On the one hand, a radical tendency which attempted to use the institutional frame of *Paris VIII* as a base to continue the momentum of the institutional critique founded in '68. On the other, a reformist tendency which attempted to consolidate their achievements by representing the formation of this new university as their 'victory'. Reflecting on his own course taught at *Paris VIII* in 1969, Rancière situates his

own practice and pedagogy within the former category. Predictably, Althusserianism is painted squarely in the latter reactionary category, where it became the 'theoretical weapon' not just of the PCF but of a generation of 'new recruits who were no longer attracted by subversion but by the desire to put an end to it' (Ibid.).

The distinction between the two tendencies had already been made visibly evident for Rancière in the differences between two political interventions into the same lecture hall of the Sorbonne in 1968. First, a Marxist-Leninist lecture delivered by Althusser to the genteel *Société française de philosophie* (February 1968), and the subsequent occupation of that same lecture hall by *soixante-huitards* in May. For Rancière, the demarcation between these 'two infringements of 'class struggle' on the university' is the 'space where the *political* history of Althusserianism was played out' (22). Retrospectively, this italicised reference to the '*political* history' of Althusserianism seems to function not simply an allusion to the overdetermined political conjuncture of '68, and the revisionist compromises of Althusserianism, but also as a proto-formulation of the idiosyncratic and homonymous use of the concept of 'politics' which would animate most of Rancière's mature work. With hindsight, this '*political* history' could be figured to apply equally to Bourdieusian discourse as Althusserian. It will be the task of the last chapter in this thesis to explicitly articulate the visual 'politics' of the Sorbonne intervention. To adequately address the pedagogic, aesthetic, and discursive effects of this 'politics' within the social space of the university, it is necessary to attend to Rancière's specific critiques of Bourdieu, alongside Marxist political-philosophy in general.

The appendix of *Althusser's Lesson* republishes 'On the Theory of Ideology: Althusser's Politics'(1973), initially published in *Les Temps Modernes*, the journal of Althusser's philosophical rival, Jean-Paul Sartre. Based on Rancière's first semester course at Vincennes (1969), it outlines an initial critique of Althusserianism as a theoreticist and structuralist deviation from orthodox Marxism *avant la lettre*. However, by 1995's *Disagreement* (1999) Rancière's philosophical oeuvre could be characterised as an extreme

anti-Althusserianism. His mature politics did not simply attempt to re-emphasise the class struggle sidelined by theoreticism, but ultimately rejected all forms of 'Theory' that resembled 'scientific' or 'structural' Marxism in any way. This effectively meant his position became entrenched as what Alberto Toscano has characterised as an 'anti-sociology' (2011: 217), rejecting structural causality, but also sociology *per se*. *The Philosopher and His Poor* is the theoretical bridge between these two texts.

Within, Marx, Sartre, and especially Bourdieu, are repeatedly accused of peddling an essentialist, top-down, and patronising idea of the working class, which can only ever be repressive. From here, Rancière reveals a violent and self-serving paternalism within all political philosophy, which diagnoses social dispossession yet distinguish itself from the dispossessed, thus redoubling 'oppression by giving [such diagnoses] their academic and analytical imprimatur' (Toscano 2011: 220).

As an analogy of the problematic of political-philosophy, Rancière offers the figure of Hans Sachs, the shoemaker from Wagner's *Meistersinger* (1976 [1845]), who is granted the temporary status to act as sole authority to judge the best music of the year (PP: 57-104). The peculiarity and scandal of this scenario resides is the presumed incapacity of the artisan to possess connoisseurly knowledge equivalent to that of the genteel classes. This class-based essentialism is argued to be as much a feature of political philosophy as bourgeois ideology. For Rancière, Marx situates the salvation of the worker not in egalitarian claims to such alternate social statuses (e.g. 'artisan-aesthete'), but in the revolutionary development of the means of production. Here the 'purifying hell of the textile mills' (PP: 66) is turned into machines to destroy the bourgeoisie. History has revealed such sites as neither purifying nor emancipatory but spaces where the labourer becomes alienated and disempowered. This disempowerment spreads in inverse proportion to the development and acceleration of the productive forces; the lessons of the Fordist and Taylorist eras are a case in point. Arguably, this suggests the concentration, not transformation, of social roles, wherein 'the shoemaker, far from making more than his footwear, has every chance of making less' (Ibid.).

In a crucial passage of *The Philosopher and His Poor*, Rancière demonstrates that the sublation of 'workers' and 'scientists' into the 'worker-scientists' (76), necessary for the revolutionary 'formation of a class and its dissolution' (86), is not only sidestepped by *The Communist Manifesto*, but unthinkable within its system. Because the laws of historical materialism prevent 'German poverty from producing anything other than a philosophy of poverty' (77), 'revolutionary science' appears as the 'non-place [*non-lieu*]' (76) of proletarian experience. The *Manifesto*'s suggestion that 'bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole' (Marx 2000: 253) will join the revolutionary proletariat is a symptom of this paradoxical problematic. The equivalence of this problematic with that of both the Communist Party hierarchies and the Althusserian theory of education should also be self-evident. Rancière:

> The alliance of science with this ridiculous vanguard is, first, division *in actu*. The party is essentially the point at which is materialised the principle of the proletariat as division, under its double aspect. It represents the proletariat as absolutely *One*, constituted as such by the hatred of all the powers of the old world. But it is also the dissolution of this *One*, the non-class that attacks class from within. [...] The philosopher is himself the party only as the tragic power of the negative (PP: 86-7).

Marx and Engels had to imagine the new caste of world-historic proletarians which did not exist at the time of writing (85). Therein lies the dilemma of all political philosophy, according to Rancière, which is caught between the need to validate its position itself as enlightened guide, in advance of the masses, and simultaneously internal to the struggle, drawing prognoses as commentator-analyst on the material present. In the latter case, the relatively pedestrian speed of the development of the productive forces would not only require a degree of patience not usually associated with revolutionary philosophy but also run the risk of making the philosopher redundant to the revolutionary process (86). Therefore, Marxist political philosophy, like all political philosophy, invents a situation where philosopher and proletariat are synthesised. The philosopher needs to imagine a reified and homogenous proletariat, against which he stands always as 'the tragic power of the

negative', yet the proletariat is chained to the philosopher's manifesto, 'doomed comically to repeat a text that is not its own and that it can only distort' (87).

Rancière's critique of Marx, (also Bourdieu below) parallels his critique of the 'philosopher-king' of Platonic philosophy. Indeed, Platonic scenes recur with regularity throughout his oeuvre as rhetorical exemplars of the violence of political philosophy. For example, Marx's proletariat is equated to the slave in Plato's *Meno* (2002: 58-92), in that they are both defined negatively in order to extract a positive philosophical proof by the 'philosopher-king'. The slave's ignorance of geometry is demonstrated in order to display the power of Socrates' pedagogic method; the abstract and dehumanised nature of the proletarian is demonstrated in order to reveal the historical necessity for the revolutionary call to arms issued by Marx. In this case, the proletariat are reduced to the status of *tabula rasa* on which the revolution will inscribe itself, 'on the condition that the *Manifesto* gives him existence as a subject' (PP: 81). Both slave and proletarian are defined negatively in order to positively demonstrate the mastery of the philosopher's discourse. In both cases, social hierarchy is entrenched, rather than transcended by the work of political philosophy.

Beneath the harmonious structural elegance of Plato's ideal *Republic*, Rancière finds a rigid caste society, organised into three fixed layers by its self-appointed philosopher rulers. Within this tripartite republic, a 'Producer' class of workers, artisans, and artists are at the bottom, and the 'Guardian' class of politicians and public intellectuals rule at the top. The 'Auxiliaries' form a third class sandwiched between ruler and ruled. Though no translation adequately encapsulates their social function (Plato 1974: 177), they are essentially a military-disciplinary class, equivalent to Lenin's famous 'special bodies of armed men' (1969: 270). The 'Auxiliaries' enforce the will of the 'Guardian' class, controlling the *dēmos*, primarily through physical coercion. The 'Guardians' and 'Auxiliaries' thus essentially form a prototype modern state, but managing the common affairs of the 'Guardians' rather than the bourgeoisie (Marx 2000: 247).

Though movement between classes is theoretically possible (Plato 1974: 182), Socrates fails to suggest precisely how such social mobility would occur, other than that

innate aptitudes would be recognised, and children aligned with the correct classes accordingly. However, as education was only selectively available, according to parental social standing, the frequency of such class realignment is dubious. More likely, the refined 'Guardian' classes would produce offspring with an interest in politics or education thus reproducing itself in perpetuity. Infamously, Socrates failed to justify this class division in reason, resorting instead to a foundational or 'Magnificent Myth' (181-2). This 'Noble Lie' depicts citizens of the republic as gestated within the womb of Mother Earth itself, and that the Earth gave them ingrained aptitudes and abilities. This organic essentialism justifies the stratified republic by arguing that the 'Guardians' have gold in their compositions, the 'Auxiliaries' silver, and the 'Producers' merely iron or bronze. Relative metallurgical values thus demonstrate the innate superiority of one class over another. Furthermore, the myth implies a civic, fraternal, and familial responsibility to defend the status quo, fossilised by Mother Earth, primarily through diligent conformity to the actions and behaviours proper to one's social role. The metaphorical 'Noble Lie' of Plato, is itself repeatedly employed as Rancièrean metaphor to illustrate the socio-behavioural effects of *le partage du sensible*.

The pedagogic methods of the 'philosopher-king' are also debunked by Rancière. For him, the 'Socratic Method' often exceeds simple intellectual enquiry and transmogrifies into a display of intellectual domination (IS: 29-30). Outwardly benevolent, the 'philosopher-king' routinely disguises aggressive interrogation behind a faux-ignorance which nevertheless compels all citizens to measure up to his exacting standards. Even a cursory reading of Socrates' dialogues, for example with Glaucon in *The Republic* (1974: 129-77; 177-95), reveals they are hopelessly one-sided, stifling Glaucon at times to one- or two-word replies (178). Glaucon's knowledge is unpicked, twisted, turned on its head, with a variety of half questions, which prompt him to overstretch to the point where an inconsistency or mistake can be revealed, thus demonstrating the wisdom of Socrates. Similarly, within the lopsided dynamics of this dialogue, only Socrates has the power of affirming 'correctness'. When Glaucon offers a correct insight, this is twisted into evidence confirming his interlocutor was right all along. In this dialogue at least, there can never be equality. Here, in the Socratic

scene, Rancière uncovers violent domination perfectly disguised as benevolence. He also uncovers an analogy for the contemporary public intellectual and the modern hierarchical pedagogical relationship. For Rancière, 'the Socratic Method is thus a perfected form of stultification' where the student can 'never walk by himself, unless it is to illustrate the master's lesson' (IS: 29).

This critique of the 'philosopher-king' applies equally to the 'sociologist-king'; a label Rancière uses to attack Bourdieu (PP: 165-202). Clearly, the label fits Althusser, and Marx also. The core of Rancière's argument revolves around questioning the self-imagined function of sociology as 'science of the hidden', employing the 'science of right opinion' (166) garnered from a seemingly irrefutable array of surveys and statistics, to demonstrate the misrecognition of social subjects to their social reality. Sociology is the self-appointed science of 'demystification', a *doxa* whose science is even turned back on the self-delusion of the 'philosopher-king' whose 'contorted relations with the men of iron reflect his inability to think his own place' (164). As such, sociology's self-image is that of 'the young science wresting from the old metaphysical empire one or another of its provinces in order to make it a rigorous practice' (167).

For Rancière, sociology transcends mere dismal description of the actual only through the invention and subsequent exposure of the category of misrecognition; a category validated and relentlessly demonstrated by the scientificity of its methods and data. Therefore, whilst it reveals hidden authority and domination, it reserves a special place for the sociological expert, whose science is a necessary prerequisite for social demystification and emancipation. As Pelletier argues, 'rather than closing the gap between 'intellectual' and 'manual' workers, this conception of emancipation, or emancipated discourse, founds the very distinction between the two' (2009: 139). This has consequences for Bourdieu's 'sociology of education', which exposes the misrecognition of 'pedagogic authority' only to reproduce the same within its own discourses. For Rancière, Bourdieu's *Inheritors* and *Reproduction* are merely Plato's *Republic* explained the first time with images, the second with axioms' (PP: 178). As both texts frame the university struggles of '68, and therefore

specifically the objects of this thesis, it is worth attending to his specific objections to these Bourdieusian texts in turn.

The Inheritors (1979) argues that the exclusivity of the university is perpetuated by the misrecognition of their exclusion by the excluded. This misrecognition is reproduced by the myth of the educationally gifted student, whose 'gift' is merely the 'habitus' of the privileged classes reflected back to their progeny in institutional curricula and manifests itself as 'charisma' to those teachers, selectors, and assessors who share similar backgrounds and cultural interests (23-7). This mythic 'gift' causes self-eliminating behaviours in those students who don't recognise it in themselves (avoiding *Beaux-Arts* subjects, or applying to *grandes écoles*), and the school thus 'eliminates by dissimulating that it eliminates' (PP: 172). So strong is this dissimulation that the educational ISA can integrate even the most counter-cultural subjectivities within its institutional field. A remarkable passage, reminiscent of Adorno's essay 'Free Time' (1991: 162-70), called 'Games Students Play' (Bourdieu and Passeron 1979: 28-53) argues both oppositional educators and students are fooled into 'serving the system while believing [they are] fighting it' (25). For example, (absolute conformity to) the cliché of student anti-conformity echoes the values of bourgeois dilettantism and liberal 'free thinking', which the university valorises (53). Similarly, students with the most eclectic and obscure subcultural interests similarly excel in the study of the traditional culture of the parent class, driven in part by their voracious appetites for sourcing 'competing influences' to their teachers instils an attitude of independent learning directly transferable and beneficial to their core studies (41). Indeed, the counter-cultural 'charisma' of these students can even fool the critical pedagogue into 'misrecognition' -

> The most routine teacher, who [...] provokes his students to espouse an 'anti-culture' that they see as more vital and authentic, is still, despite himself, fulfilling his objective function - persuading the neophytes to worship culture and not the university, whose role is merely to organise the cult of culture (45).

Here, as Bourdieu argues in *Reproduction* (1990), the seemingly paradoxical and logically contradictory 'idea of a pedagogical authority exercised without a pedagogical

authority' (12) is symptomatic of the dissimulation inherent in the system. For Rancière, this is the quintessential example of the sociological invention of misrecognition, crafting its analysis of the reproductive effects of the system from its external 'non-place', so perfectly as to constitute a perfect circle. In his essay, 'The Ethics of Sociology' he characterises this Bourdieusian circle in the following manner -

1. Working class youth are excluded from the University because they are unaware of the true reasons for which they are excluded (*Les Héritiers*)
2. Their ignorance of the true reasons for which they are excluded is a structural effect produced by the very existence of the system that excludes them (*La Reproduction*) (IP: 161).

This tautology guarantees the sociologist the privileged position of external exposer-denouncer of the structural effects of a system, to which they remain mysteriously immune. This manoeuvre depends on the construction of the students as ignorant and oblivious. As will be suggested by the concluding section of this chapter, this self-legitimising 'non-place' of political philosophy to its objects is also that of the pedagogue to their students. This demonstration depends upon clarifying the Rancièrean conceptual distinction between 'politics' proper and the political effects of what he will call 'the police'.

3.4: The Lessons of The Police

The Rancièrean definition of 'politics' is most famously articulated in *Disagreement* and recurs as a central concept throughout the rest of his work. However, the concept was sketched in an earlier essay 'Politics, Identification, and Subjectivisation' (1992), and its centrality to the Rancièrean system necessitated subsequent clarificatory essay, 'Ten Theses on Politics' (2001b), republished recently in *Dissensus* (2010: 27-44). In *Disagreement*, the concept of 'politics' is defined negatively against its apparently dialectical opposite, 'the police'. What is commonly understood as the political, the project of policy making and representation, actually functions to repress 'politics' proper. For Rancière, 'the set of procedures whereby the aggregation and consent of collectivities is achieved, the organisation of powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimising this system of distribution and legitimisation' constitutes 'the police' (28).

As is clear from this definition, 'the police' in Rancière's system is to be understood in a more expanded sense than its traditional institutional form. The commonplace understanding of 'the police', which Rancière labels as the 'petty police', represents just one particularly visible aspect of a 'more general order' of social control. However, Rancière rejects the top-down determinist or causal location of 'the police' solely within the state. For him, this 'representation already presupposes a certain "political philosophy", that is, a certain confusion of politics and police' (29). The 'petty police' function of Althusserian RSAs, and the interpellative function of ISAs, including the normative behaviours, attitudes, and subjectivities they reproduce, are effects of the 'police', which precedes both. The following chapter will give detailed attention to the reasons why Rancière's concept must be distinguished from the Althusserian theory of ideology. Here, it is enough to suggest that Rancière resists the simple equation of 'the police' with a repressive state, and radically opens the concept to incorporate all forms of micro or macro level discourse which ossify the prevailing social order. Rancière:

> The police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise (Ibid.).

The Foucauldian overtones of phrases signifying the 'ordering of bodies', and the 'assignation of tasks' imply a conceptual relationship between 'the police' and Foucault's conception of 'governmentality' (2007: 333-62). However, like the Althusserian ISA/RSA doublet, 'governmentality' still implies that the carceral relationship, within which the (potentially free) subject is enmeshed, is ultimately determined by the oppressive figure of a panoptic state and its technological and institutional apparatus. The phantom figure of the oppressive state persists even when the Foucauldian discourse on power emphasises its relational aspects, and the extent to which it is reproduced by the self-regulatory 'disciplinary individual' (Foucault 1977: 127). For Foucault, 'discipline is a 'technology' [aimed at] 'how to keep someone under surveillance, how to control his conduct, his behaviour, his aptitudes, how to improve his performance, multiply his capacities, how to put him where he is most useful: that is discipline in my sense' (Foucault in O'Farrell 2005: 102). For Rancière, the 'police' extends conceptually beyond 'disciplinary power'; it is the law regulating behaviours or aptitudes, but also the law which determines whether subjectivities are even recognised within the socius. Unlike Foucault, 'policing is not so much the "disciplining" of bodies as a rule governing their appearing, a configuration of occupations and the properties of the spaces where these occupations are distributed' (DA: 29).

To use Rancière's examples, in the workplace, the logic of the 'police order' regulates all possibilities for the social production of space, limiting all participation to the psychological and behavioural remits of predefined roles, such as worker, manager, supervisor, and so forth. The claims of aberrant subjectivities reaching beyond these strict delimitations, such as the worker-poets of *Proletarian Nights*, are simply ignored. The dissensual claims of the *soixante-huitards*, such as the calls for remuneration for academic labour, or student control of curricula, were called out of order by the logic of the police

order, thus denying them a fair hearing. This is not simply a matter of correcting deviant subjectivities but closing the epistemic field where such subjectivities can even be conceived.

This epistemic field, whose stratifications the 'discursive regularities' (Foucault 1972: 21-78) of the 'police order' maintain, is referred to by Rancière as *le partage du sensible*, translated from the French verb *partager*, meaning to divide up or share, as 'sharing', or 'partitioning'. Equally, the adjective *sensible* has been translated as both sensible and sensory (Davis 2010: 179-80n54), though 'distribution' and 'sensible' are the terms that seem to have the most currency now. Of several explicit attempts by Rancière to summarise this concept, the most oft-cited comes within *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2000). The popularity of this text, and the prominence given to the concept from the subtitle onwards, has fixed Rockhill's preference for 'distribution' as the accepted translation. Herein, the following definition is offered:

> I call the distribution of the sensible the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it. A distribution of the sensible therefore establishes at one and the same time something common that is shared and exclusive parts. This apportionment of parts and positions is based on a distribution of spaces, times, and forms of activity that determines the very manner in which something in common lends itself to participation and in what way various individuals have a part in this distribution (PA: 13).

Clearly, this is a theory of social division, focusing on what separates society from itself. However, it differs from sociological theories of stratification in its emphasis on how forms of consciousness precede hierarchical division in the relations of production, not vice versa. *Le partage du sensible* then is an *a priori* system of stratification; the structural totality behind more readily apparent social distinctions, such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and so on. As an *a priori* account of all possible components of a social whole, this 'distribution' fixes the nature of society at the same time as it delimits all possible social roles within it. At the same time, it also designates the prescribed attitudes, competences, behaviours, and conventions proper to those roles. As such, it dictates not only the relations of production but

also who, in any given situation has the right to think, speak, act, feel, resist, and so forth. It also determines who is silenced, who is heard, and the forms through which the visible and audible are made apparent.

In Bourdieusian terminology, this is the 'field' in which societal agents act and interact, their 'habitus' ingrained, and their social, cultural, and economic capital accrued. It is also the Law which determines how subjects are fixed within the social order. Rancière:

> The partition [*partage*] of the sensible is the cutting-up of the world and of 'world;' it is the *nemeïn* upon which the *nomoi* of the community are founded. This partition should be understood in the double sense of the word: on the one hand, that which separates and excludes; on the other, that which allows participation (DS: 36).

Therefore, this concept exceeds the Bourdeusian 'field' which cannot account for the circularity of the 'Bourdieu effect' indicated above. Instead, the closed loop of all political philosophy, whether it be the Bourdieusian system of dissimulation-reproduction or the Platonic 'beautiful lie' must be regarded as part of the 'police order' [*nomoi*] which manage the 'distribution of the sensible' [*nemeïn*]. Where Plato condemns those with iron in their soles to a lifetime of toil, Bourdieu consigns students to permanent self-delusion.

Aristotle, protege of Plato, envisaged the partitioning of society along similar lines; the wealthy elite [*oligoï*], the people [***dēmos***] who were free, but poor, and finally an aristocracy [*aristoï*] of enlightened citizens, judged by their excellence or virtue, who would ultimately rule the others. This aristocratic constitution, which once again places the 'philosopher-king' at the head of society, was considered by Aristotle to be the most perfect form of social organisation. Yet, his book includes defences of despotism and slavery, because some people are incapable of self-governance (*Politics*, I, V, 1254b16-32; 1992: 69) and paternal and marital rule, because the male is supposedly more capable of leadership than the female (*Politics*, I, XII, 1259a37-b17; 1992: 91-2). The ***dēmos*** are denied the ability to rule society for themselves (democracy) under the justification that society's main purpose is not to protect freedom, in the same way that the *oligoï* do not deserve to rule because it is not society's sole purpose to make money. It is only the enlightened that

can knit these rival constituent parts together to create a harmonious social whole, acting objectively in the common good.

The supposed 'freedom' of the *dēmos*, which seems contradictory to its apparent exclusion from the political affairs of society, was presumed due to the accident of it 'being born [...] in the city of Athens once enslavement for debt was abolished there'(DA: 7). The level to which Athenian anti-slavery legislation (594 BC) created genuine freedom is debatable. Citizens were legally protected from the *oligoï*, and theoretically allowed a voice in running the affairs of the city, right up to the upper echelons of government. In reality, the opinions of the *dēmos* were treated dismissively by the Athenian ruling classes, who rejected the opinions of these proletarian 'speaking bodies that are of no more value than slaves - even less, [...] since the slave gets his virtue from the virtue of his master' (Ibid.). The paradox of the structure of ancient Athenian society then, within which Rancière finds contemporary parallels, is that to maintain power the enlightened *aristoï* needed to exclude the voices of the ill-informed artisans and shopkeepers from the governmental decision-making processes. At the same time, this exclusion threatens the very myth of democratic freedom that Athenian society valorised. Rancière:

> The simple impossibility of the *oligoï* reducing their debtors to slavery was transformed into the appearance of a freedom that was to be the positive property of the people as part of a community (Ibid.).

This paradox of the dēmos lies in their simultaneous inclusion and exclusion, and their necessity and existential threat. This duality is key to understanding Rancière's understanding of both 'police' and 'politics'. The *dēmos*, whose inclusion is celebrated by Athens, are systematically silenced by that same society, and as such, effectively play no real part in social affairs. Modern Western democracies similarly depend on this paradox. As Rancière suggests, 'from Athens in the fifth century B.C. up until our own governments, the party of the rich has only ever said one thing, which is most precisely the negation of politics: there is no part of those who have no part [*sans-part*]' (17).

Rancière identifies three archetypal analytic or explicative strategies common to political philosophy, ancient and modern, each of which disguise a 'policing' effect beneath outwardly progressive intentions. In turn, he calls these 'archipolitics', 'parapolitics', and 'metapolitics' (65). These counter-political strategies undercut 'politics' by exposing their challenges as foundationless, irrational, scandalous, or simply 'wrong' (21-42). Subsequently, they each offer a rational corrective 'as an alternative to the unfounded nature of politics' (62).

'Archipolitics', the first of Rancière's triad of neologisms, responds to the disordered challenge of politics with the invention of an *arkhê*; an origin story or totalising explanation for the social order which completely exorcises the problem of the *sans-part* by leaving no space for them to be thought within its system (65-70). Plato's 'beautiful lie' is the quintessential example of 'archipolitical' philosophy, because of its essentialist defence of class inequality via a memorable and elegant metaphor. The police function of this 'archipolitics' resides in its insistence that the harmony of the Republic is contingent upon its citizens compliance. Anything other than dutiful maintenance of the status quo, according to one's essential abilities, is characterised quite simply as un-Republican. In this schema, the *sans-part* is rendered unthinkable, or explained away as symptomatic effect of an inferior or malign social system (68).

'Parapolitics' refers to the displacement of 'politics proper' into the regulated and administered structures of organised politics and government. It transforms 'the actors and forms of action of the political conflict into the parts and forms of distribution of the policing apparatus' (72). The incorporation of politics is therefore its neutralisation, and 'through a singular mimesis, the ***dēmos*** and its miscount - preconditions for politics - are integrated in the achievement of the telos of the nature of community' (74). As suggested above, the quintessential 'parapolitical' thinker is Aristotle, in his *Politics* (1992), who begrudgingly justifies the troubling inclusion of the ***dēmos*** within the Athenian state out of an idea of social justice (II, 1261a, 38-42; 1992: 105), which importantly is not the equivalent to social good (DA: 71). There is an equivalence to be drawn here between the Athenian state and

contemporary neoliberal democracies concerning how their outward claims to representativeness disguise a mechanism for containing, or simply excluding, the political threat of the *sans-part*. By drawing such an equivalence, the apparently naturalised system of democractic governance is revealed as founded, contingent, even anti-democratic. The sanitised displacement of politics into the organised and orchestrated disputes between antagonistic political parties is not the same thing as politics proper. It is its robustly policed simulacrum, as anybody with experience of the overbearing bureaucracy and counter-revolutionary tendencies of trade unions (Althusser 1971: 143), or the orchestrated spectacle of televised political debates, will readily understand. Behind the glibness of the truism that if voting changed anything, then the ruling class would abolish it, common to socialist circles, is a recognition of the ineffectiveness of organised parliamentary 'parapolitics'.

'Metapolitics' is the third archetypal discourse of political philosophy, which Rancière identifies primarily with the work of Marx. 'Metapolitical' discourse works behind or beneath manifestations of 'politics', seeking to delineate a space between the social or economic truth of the political act and its representations. This strategy not only recuperates the truly political by exposing it as naive or misguided, but also reveals the political as determined by, and 'identical with a constitutive lie' (DA: 82). As a mode of philosophical investigation, it 'presents itself as a symptomology that detects a sign of untruth within every political distinction' (Ibid.). The defining 'metapolitical' text is Marx's (1843) *On the Jewish Question* (DA: 82), particularly his reading therein of the concept of citizenship outlined in the American Constitution and the French post-revolutionary *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* of 1791 and 1793. Both of these purport to outline an egalitarian political vision of civil society, and seek to enshrine and protect it in law. However, what initially appears as a 'Rousseauist figuration of the sovereignty of citizenship' within these discourses quickly is revealed as Hobbesian 'war of all against all' (Ibid.) by Marx's metapolitical critique. According to the terms of this critique, this is due to the distance between the concept of citizen and the actuality of man, which are presented as synonymous but, in fact, are homonymous. Each of the declared rights of the citizen, rather

than preserve civil society and equality under law, actually entrench social division and inequality. This is necessarily the case because the conceptual problematic, common to both texts, generating the concept of citizen is statist or capitalistic. As such, it conceptualises the individual as property owning and egotistic, 'rather than conceiving of man as a species-being, species-life itself' (Marx 2000: 61). For example, liberty, which is figured as the power to do anything that does not infringe on the rights of someone else, functions as much as an atomising or protectionist mechanism as a form of liberation. As Marx puts it, liberty 'is the right to this separation, the rights of the limited individual who is limited to himself' (60), which is also the equation of freedom with the right to private property. Similarly, equality is merely the guarantee that 'each man shall without discrimination be treated as a self-sufficient monad' (61). Security, 'the highest concept of civil society [...] is merely there to guarantee each of its members the preservation of his person, rights, and property' (Ibid.), and as such is inseparable from the concept of the police, the law, and the capitalist state.

Marx argues that political emancipation requires both the revolutionary dissolution of civil society and its essence, which is figured as that which imbues all social elements, such as family, work, or social rights, with an hierarchical or political character. The political dream of civil society and citizenship is rejected because of the incompatibility, and subsequent estrangement, between the concept of the state and the essence of the people (62). At the same time, it presents itself as discourse on de-alienation and emancipation, this discourse also operates as the metapolitical signifier of the limits and falsity of politics itself. Figured thus, 'metapolitics' is always the policing of 'politics' and, as such, is a disaster for the *sans-part*, whom it always dismisses as the necessary untruth supporting the political dream of the social. In Rancière's analysis, the 'central figure of a 'metapolitics' conceived as a *beyond* of politics', whether in Marx or the wider sociologist outlook, is invariably the notion of class; the concept wielded as 'the *truth* of the lie of politics' DA: 85). His critique exposes a homonymy central to the concept of class which reveals its veracity to be far less certain than the archetypal metapolitical discourse would pretend.

In Marx's *Jewish Question* essay, the concept of class haunts the critical juxtaposition of 'the citizen', who is in fact most repressed in the discourses where he/she imagines him/herself to be most free, and 'Man' in general, who is figured as free both by biology and destiny; the 'truth' about the 'lie' of civil society. The critical bifurcation of freedom and civic responsibility, or more simply the free and unfree, is as much an assignation of class as the labels 'bourgeoisie' and 'proletariat'. The latter, who have nothing to lose but their chains, are recognised in 'metapolitical' discourse as the 'truth' of the 'lie' of capitalist societal relations; the promise of an unalienated humanity to come. Yet, the same discourse also designates a proper proletarian place within the social order, inventing a generalised and essentialist universal proletarian subjectivity to match. The homonymy at work here is not complementary but aporetic. As with the discourses of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*, it reveals an irreconcilable conceptual space between one mode of thinking and another. When utilised by 'metapolitical' discourse as empirical evidence of the falseness of the political, the concept of class has a police order function; beneath the revelation of specific class character is the invention of class character and attendant subjectivities. Yet, the idea of class is also 'an operator of conflict, a name for counting the uncounted, a mode of subjectification'(83) which can only be regarded as political. Marxist 'metapolitics' conflates both sides of this homonymy in 'an ambiguity in which all the philosophical disagreement about political disagreement is concentrated' (Ibid.).

Rancière, in a dense but central paragraph of *Disagreement*, made all the more abstruse by his own homonymous use of the term 'politics', relates this homonymous concept of class, that reveals a fundamental aporia at the heart of 'metapolitical' discourse, back to the concept of ideology.

> So, metapolitics becomes the scientific accompaniment of politics, in which the reduction of political form to the forces of the class struggle is initially equivalent to the truth of the lie or the truth of illusion. But it also becomes a "political" accompaniment of all forms of subjectification, which posits as its hidden "political" truth the class struggle it underestimates and cannot not underestimate. Metapolitics can seize on any phenomenon as a demonstration of the truth of its falseness. For the truth of falseness, Marx in his genius invented a key word that all modernity has adopted, at times even turning it against him. He called it ideology. Ideology is not

> just a new word for simulacrum or illusion. Ideology is the word that signals the completely new status of the true that metapolitics forges: the true as the truth of the false. Not the clarity of the idea in the face of the obscurity of appearances; not the truth as an index of itself and of falseness but, on the contrary, the truth of which the false alone is an index, the truth that is nothing more than highlighting falseness, the truth as universal interference (DS: 85).

If class is thus understood as the indispensable metaconcept of 'metapolitics', invoked to demonstrate the veracity of its master discourse by exposing the falsity of its objects, then ideology is the universal metalabel of that falseness. However, as the following chapter will argue, there is also a homonymy to the concept of ideology; its different connotations are alternately highlighted and conflated in 'metapolitical' discourse in a similar manner to the concept of class. Both present themselves within the 'metapolitical' as operators of the political or emancipatory, as revelations of the truth of social relations, yet in the process of that revelation both concepts reveal a violent and controlling desire to assign lots, to order, to categorise, to debunk, or to attack the other; traits which are evidence of the general contempt of 'metapolitics' to its objects of study. Class is the promise of freedom at the same time as it is the invention of a hierarchical category within the social order. Ideology is not simply the veil which, when lifted, reveals class as both the truth of the social and the promise of humanity to come. It is also the label to which an entire cast of actors within the social formation are assigned according statuses, aptitudes, and worldviews. Both are weaponised within 'metapolitical' discourse as tools to destroy all other political discourses. Ideology and class then could be regarded as codependent negative concepts within the 'metapolitical'; one is turned against the other endlessly to reveal the perpetual falseness of both, necessitating the science of 'metapolitical' critique to cut through this eternal circle. Yet at the same time, there is a curiously empty, almost self-destructively nihilistic, quality to this 'metapolitical' project which would seek to turn political philosophy perpetually against the political. Pushed to its extremes, 'metapolitical' philosophy is not only the 'achievement-elimination of politics', but a discourse 'whose last word might be the achievement-elimination of philosophy itself' (65).

As Rancière suggests, what is symptomatic within 'metapolitical' discourse, and visible within the aporetic homonymy of its central concepts such as ideology and class, is the uncontainable force that will ultimately cause it to implode. In Marxist 'metapolitics', class, as underestimation, is both a conceptual tool to demonstrate the power of the master discourse and the social assignation of lots. Yet the same concept, 'not underestimated', has the capacity to transform an enforced subjectification by the police order to a process of emancipatory process of *subjectivation* wherein the uncounted, the *sans-part*, stake a claim for equality. Negatively, ideology, be it concerning class or any other aspect of the social, can only ever be a barrier or illusion. Positively, it can be a form of practice where the individual instance is articulated within a wider set of institutional apparatuses and discourses which, despite their imaginary nature, has the very real consequence of creating class solidarity or a revolutionary mass movement. The homonymy or slippage between these two very different processes is more than just a consequence of the transition between the anthropological humanism of Marx's *1844 Manuscripts* and the anti-humanism of *Capital*. It concerns the very nature of political philosophy to politics proper. However, it is obvious that Rancière's exposure of this homonymy is targeted as much at Althusser and Bourdieu as Marx. Both are exponents of metapolitical discourse, theoretical *aristoï*, in the same way that the student movement they critique are the quintessential *sans-parts*.

Therefore, *le partage du sensible*, which political philosophy polices, involves the naming, separation, and management of the constituent parts of a social totality. This counting of parts necessarily elides the *sans-part* which is the very possibility of politics itself, as well as the possibility of an alternate social order. However, a miscount contains the possibility of a recount to redress any wrong. Rancièrean 'politics' is the call for such a recount. This term describes any determined activity which 'breaks with the tangible configuration' (65) of the police order.

> Political activity is whatever shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a places destination. It makes visible what had no place being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise; it makes understood as discourse what was once only heard as noise (30).

Because of its radical alterity to the perceptible order, 'politics' must necessarily be received as an unthinkable impossibility. Because the police order has already accounted for every perceivable social part, strata, identity, and subjectivity, the 'political' can only ever be the impossible claim of the *sans-part*. To use his preferred characterisation, the 'police' categorises and enumerates all constituent parts of a given society. In response, 'politics' makes visible the claims of those elided by that (mis)count. From Plato's *Republic*, to Aristotle's *Politics*, this task of accounting for 'correct' subjectivities within a social totality, and consequently silencing aberrant ones, has been enacted by political philosophy. Rancière:

> What the "classics" teach us first and foremost is that politics is not a matter of ties between individuals or of relationships between individuals and the community. Politics arises from a count of community "parts", which is always a false count, a double count, or a miscount (DA: 6).

If 'politics' therefore is constituted by the miscount of the police order, and represents the demand for a recount according to egalitarian principles (Davis 2010: 80-1), and the discipline of political philosophy as a discipline has served as the historical adjudicator of such accountancy, then it is easy to see how political philosophy can collapse into a confusion of 'politics' and 'police'. In contradistinction, true 'politics' has no politics as such, other than the verification of equality, and that when politics involves the naming of parts and roles it becomes part of the police order. As Rancière argues, 'politics is not the exercise of power', it is 'a specific mode of action that is enacted by a specific subject and that has its own proper rationality' (DS: 27). Political philosophy purports to supplement the presumed naivety, spontaneity, or confusion of organic socio-politics with its own rationality, thus claiming an organisational power which would speak for those presumed incapable of speaking for themselves. 'Politics', when 'conceived as a theory - or investigation in to grounds of legitimacy - of power' (Ibid.) is quickly transformed, like Althusserianism, into its opposite. This claim to representation, which implies judgement and is inescapably

hierarchical, consolidates power and status for the political philosopher, constituting the miscount of the police. The central ambition of *Disagreement*, consolidating the earlier critique of *The Philosopher and His Poor*, is to demonstrate this regression.

'Politics', then, must firstly be construed as a refusal of the prevailing social order. As Rancière insists, the anti-authoritarian or symbolic opposition of 'politics' is 'identical to the institution of class struggle' (DS: 18). Despite this, Rancièrean politics is not reducible to the antagonistic struggles between identifiable classes within society. As he insists, 'there is politics - and not just domination' (10). Instead, 'politics' involves staging a dispute between the determined classes of the police order and 'the classes that are not really classes' (18), because they serve no tangible function within the hegemonic order.

In this more expanded sense, 'politics' occurs 'when there is a place and a way for two heterogeneous processes to meet'; these processes being the regulatory and classificatory logic of the police order and 'the assumption of equality' which tests and undoes all such logic (30). In Deleuze and Guattari's terms, 'politics' would exist when 'smooth and striated space' are revealed as coterminous (1988: 474-500). The two processes are permanently and dialectically intertwined; 'politics' appearing as the affirmation of equality at the heart of the police order, which then logic of the latter would otherwise deny. Yet, 'politics has no objects or issues of its own' (DA: 31). The principle of equality is not in itself political; it is the platform through which specific cases of litigation are heard (32). This egalitarian hypothesis 'decomposes and recomposes the relationships between the ways of *doing*, of *being*, and of *saying* that define the perceptible organisation of the community' (40).

Davis (2010: 84) characterises the process of *subjectivation* at the core of Rancièrean thought as containing three stages: it is (i) an argumentative demonstration, (ii) a theatrical dramatization and (iii) a 'heterologic' disidentification'. The first of these involves using logic, or what Rancière calls the 'syllogism of emancipation' (SP: 45), to test the 'equality' of the prevailing social order. This approach often begins with legislation or constitutional rights to reveal an inconsistency between the status of the *sans-part* to the

declared ethos of the community as a whole. From this initial inconsistency, a conclusion is offered which establishes the right of the *sans-part* by either rectifying the inequalities described in the minor premise, or by changing the major premise' (Davis 2010: 85). This is a standard tactic of trade union negotiations during the centuries, at a national and local level, whom often manage to utilise technicalities in employment law to gain concessions from employees. Rancière's example of precisely this strategy, from *On the Shores of Politics* (1995b: 45-6; DA: 40), involves an 1833 strike amongst the Parisian tailoring trade who cited the declaration of equality of all French citizens under the 1830 charter (the major premise) to reveal the refusal of the Master tailors to meet their demands for equal pay (the minor premise) as logically inconsistent. Here, 'politics' appears when the egalitarian demands of the universal push up against the restricted limits of the individuated.

The 'theatrical dramatization' spectacularises protest, thus making visible what would otherwise be silenced by the police order. The theatrical aspect of the claim to equality made by the *sans-part* is intrinsic to Rancière's conception of both politics proper and democracy itself. Similarly, large mass protest rallies, occupations, and giant workers banners are classic theatrical techniques of street-level politics aimed at maximising the visibility of a particular struggle. If 'politics' proper can only be realised by the excluded parts of society by visibly disrupting the police order to such an extent that oppression and exclusion can be ignored no longer, it stands to reason that the louder and more spectacular this dissensual claim to equality is the better. In this reading, equality is perpetually performed or staged, against its dialectical other, the police order, both of which are revealed as contingent, precarious, and reversible. For Rancière, democracy requires continuous verification via the reperformance of 'stages of equality' (Bowman and Stamp 2011: 15), recast in perpetuity. Peter Hallward (2006) emphasises the term 'theatocracy' [*la théâtocratie*], used in *The Philosopher* (45-7), to characterise the performative or spectacular element necessary to Rancière's conception of true democracy. 'Theatocracy' should not be confused with the tendency to reduce the political to spectacle, common to mainstream Western politics.

Instead, the ‘theatocratic’ has its roots in the unruly disorder of the Athenian theatre, which Plato famously found dangerous enough to banish it from the fledgling republic.

The prohibition of the theatre, according to Plato, was necessary because of the way that it solicited and encouraged emotive and sensuous response over rationality. It was also undesirable not only because it relayed imperfect simulacra of ideal Forms, but also because it encouraged the consumption of these simulacra in a disorganised and unruly mob, which corrupted each other into the mistaken belief that they were in fact capable of interpreting the events on displays via consensus, as a community of experts (Plato, *Laws* III, 701; 1975: 154). In the twentieth century, Walter Benjamin recognised the same phenomena, in cinema and all technologically reproduced artworks, as progressive due to increased capacity for their collective experience. Here, the Benjaminian audience of technically reproduced art effectively authors the meaning of those works at the point of reception. The sense of collective authorship was therefore symptomatic of a shift away from a closed authoritarian society towards an open democracy; the sense of agency gained through the ‘illusion of expertise’ is equally symptomatic of an emancipated proletariat. It is the anarchic danger of both of these tendencies for the neatly organised and strictly policed republic that Plato really wanted exorcising. The ‘theatocratic’ then, simultaneously indexes the unruliness of the mob and the claim to an alternative worldview than that perpetuated by the police order. ‘Theatocracy’ therefore is contingent rather than universal or eternal, and ‘privileges multiplicity over unity’ (Hallward 2006: 148), whose coherence and order it seeks to disrupt as much as possible. It also needs to be actively ‘performed’, rather than accepted or passively received. In all these aspects it opposes, and pierces, the reificatory veil of dominant-hegemonic ideology.

Finally, ‘heterologic disidentification’ involves the refusal of the particular identity and role that the *sans-part* has been given by the police order, and the assertion of an independent and oppositional identity simultaneously. It also involves the declaration of the radical alterity and heterogeneity of the socius, ‘the being *together* to the extent that we are *in between*’ (1992: 62), contrary to the myth of social unity presented by the police order.

Figured thus, 'the logic of emancipation is a heterology' (59) where alternate subjectivities, aptitudes, and trajectories co-exist with those which *le partage du sensible* insists as normative. As essence of the political, heterology is the very possibility of transcending one's station. In contrast, *le partage du sensible* determines the interrelationships between social classes and social designations, as well as the specific subjectivities and forms of consciousness appropriate to both. Disciplinary specialism is the fetish form of the division of labour within capitalist society. It is the means by which the rate of production and profit is exponentially increased, in inverse proportion to the alienation of its worker-exponents. Furthermore, 'specialism' separates workers from each other through promulgating specialist discourses and behavioural codes appropriate to one specific strata of society but not the rest. Finally, the division of workers from each other on the basis of technical competence tends to lead to presumed divisions regarding intellectual competence. Rancière:

> A discipline is always something other than an exploitation of this territory, and therefore a demonstration of an idea of knowledge [*savoir*]. [...] It is a way of defining an idea of the thinkable, an idea of what the objects of knowledge themselves can think and know. It is therefore always a certain regulation of dissensus, of its dehiscence [*écart*] in relation to the ethical order, according to which a certain type of condition implies a certain type of thought (TBD: 6).

In contradistinction, Rancière aims to foster a method of thinking through and against this *partage*. He calls this method of thinking 'indisciplinary', connoting a process of cognition that exceeds interdisciplinarity, though it will share its aims of inter-perspectival collaboration. More accurately, this way of thinking could be described as anti-disciplinary. 'Indisciplinary' thought refuses to acknowledge even the presence of disciplinary boundaries, thus affirming the principle of the 'community of equals' (IS: 71). This 'indisciplinary' methodology is especially applicable to the increasingly specialised and technocratic world of academia. As the final chapter of this thesis will argue, the *sans-part* of ancient Athens has an equivalence with the student movement of '68. The posters of *L'Atelier populaire* were their 'theatocratic' and heterologic claims to political disidentification and emancipated *subjectivation*.

3.5: The Ignorant One's Lesson.

Against metapolitical philosophy which, against its expressed intentions, silences 'politics' proper to maintain the prevailing *partage du sensible*, Rancière has persistently forwarded the possibility of 'politics' as counter-philosophy. Deranty has characterised his approach as an 'ethics of recognition' (Deranty 2003: 136-56), as it insists that 'the role of the philosopher is not to give his/her voice to the silent aspirations of the dominated, but to add his/her voice to theirs, therefore, to hear their voices, rather than interpret them, and to help them' (137). For Deranty, Rancière rejects Althusserianism's 'anti-humanist, anti-democratic, and anti-subjectivist stances' (138). Ultimately, these three characteristics coalesce into a defence of the enlightened expert, which logically implies an unenlightened or ignorant caste as their others. Rancière instead insists on the uncovery of a politics immanent to the exploited's own words and actions (140).

Between *La Leçon d'Althusser (*1974) and *La Mésentente* (1995), Rancière devoted himself to a sustained period of archival work, focusing on the period 1830-50 which witnessed, amongst other things, the publication of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) and 'the flowering of utopian socialism' (PP: xxvi) in France. Coinciding with the above, a proliferation of 'ethereal poetry [...], combative pamphlets, and doctrinal newspapers' (Ibid.) were published which Rancière used as textual evidence to test the representations of the proletariat in the discourses of *les maitres penseurs*. This period of archival research also coincided with the emergence of the work of the 'new philosophers', such as Bernard Henry-Lévy, André Glucksmann and others, many of whom were erstwhile spokespeople for the *enragés*. Post-'68, many of these thinkers turned away from the Soviet model, towards a politics of individualism and freedom, inspired by dissidents such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (Dews 1980: 7). Many of these thinkers would be torchbearers for the *Gauche prolétarienne* group, who attempted to keep a dream of '68 alive but without the baggage of Leninism (Ibid.: 4; *Gauche prolétarienne* 1968).

Typical of these thinkers, Glucksmann's work famously argued that Marxism always leads to totalitarian horror, or that its individual and institutional exponents merely facilitated that repression (Glucksmann 1975; 1980). However, caught between a critique of capitalism and a rejection of its organised apparatus, these theorists ended up displacing the concrete analysis of the class struggle between worker and capitalist onto a generalised analysis of institutional power and its opposition, outside the relations of production. Peter Dews has characterised Glucksmann's work as relentless 'anti-statism' which views all society as oppressive but must be distinguished from liberalism, to the right, and anarchism, to the left, by its pessimistic view of both society and human nature. The consequence is a 'politics of the least evil', concerned with the singular rebellious event, outside any concrete strategy for historical development or social transformation. In addition, this 'post-*gauchiste*' philosophy repeatedly employ an inverted, but similarly reductive, 'metapolitics' to that identified by Rancière as common to all political philosophy. Instead of 'class', the 'new philosophers' employ 'the image of the pleb, of the suffering and downtrodden people, as the moral blackmail at the heart of an attack on the power-affiliations of learned discourse' (Dews 1980: 6).

Nevertheless, 'new philosophers' such as Clavel or Lardreau and Jambet, who eulogised about the transformative potential of the 'event' of '68, which they regarded as a 'cultural revolution' of Marxism in its anti-Communist forms (Dews 1980: 4). This view was not shared by the French Marxist philosopher and militant Régis Debray, who missed the 'event' of '68 due to his incarceration in Bolivia for his participation in Che Guevara's guerrilla group. For Debray, 'May '68 was the cradle of a new society' whose 'asynchrony' (between politicians, workers, and students) was gradually recuperated into a resynchronised social order under the 'May cult' and its spectacular and mythic image of French republican revolt (Debray 1979: 45-7).

Though neither part of, nor beloved by, the 'new philosophers', for Daws, their work shares a conceptual problematic, and thus similar political limitations, to Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* (2004 [1972]). Both share a

> radically undialectical view of the relation between individual and social formation: both are seen as constructed, in a way which remains unelucidated, by the activity of apersonal 'desiring machines'. All forms of order or codification are seen as oppressive, including the order of theory (Dews 1980: 7).

Dews argues that this position 'pays for the 'radicality' of its challenge to social institutions with an almost total vacuousness', collapsing into a 'random and peremptory' affirmation rather than careful critique, paving the way for 'throwaway philosophy' to become the new form of theoretical practice' (Ibid.).

The question of how far Rancière follows Deleuze and Guattari down the path away from the 'Theory of theoretical practice' will be attended to specifically in the following chapter. Here, it should be highlighted that Rancière's turn to a careful reading of worker's archives, against the universal metapolitical sign of 'proletarian' or 'pleb' was an attempt to distinguish his project from that of the 'new philosophers', whilst also maintaining the critique of Communism which the 'events' of '68 instigated. For Rancière, the historical rigour of such a project could act as a 'reality principle' against the 'pleasure principle' of the aforementioned 'May cult', whilst preventing the 'liquidation of a certain way of thinking about revolution from dispensing with an understanding of the issues, complexities, and contradictions of two centuries of struggle' (STP: 9).

This project began in 1972, leading to the formation of the *Centre de recherches sur les idéologies de la révolte* with Jean Borreil and Geneviève Fraisse in 1973, whose work found its mouthpiece in the journal *Les Révoltes logiques* (1975-85) (STP: 7). Based at *Paris XVIII*, this journal was physically and intellectually attached to the student movement of '68 from the outset. It's title, borrowed from Rimbaud's poem 'Democracy' (1889), explicitly connotes the Rancièrean concerns for youthful rebellion, democratic political 'subjectivation', and the spontaneity of 'revolt', contra metapolitical theoreticism and doctrinaire Communism. Read retrospectively, it also enacts a chain of signification connecting *Althusser's Lesson* to *Disagreement*. The essays written by him, for this journal, subsequently translated and collated as *Staging the People*, and *The Intellectual and His People*, all embody an attempt

to move ‘from concepts to realities’ (STP: 11) recovering historically specific working class subjectivities which conformed neither ‘the strict proletarian of Marxist science’ nor the ‘imaginary correlate of the socialist intelligentsia that was about to take power in 1981’ (8).

The ‘lesson’ of this archaeological approach is to sever the political from the organisation of minds and bodies which Rancière associates with both party politics and the *le partage du sensible*. As Mecchia argues, by insisting on the specific historical claims of subjective struggle as the foundation of the political, Rancièrean politics could be closer to the Marxist theory of class struggle (Deranty 2010: 44) than the Althusserian tendency to treat Marx’s categories as if they could ever be were immutable concepts’, such as ‘the masses’ in the ‘Reply to John Lewis’, or the equation of student struggle with ‘petty-bourgeois’ individualism, in ‘Student Problems’. At the same time, as Mecchia also argues, Gramsci’s work in the 1920s had already attempted to radically de-economise the proletariat as social class, and subsequently, Rancière’s attempt to eradicate the epistemic distance between the subjective politics of workers and the philosophy that claims to represent them seems to closely resemble Gramsci’s notion of ‘spontaneous philosophy’ (1999: 626) immanent to language and so-called ‘common sense’.

Given these heterological ambitions, the articles for LRL encompass a divergent range of proletarian subjectivities, narrating a counter-hegemonic ‘history from below’ celebrating the historically and artistically marginalised, as politics. The examples Rancière employs, such as the early nineteenth century ‘People’s Theatre’ (IP: 1-40), worker-delegates to *L’Exposition universelle* (1867) (STP: 64-88), and the bawdy *Goguettes* [singing societies] (STP: 175-232) all exist at the interstices, or what Rancière calls the ‘barrier [*barrière*] of pleasures’ (16), which maintains consistency between social status and normative social behaviours. Rancière’s examples problematise this strict and seemingly natural social partitioning. For example, the lyrical content of an anonymous *Goguettier* drinking song from 1872 outlines a reactionary, even anti-revolutionary, politics which jars with what one would expect from post-Paris Commune organic worker’s culture (195). Similarly, the worker-delegates at *L’Expo* recognised not the fruits of their labour, as

expected, but their own disempowerment and alienation through the mechanised division of labour (69). The historical evidence uncovered within Rancière's LRL essays could all be argued to expose the prevailing *partage du sensible* only to overturn it. The original French title of the *Goguettier* essay [*Le Bon temps ou la barrière des plaisirs*] was translated as 'pleasure at the barriers' for the English edition (175). *Barrière* connotes a limit but also a revolutionary barricade, indicating that thinking the *barriéres* is to think revolutionary method as well as the delimitation of borders. More interestingly, this work on the *barriéres* opens up connections between politics, aesthetics, and 'heretical knowledge' (16).

As suggested above, this archaeological methodology of political recognition extends to numerous other Rancièrean projects produced within this period, such as the proposed television series *The Meaning of Revolt in the Twentieth Century*, researched with GP activists but abandoned after political pressure from the then prime minister Jacques Chirac, or his doctoral thesis, eventually published as *La Nuit des prolétaires* (1981). This approach also dominates his recent work on aesthetics, *Aisthesis* (2013a), which outlines fourteen 'scenes' of marginalised cultural practice hitherto ignored by the canon. Rancière insists *La Nuit des prolétaires* and *Aisthesis* form a dialogue.

In the former, various forgotten artisans in nineteenth century France, influenced by the utopian socialism of Saint-Simon (Highmore 2001: 97), dreamt of meaningful work beyond the production line, such as art or poetry, explicitly expressing envy for the leisure time which the bourgeoisie have for such pursuits. Articulating critical empathy with the bourgeoisie, and self-loathing of their proletarian existence, the symbolic refusal of these workers' testimonies difference the '*barriéres*' between classes, collapsing the class essentialism that one must be either worker or poet into the improper figure of the worker-poet. The politics of this 'redistribution of the sensible' is to suggest that the 'the possible is the workers' dream deemed as impossible by a temporal ordering that would offer workers no time and no dreams' (98). The key figure of this spontaneous philosophy is Louis Gabriel Gauny (1806-1889), floor layer turned poet and 'spontaneous philosopher', whose work was edited by Rancière in an as yet untranslated book *Le Philosophe plébéien* (1983).

Rancière's key educational work, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991 [1987]), is inseparable from the project outlined above. It is an archaeological recovery of the lost pedagogical methods of Joseph Jacotot (1770-1840), which are employed as politics against the prevailing pedagogic wisdom in the conjuncture of 80s France. The books confused reception within that conjuncture in many ways demonstrates its political efficacy as scandalous 'wrong' (DA: 8). Some commentators dismissed it as historical and archival oddity, some as a nihilistically suicidal 'pedagogical how-to' (IS: viii-ix). Rockhill suggests that its publics were unwilling, or incapable, of recognising it as a 'fable or parable, that enacts an extraordinary philosophical meditation on equality' speaking, as politics, to an audience reckoning 'with the legacies of Reaganism and Thatcherism' (ix).

Nevertheless, its controversial reception has meant that the 'intellectual adventure' (1) of its central protagonist is well known. Jacotot, because of his links to the revolutionary Convention, was exiled to the Netherlands following the Bourbon Restoration of 1815, and compelled to take a job at the University of Louvain, apparently on half-pay due to his refugee status (Ibid.). Despite Jacotot not speaking a word of Flemish, his classes were oversubscribed, ostensibly due to a student desire to practice French by proxy. Given neither tutor nor student shared the same native tongue, Jacotot turned to the newly translated Flemish copy of edition of Fénelon's *Télémaque*, which he supplied to each student alongside a copy of the French original. The students were then instructed to begin the task of deciphering the French language through comparison. Jacotot would facilitate this process by encouraging students to recognise structural similarities and repetitions. However, the task of translation was ultimately autonomous and autodidactic. The final stage verification of learning, via a formal essay, produced not the mutated and monstrous French prose Jacotot expected, but levels of competency in excess of student work by native speakers.

The 'lesson' Rancière draws from this obscure historical and pedagogical success story, and the brief fame of the 'universal teaching' method Jacotot developed subsequently, is that, like the 'spontaneous philosophers' of Gramsci, each person possesses the capacity

to learn independently from formal tuition. Pushing further, as Jacotot also found out when this method was transferred to the tuition of subjects completely unfamiliar to him, this also implies 'that one can what one doesn't know [providing that] the student is emancipated' (9). The second clause of this sentence is pivotal. Rancière immediately clarifies that 'emancipation' occurs when the student 'is obliged to use his own intelligence' (Ibid.). For Rancière, this obligation opposes the presumption of most teaching, where the 'important business of the master is to transmit his knowledge to his students so as to bring them, by degrees, to his own level of expertise' (3). Here, he pinpoints the book's central dialectic, between 'emancipation' (the presumed purpose of all education) and 'stultification' (its actual effects) (7). Whether this dialectic ossifies into a closed loop depends on whether the educator is emancipated themselves, an emancipation which depends on the recognition of the repressive function of 'explication'.

For Rancière, 'explication is the myth of pedagogy' (Ibid.), dividing the world into two orders of superior and inferior intelligences. Explication is the act of generating and regulating this 'distance' between intelligence and ignorance (5). Traditionally understood, the educator's presence inaugurates learning, but it also demarcates learner from learned. Educational emancipation thus demands on the acknowledgment that the capacity of educators depends partly on the presumed incapacity of others. Inversely, the obligation to use one's own intelligence requires the mutual recognition of educator and educated as equals. Althusser's characterisation of the student vision for the university as 'hopelessly anarcho-democratic' is ultimately a refusal to acknowledge this basic presumption of the equality of intelligences, and thus an act of 'stultification', and especially evident in the following quote. Althusser:

> It is absurd to waste time rediscovering by uncertain methods, and at the cost of considerable effort, knowledge to which there exists a path that is infinitely more direct, since it is rational, The student who might proceed this way will in fact postpone the moment when they might acquire the training they need to become the researchers they wish to be (2011: 15).

The example of ‘universal teaching’ clearly reveals Althusser’s first sentence to be reactionary, if not completely incorrect. This reactionary pedagogical position is unsurprising, given the dominance of the *explication de texte* at the *grandes écoles.* However, there are two other significant distancing effects evident, symptomatic of the underlying Althusserian problematic. Firstly, the implication that student knowledge and methods are irrational, thus inferior to the rationality of the master-explicator. Secondly, the demonstration and rhetorical exaggeration of that distance through spatial and temporal metaphors (‘proceed’ / ‘become’ / ‘delay’). Though its seems contradictory for someone who would later denounce the school as the greatest ISA within capitalist society (1971: 155), Althusser is insistent that pedagogic equality is a fallacy, and ‘the pupil-teacher, lecturer-student, relationship is the technical expression of this fundamental pedagogic relationship’ (2011: 14). Against this, Rancière insists that ‘whoever teaches without emancipating stultifies. And whoever emancipates doesn't have to worry about what the emancipated person learns. He will learn what he wants, nothing maybe’ (IS: 21).

The question then is not simply about who controls the ‘learning journey’, but who are its subjects and who are its objects. The ‘explicative order’ is about controlling every aspect of the educational imaginary, including its attendant subjectivities, each of which are absolutely immutable and codependent if the system is to remain coherent. From the days of Matthew Arnold, ‘anarchy’ has been employed as a pejorative by those paranoid about the imminent overthrow of the status quo. The contradictions in Althusser’s defence of pedagogic inequality are perhaps merely symptoms of the denial that ‘it is the explicator that needs the incapable and not the other way around’ (IS: 7).

Writing recently, Gert Biesta has challenged the ‘problematic’ constructivist (or ‘anarcho-democratic) conclusions drawn from Rancière’s work by educationalists (2017: 53). He argues that Rancière retains a role for educators, albeit only ‘emancipated ones, as ‘verifier’ of the equality of others (IS: 15). Of course, the verification of learning by a teacher is not the same as the verification of equality by an equal, and it must be said that there is textual evidence for the most radical anarcho-democratic-constructivist interpretation of

Rancièrean pedagogy, even if the institutionalised discipline of pedagogy is incapable of recognising it. Before Rancière, Foucault's work famously teaches us that the development of institutions creates specific forms of institutional knowledge alongside the institutional experts necessary for the validation and reproduction of both. In the asylum, this specialist disciplinary knowledge is called psychiatry, in the school it is called pedagogy and its custodians are the teachers and lecturers, who in turn benefit from this privileged status (Foucault 1977; 1971). For Rancière, 'every institution is an explication in social act, a dramatization of inequality. Its principle is and always will be antithetical to that of a method based on equality and the refusal of explications' (IS: 105). The question of whether a true pedagogy of equality can ever be developed from within institutionalised pedagogy remains as vital today as it was in 1986 or 1968.

Of course, the 'order of explication', just as much as the question of emancipation, is not confined simply to the school. Both apply equally to the question of the university, past and present, and bleed through all societal institutions and apparatus. The dialectic of 'explication' and 'emancipation' is precisely equivalent to that of the dialectic of 'politics' and 'police' which regulates *le partage du sensible*. The logic of the explicative order extends to the university, and in fact all societal institutions. It is this more expansive sense that *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* has been heralded as Rancière's most important work (May 2008: 2; Badiou 2008: 30-54). Reflecting on its arguments in the more recent *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009b), Rancière draws upon Gauny's example, yet again, to demonstrate how 'stories of boundaries [*barriéres*], and of a distribution of roles to be blurred' (21) unify questions of education, spectatorship, politics, and emancipation.

For Rancière, the paradox of the spectator within the theatre has an equivalence with the student in the classroom. Without their presence, their respective theatrical or pedagogical events cannot take place. However, spatially, institutionally, and psychologically fixed and in their place, both could be regarded as victims of enforced passivity, or alternately as 'embodied allegories of inequality' (12). Yet, Rancière insists that for emancipation to take place within this scene it is not enough for a simple reversal, in the

manner of either Brechtian or Artaudian theatre, or constructivist critical pedagogy, both of which seek to grant agency to those otherwise stultified.

Recollecting the conjuncture of '68, Rancière insists that there can be a deconstructive 'third way' to emancipation which involves neither those with knowledge of the system's horrors educating the ignorant, nor the exploited class rejecting those that would claim knowledge as ignoramuses (18). The desire to abolish distance in the name of emancipation does not necessarily remove the epistemic system which generates that distance, *a priori*. To paraphrase Rancière, the theatre without spectators and the university without students represent mediations striving for their own abolition. Yet, both retain and reproduce the terms which recreate the distance they wish to be abolished. Elizabeth Ellsworth's influential essay 'Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering?' (1989: 297-324) has shown that even the most well-intentioned critical pedagogies can end up reproducing 'the very conditions [they] were trying to work against' (298). In Ellsworth's example, a radical class on 'Media and Anti-Racist Pedagogies', delivered at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1988), which was written explicitly to empower black and minority voices, actually ended up reproducing 'Eurocentrism, racism, sexism, classism, and 'banking education" (299). These were direct consequences of a curriculum which silenced intersectionality and difference in the name of a generalised 'liberatory pedagogy'. In Rancièrean terms, a desire to abolish the distance created by the oppositional binaries of activity/passivity and inclusion/exclusion failed because the strategy did not contemplate 'altering the functioning of the opposition[s] itself' (Rancière 2009b: 12). Ellsworth's solution is to call for a 'pedagogy of the unknowable' (1989: 318-24) not dissimilar to Rancièrean politics. Such a pedagogy would play on the *barriéres* between terms such as teacher/taught or student/teacher and also 'problematise the cause-effect relationship itself and the set of presuppositions that sustain the logic of stultification' (Rancière 2009b: 22). As the concluding chapter of this thesis will argue, the occupation and transformation of *L'École des Beaux-Arts* into *L'Atelier Populaire* is the site where such a 'translation and counter-translation' (21) of the sensible orders of the university becomes visible.

Chapter 4: On the Politics of Aesthetic and Ideological Practice.

> In studying such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic – in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out (Marx and Engels 1968: 172-6).
>
> Fundamentally, Althusserianism is a theory of education, and every theory of education is committed to preserving the power it seeks to bring to light (AL: 52).

The previous chapter concluded with the suggestion that Rancièrean 'politics' contained a heuristic or 'lesson' which could counter the authoritarian, police order 'lesson' of political philosophy, of which Althusserian theoreticism is an acute example. Furthermore, that the political actions of the student movement during the 'French May' reworked the physical, pedagogical, and ideological space of the Sorbonne University as practice. The 'occupation' was the most effective technique of this practice, and the one which most effectively spectacularised its immanent heuristic. At the vanguard of this political practice was the occupation of *L'École des Beaux-Arts*, which provided the student movement with the means of visual production to mount their ideological struggle. However, this occupation also instigated a process of collective subjectivation, from *L'École to L'Atelier*, which embodied the 'theatocratic' stage of Rancièrean 'politics'. As the final chapter of this thesis will argue, this theatrical dramatisation not only rendered visible the becoming-political of the student-worker-activist, but also rendered visible *le partage du sensible* which would render such subjectivities impossible. As part of this, this 'politics' also made visible the orders of institutional, pedagogic, political, and ideological discourse which frame the teaching scene of both the French university and French culture, and especially the *Beaux-Arts*, as institutional embodiment of the above. As such, this 'aesthetics of politics' exceeds mere visualisation or 'supplementary ornament' and moves towards a 'politics of aesthetics', where the effectivity of 'politics' renders visible an aesthetic dimension which is 'there in every sense as an immanent given of knowledge' (TBD: 1). Building on this claim, this

chapter will argue that *L'Atelier populaire* embodies a form of practice in excess of the Althusserian labels 'political' or 'ideological'. As such, this chapter begins the task of sketching an original concept of 'aesthetic practice'; a Neo-Althusserian label adapted from two fleeting but undeveloped instances within *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2004c: 13, 43). Conceptually, this incorporates aspects of Althusser's 'ideological practice' and 'political practice' but also retains the radical heterology which Rancière locates at the heart of aesthetic experience and insists on as an essential component of the political.

The final chapter of this thesis will demonstrate this 'aesthetic practice' more completely through an extended reading of *L'Atelier populaire*. Beforehand, this chapter will develop the concept of 'aesthetic practice' by considering the specificities of Rancièrean 'politics' as a theory of ideological struggle. This will not only necessitate situating Rancière's work within the broader Marxist field of ideology studies, but also distinguishing between his understanding aesthetics as epistemological mode rather than aesthetics as a regime of artistic production, which the Marxist tradition would more simplistically characterise as 'aesthetic ideology'. Furthermore, this task will also depend on establishing the specific differences, and indeed inheritances, between his theory of ideology and Althusser's. Though Rancière's system can be explained, in part, by a rejection of theoreticist, anti-humanist 'metapolitics' in favour of dissensual subjective micro-politics, whose impossible subjectivities endlessly deconstruct the normative categories of political philosophy, revealing them as police, to over emphasise the negative influence of Althusserianism on Rancière would be to ignore the extent to which his concept of *le partage du sensible* depends on the Althusserian theory of ideology. As suggested by the title of Rancière's polemic, questions of inheritance and mediation, also invoke questions of pedagogy, or 'lessons'. Questions of 'lessons' in turn produce questions of mastery or power relations. The last chapter demonstrated how much of Rancière's theoretical critique of Althusser's politics can be displaced onto questions of education and the university. For Rancière, the theoreticist distrust of spontaneity, which finds its equivalent in politics questions of organisation or the vanguard Party, and pedagogic questions of method and expertise,

constitutes a police-politics of stasis and delay. Instead of stimulating ‘politics’ these suppress them ‘by legitimating, in the endless meantime, the social and institutional hierarchies through which pedagogical power was exercised’ (Davis 2010: 15). Against the theoreticist dismissal of spontaneous practice as always already ideological, this chapter will lay the groundwork for a spontaneist celebration of the ‘aesthetic practice’ of *L’Atelier populaire*, which is also a celebration of the neo-anarchist conception of pedagogy within the final chapter.

4.1: Ideology

As Eagleton (1991) acknowledges in his introductory book on the subject, ideology is a slippery concept, used in divergent contexts, for different ends, ranging from the very neutral, where ideology refers to a shared set of ideals and values amongst a culture, to the more partisan, where ideology refers to the values of a particular group, usually in a position of power or social authority. Finally, the most oppressive sense of the term connotes a false set of ideas, perpetuated by a dominant class in society, usually to maintain their grip on power in a conflict society, whilst entrenching the oppression of its opponents (1-31). Ideology, as a specifically named science or study of ideas, was invented by the aristocrat turned revolutionary mouthpiece Antoine Destutt de Tracy, while incarcerated during the Terror. For him and his fellow 'ideologues' of the *Institut nationale*, the raison d'être of this new science was the application of ruthless rationality to the task of dismantling the metaphysical doctrines of theology and the church, which until this point had held the fledgling republic in yoke to superstition and mysticism (Williams 1983: 154). Althusser suggests that Destutt de Tracy et al use the term objectively, to refer to 'the (genetic) theory of ideas', whereas Marx's use of the term 'ideology' refers to 'the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or social groups' (1971: 149). Marx's use of the term changes fluctuates throughout his work to the extent that Althusser feels the need to write the long clarificatory essay 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' (1970) supplementing the Marxist canon. Étienne Balibar argues that philosophy has never 'forgiven Marx for ideology' and seeks to neutralise its dangerous implications by attacking the apparent contradictions of the theory (Balibar 1995: 43).

The concept of ideology operates implicitly throughout much of Marx's early work within his wider theory of alienation (Eagleton 1991: 70), such as the passages within his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (Marx 1963: 120-34, 200-06) which seek to explain the apparently phantom autonomy of the products of human labour, which appear

to possess human qualities, holding a mysterious influence over their creators, rather than vice versa. Here, this phenomena is explained as a direct consequence of the capitalist system of social organisation wherein the efforts of human labour are directed not towards individual fulfilment but the profit motives of capitalist production. As such, the *Paris Manuscripts* outline a broadly humanist definition of ideology, figured as the unreality of estranged human labour presented back to the subject as other. Therefore, the negation of ideology centres on the subjective transcendence of capitalist subjectivity following the revolutionary overthrow and replacement of that system by communism.

Though classified as 'early' works, the Paris Manuscripts were relatively 'late' additions to the Marxist lexicon, published first in 1932. By then, the default Marxist position on ideology was pieced together from a handful of oft-quoted passages from three seminal texts. In order of complexity, the first of these is usually from the 1859 'Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy' (Marx and Engels 1968: 172-6), which sketches the material basis of ideology via the infamous, and often simplistically understood 'base and superstructure' doctrine. The second passages, at the heart of *The German Ideology* (1986 [1846]: 64), outline ideology as an inversion of concrete reality, via the equally famous *camera obscura* metaphor, whilst politicising that reading by arguing for a symmetry between the ruling ideology of any given society and the worldview of its ruling classes (47). The final passage is arguably the most famous of all, from the beginning of *Capital* (1995 [1867]: 42-50), where Marx extrapolates from an analysis of the character of the commodity form to suggest that it is the specific structures of capitalist societal relations, not necessarily any dominant-hegemonic social group, which produce ideological behaviours, attitudes, and related subjectivities.

The base / superstructure model of the 1859 'Preface' argues for the irreducible influence of the economic base of a given society, comprising of the forces and relations of production specific to that society's stage of historical development, on its superstructure, which is characterised as its 'legal, political, religious, artistic, or philosophic - in short, ideological forms' (Marx and Engels 1968: 174). All the attendant contradictions and class

conflicts inherent in the base are reflected in the ideological superstructure through ‘which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out’ (Ibid.).

Against the Young Hegelians, who argued for the autonomy of ideas, and the power of autonomous ideas as motor of history, the ‘Preface’ insists that an individual's life is socially produced, out of ‘definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will’. These relations of production, resulting from the technological and productive demands of a given society, directly create ‘definite forms of social consciousness’ or the ‘social, political and intellectual life process in general’ (173). Put directly, ‘it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness’ (Ibid.). This analysis repatriates thought back within the socius and allows the production of ideology to be materially thought. In turn, this manoeuvre exposes the claim to the autonomy of thought as ideological. The apparent simplicity of this model has resulted in its caricature as reflection theory, where human consciousness is merely a reflex of the economic. The lazy reduction of this concept in vulgar Marxist analyses is produced, in part, by the nebulousness of some of its core concepts. For example, the superstructure covers all forms of ‘social, political and intellectual life’ (Ibid.), presumably individually and institutionally.

Nevertheless, this passage insists on the inseparability of ideas and everyday life, and historically positions individual consciousness within the forces and relations of production, all of which are suggested as relational and interdependent. This suggests a dialectic wherein the class struggle is fought at the realm of ideas, produced from ‘real, active men’ (Marx and Engels 1986 [1846]: 47) situated in a dynamic relationship with a specific socio-economic conjuncture, ‘exploiting the materials, capital funds, the productive forces handed down to it’ (57). Read thus, history is neither ‘a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists [...] or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists’ (48). Young Hegelian ideology, as Marx and Engels famously teach, imagines people ‘upside down, as in a *camera obscura*’ (47), influenced and driven irresistibly into the future by some heavenly zeitgeist. Instead, Marx and Engels argue historical life-processes

determine consciousness, in a move which in isolation can be criticised as a) merely an ideological reversal of Hegelianism (Althusser et al 2015: 32), b) an overly linear or causal relation between experience and consciousness, which does not suggest dialecticity but 'naive, sensuous empiricism' (Eagleton 1991: 75).

The earlier text, *The German Ideology* (1986 [1846]: 47), conceptualises the superstructure more complexly as the 'conceiving, thinking [and] the mental intercourse of men', from which follows 'mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics'. This emphasises the superstructure's twofold and relational character, whilst demarcating its individual and social-institutional aspects. Ideology, however, is less clearly defined and often seems synonymous with the superstructure (Ibid.). At other times, it appears as 'phantoms formed in the human brain' (Ibid.); an abstract realm of false-consciousness cut off from material reality. Analysed thus, ideology loses its historical materialist grounding and appears as the eternal, universal, and generalised system of ideas produced by human-sensuous activity. A symptom of this ahistoricism is the occasional presentation of historically specific examples of ideology (Feuerbach, Stirner, etc.) as a universal and fully replicable general theory of ideology.

What saves the occasionally universalising definition of ideology from becoming theses of general materialism are properly historical materialist sections, such as the following:

> These three moments, the forces of production, the state of society, and consciousness, can and must come into contradiction with one another, because the division of labour implies [...] that intellectual and material activity - enjoyment and labour, production and consumption - devolve on different individuals, and that the only possibility of their not coming into contradiction lies in the negation in its turn of the division of labour. It is self-evident, moreover, that 'spectres', 'bonds', 'the higher being', 'concept', 'scruple', are merely the idealistic, spiritual expression, the conception apparently of the isolated individual, the image of very empirical fetters and limitations, within which the mode of production of life and the form of intercourse coupled with it move (52).

This passage powerfully argues for the interconnectedness of material life, intellectual life, and the historically specific social division of labour. It also emphasises material and intelligible contradiction to such an extent that is not easily reducible to mechanical materialist caricature. Furthermore, its emphasis on proceeding from the historically specific division of labour allows a situated concept of ideology to be developed within a class dynamic. Furthermore, as this class dynamic will inevitably be one of perpetual conflict, as *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848 insists, ideology is not simply the realm of phantoms, but a specific manifestation of the class struggle, which is the perpetual motor of history.

As such, the ideological 'phantoms formed in the human brain' (1986 [1846]: 47) can be conceived as the cognitive effects of the class struggle on historically situated subjects. This politicisation of the concept is explicitly developed in the section of *The German Ideology* called 'Ruling Class and Ruling Ideas' (64-8), which equates dominant socio-cultural attitudes with ruling class hegemony. Figured thus, as product of conscious existence, or 'the language of real life' (47), ideology contains and reproduces the attitudes and prejudices of everyday life. More so, as the rulers of the means of material production largely also have 'control over the means of mental production' it is logical that superstructural forms of 'mental intercourse' and 'mental production' will contain and reproduce class bias. Figured thus, 'the ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas' (64). Given this, the dominant ideology of any given epoch could be figured as a mechanism for legitimising that class dominance, presented therein 'as the only rational, universally valid' (66) way of understanding the world. As such, ideology is both a reflection and performance of class dominance; simultaneously a celebration and hyper-exaggerated fantasy of power, thus reflecting anxiety or insecurity as much as hubris. One political implication of this analysis is that social change cannot be achieved by merely changing the way that people think (Eagleton 1994: 6). As Marx argues, 'the existence of

revolutionary ideas in a particular period presupposes the existence of a revolutionary class' (Marx and Engels 1986 [1846]: 65). Therefore, a reorganization of the social, the revolutionary 'negation of the division of labour', is required before any forms of consciousness can become unfettered from ideology.

Both the above passages read the ideological as determined by base relations of production, whilst beginning to suggest a reciprocally hegemonic effect on the substructure in turn. However, both texts are unclear on precisely how this reciprocal effect operates. For all its emphasis on the causal primacy of base relations of production, *The German Ideology* also betrays a tendency to locate the question of ideology squarely within the concerns of the human subject. This contradictory and partially repressed humanism conflates concrete conjunctural analysis with bourgeois, subject centred concepts (individual freedom, de-alienation). However, within the analysis of the peculiar characteristics of the commodity form in *Capital,* Marx begins to outline a form of alienation located not in the human subject but in the structures of capitalist society itself.

In 'The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof' (Marx 1995 [1867]: 42-50), Marx undertakes a 'scientific' analysis of the apparently 'transcendent' character of the commodity form, seeking an explanation for its transformation from straightforward thing, fashioned by human labour out of inert matter, into a fantastical thing, possessing quasi-human properties and characteristics. For example, the table produced out of base wood turned by a craftsman which, to paraphrase Marx, forms its own grotesque ideas and demonstrates that it has learned to dance of its own accord. The key to understanding this fantastical metamorphosis lies in the socio-economic structures of society, wherein 'the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour' (43). This peculiar inversion is explained by the generalised abstraction of labour under capitalism. This abstraction constitutes a reduction and equalisation, 'to the lowest common denominator' of the character of all forms of labour, no matter how heterogeneous or skilled, for the purposes of exchange. This serves to de-emphasise or disguise the social character of an individual's labour, which in turn is re-

emphasised only via the act of exchange, when the specific commodity is brought into relation with others as a value at marketplace. It is this 'value [...] that converts every product into a social hieroglyphic' (45); a shorthand for the labour which produces it, that nevertheless must be deciphered by the consumer. In turn, a heterogeneity of skilled human endeavour is reified in the commodity itself. The end result is that society tends to appear as if constituted by 'material relations between persons and social relations between things' (44). This slippage, or inversion, between the subjective and objective is labelled by Marx as 'commodity fetishism', where, like the fetish in both anthropology and psychoanalysis, the commodity acts simultaneously as a displacement and deferral of the real human relations from which its magical properties nevertheless stem.

This reificatory inversion is what aligns the concept of 'commodity fetishism' in *Capital* with the theory of ideology in *The German Ideology*, under the general banner of a broad theory of alienation. The distinction is that the theory of fetishism explains alienation out of the economic laws of modern society, thus discovering 'the rational kernel in the mystical shell' (11) of idealist humanist explanations. The argument of *Capital* therefore is superior in its suggestion that ideology is neither phantom false consciousness, nor some instrument of power to be exercised by the ruling class. Instead ideology is immanent to, and produced by, the mode of production itself. Furthermore, if ideology appears to serve the ruling class and protect the status quo, this is because it is a product of the economic system of production which is always already tilted in favour of that same class. This anti-humanist explanation links the contradictory character of the commodity form, the perceived alienation of the worker, and the disjointed and anxious ideological discourses of the ruling class, via the dismal science of economics. Importantly though, as with each of the theories which preceded it, this formulation retains the primacy of class difference and class struggle in determining all the above, and therefore is still a revolutionary theory, rather than some pessimistic theory of economic alienation, of the kind offered by Baudrillardian (1996) or Debordian (1992 [1967]) analyses.

These three texts then can be read together to formulate a workable Marxist theory of ideology, which suggests a synthesis between the 'early' subjective theories of alienation and 'mature' objective economic analyses, linked via causation to the class struggle. This class antagonism is manifested not only in the societal relations of production but immanent to all forms of material and intellectual production within society. Ideology then is the contradictory system of external effects determined by contradictions in the base relations of production, which appear as natural or essential qualities of human-sensuous activity. This insistence on locating the contradictory character of all ideological forms within the historically situated class struggle saves the concept from a debilitating heterogeneity and relativism, and transforms the study of ideology from liberal humanism to political science. Here, dominant ideology is simply the heterogeneous 'expression of current social organisation' (Cangiani 2013: 225). The suggestion being that a careful and rigorous analysis of cultural forms can lead to prognoses for the radical remodelling of socio-economic relations, which would in turn radically reshape culture.

However, this synthesised theory of ideology is not necessarily in these three texts themselves and must be constructed via an act of critical reading which not only encompasses the breadth of Marx's and Engel's work, but also requires an act of work at the point of reception. Presenting three short excerpts in isolation as the sole site of definitive meaning is of course reductionist and runs the risk of producing, as Callinicos has argued, the worst kind of dogmatism (Callinicos 1976: 8). This thesis has presented the Marxist theory of ideology in precisely such a manner, to highlight continuities, but also to expose the limitations of a reductive and doctrinaire approach, which desires simplicity and completeness, only to reproduce misunderstandings of Marxist theory, if not dogma.

4.2: Althusser's Theory of Ideology.

Arguably, Althusser's work represents the most significant contribution to the development of the Marxist theory of ideology (Hirst 1979: 39), particularly through his 1970 ISA essay. However, the concept 'ideological practice' is also a recurrent concern of the works of the classic Althusserian phase (1961-66) and his later work on aleatory materialism (1978-87). The Althusserian method rejects the inheritance of a Marxist canon with an act of critical re-reading, where Marx's works are read, simultaneously against the grain and 'to the letter' (Althusser et al 2015: 11), as philosophical, not economic or political works. This dual act of reading extracts from them an underlying logic or structure, which is read against their overt content to reveal aporias and internal dislocations [*déclages*] which are symptomatic of an underlying problematic. As such, Althusserianism is firstly and foremostly a work of reading, and in many ways closer to deconstruction than many of Althusser's critics would admit (Solomon 2012: 1-25).

Reading Capital (2015 [1965]), and *For Marx* (1979 [1965]), represent the 'high' Althusserian phase. The latter text contains two important essays, 'Contradiction and Overdetermination' (87-128), and 'On the Materialist Dialectic' (161-218). The former introduced the concept of 'overdetermination', adapted from psychoanalysis; the latter introduced the Althusserian concept of 'practice', and signified a special place for the meta-practice of '*Theory* with a capital T to designate Marxist 'philosophy' (dialectical materialism)' (1979: 162) from bourgeois philosophy. As discussed in the previous chapter, *Reading Capital* emerged from the dialogic group reading conducted during Althusser's ENS seminars. 'Dialogic' because, as Althusser insists, 'when we read Marx, we immediately find a reader who reads to us, and out loud' (2015: 16). The opening chapter of the book, 'From *'Capital'* to Marx's Philosophy' (9-72), is both methodology and manifesto for that work of reading, which has a dual quality, simultaneously constative and performative. Constative, in the sense that it describes an epistemological transition in Marx's philosophical method from

ideological to scientific; performative, in that the approach to reading transforms its object of study, generating new knowledge and a new generative theory of reading. This new reading methods makes 'other 'readings' possible, first other readings of *Capital*, which will give rise to new differential sharpenings, and then readings of other Marxist works' (33).

This has subsequently become known as the 'symptomatic' reading and is now synonymous with Althusserian criticism. The 'symptomatic' reading is a dual form of critical reading that extends from the *explication de texte*, the dominant pedagogic method of the French academy. It aims to reveal the underlying logic beneath the surface level of a text and is a productive practice of reading. It transforms the raw materials of the text by a) delimiting the conceptual framework within which it operates, b) highlighting its exclusions, elisions, or silences, all of which are read as symptoms of its restrictive frame, c) transforming the entire meaning of the text by changing the terrain within which it operates (27). The structural framework disinterred through this dual reading is the text's problematic. The problematic is, like the *épistémè* in Foucault (1970), the structural limits of what is knowable or sayable within a particular mode of cognition of conceptual, akin to the field which controls the knowable. The 'problematic' is 'a definite theoretical structure [...] which constitutes its absolute and definite condition of possibility, and hence the absolute determination of the forms in which all questions must be posed, at any given moment in the science' (Althusser et al 2015: 26). A 'symptomatic' reading aims to expose 'the effectivity of a structure on its elements' (23), where the structural limitations of a text are read as a repressed and epistemic second text operating beneath the surface level. These are then read against each other to reveal aporias, ruptures, or spaces where the text accidentally provides 'an answer to a question that is nowhere posed' (27). This type of reading is revolutionary, as it exposes an outmoded ideological 'problematic' whilst creating a new and superior one out of its ashes (28-9).

Ideology then, for Althusser could be thought of as operating on the surface or denotative level of a text. Here the structural 'problematic' defines what is visible and invisible, thinkable and unthinkable within its parameters. These limitations are one reason

why certain moments in a text or discourse appear to provide answers to questions that have not been posed; some questions are necessarily unthinkable within the parameters of a certain problematic, as posing them would begin to destabilise the foundational assumptions on which that 'problematic' is based (20-2). Conversely, the limitations of a text's 'problematic' can render it incapable of recognising the significance of even its own findings.

The 'symptomatic' reading not only reveals ideology through careful scientific method, but also emancipates, as it engenders the birth of the reader (Barthes 1977: 142-9) who produces new meanings critically at the point of reception. This is to be juxtaposed with the 'expressive reading, the open and ingenuous reading of the essence in the existence' (Althusser et al 2015: 34), which conjures the presence of the author's speaking voice phantasmagorically; a true voice or true meaning there to be discovered empirically or received religiously, as the 'phantom of epiphanic transparency' (Ibid.).

In *For Marx*, Althusser develops a specific nomenclature to classify the different phases of Marx's works, each of which is governed by different 'problematics' (1979: 35). Specifically, this delineates the 'Early Works' (1840-44), the 'Works of the Break' (1845), the 'Transitional Works' (1845-57), and the 'Mature Works' (1857-83). During the *Reading Capital* seminar, Marx's earlier work was read as ideological due to its dependency on an empiricist and humanist problematic. This is explained as a natural product of the early Marx struggling to throw off the influence of both his bourgeois upbringing and education in Hegelian idealism. For Althusser, Marx's early works theorised the world through the lens of an individual subject, presumed to be alienated from their own 'species-being' as a consequence of political economy and private property. These material conditions can only be 'superseded by the abolition of private property and the introduction of a communist form of economic life in which labour becomes the free, creative and collective 'appropriation' and humanisation of the world' (Benton 1984: 58). Through this process, Hegelian contradictions between essence and appearance, man and nature, labour and labourer, are synthesised as

man comes to understand the material reality of the world and his position within it as the proletarian subject of history.

Althusserianism is critical of these teleological and anthropocentric aspects of Marx, and instead outlines an anti-humanist and anti-historicist Marxism, which reveals society and history as subjectless, and the human decentred. In this reading, the concept of history as linear and sequential stages of development leading towards the self-realisation of human essence is attacked as bourgeois ideology. In his 'Reply to John Lewis' (2008: 61-141), Althusser argues that the common-sense conception that 'man makes history' uncritically reproduces 'the original bourgeois image of 'man' [who is] a free subject by nature' (85). This conception of natural human freedom is inseparable from the material freedom within the relations of production peculiarly afforded to the bourgeois classes. This transformation of concrete social relation to natural social quality is ideological in precisely the same way as the fetishism of commodities is ideological, only in this instance it is the human subject that is fetishised. In the former, the character of individual labour appears indelibly stamped as a natural quality of the commodity; in the latter the material freedom afforded to the bourgeois classes appears as an essential quality of man. As Althusser argues, 'in both cases, the social relation is 'conjured away': the commodity or gold have natural value; man is by nature free, by nature he makes history' (84). The person / object dyad, central to all bourgeois ideology, unites both conceptions.

Instead of the teleological, bourgeois-humanist understanding of history, Althusser's 'history without a subject' (83) begins from the complexity and material existence of the class struggle in a particular epoch, and its attendant societal relations, which are the ultimate motor of history, not individuals (93). The material existence of the class struggle is, 'in the last instance, [...] the unity of the relations of production and the productive forces under the relations of production of a given mode of production, in a concrete historical formation' (83). Understood thus, history is figured an 'immense natural-human system in movement' (Althusser 1976: 51) and historical development is understood as being determined by the complex structure of these movements, overdetermined themselves by complex and

contradictory, but historically specific, forces and relations of production. In this theorisation of history then, structural causality replaces teleology; a structure which is in almost unfathomably perpetual flux. This problematises claims of individual subjects, or indeed individual disciplines of the human sciences, as components of this structure, to ever possess complete knowledge of the historical process, let alone claim to be central to it. Given its emphasis on contingency and overdetermination, this approach also reveals teleological explanations of history as the natural or logical development from one economic phase to another as artifice (Resch 1992: 67-8).

The 'natural-human system', outlined above, is an earlier formation of the concept of the 'social formation' developed in *Reading Capital*, the plurality of which extends on or supplements the ostensibly reductive nature of the base / superstructure metaphor of Marx's 'Preface'. The 'social formation' is firstly a site of 'struggle, war, and opposition, a 'contradiction' which can be 'now hidden, now open'' (Althusser et al 2015: 361). This contradictory system is constituted at different levels (244-6), as totality of 'instances' which collectively determine the 'modes of production' of a given epoch (362). The term is appropriated from Marx and is suggested as superior to the more abstract and therefore ideological term 'society'. These 'instances', within the 'social formation' are all forms of human or social practice that seek to work on and transform the raw materials of any given society in order to produce something anew. These forms of social practice are in constant flux, but for Althusser can be broadly categorised as 'economic practice', 'political practice', 'ideological practice', 'technical practice' and 'scientific (or theoretical) practice'. 'Economic practice' refers to the transformation of nature via human labour into socially useful commodities and goods. 'Political practice' constitutes the transformation of societal relations through administrative, institutional, or revolutionary methods. 'Ideological practice' is the site through which individual's consciousnesses are transformed and fully socialised subjects produced' (Resch 1992: 37). Finally, there is a fourth category of 'scientific or theoretical practice' that works on ideology to expose and transform it. Though all practices possess a 'relative autonomy' with the 'social formation', controversially, 'theoretical practice' is figured

to have a special form of autonomy denied to the others (Althusser et al 2015: 60-1; Resch 1992: 182-8).

Within the social formation, the production of knowledge is the result of the labour of 'theoretical practice'. The conception of 'knowledge as production' is one of Althusser's most important contributions (Benton 1984: 36) and related to his conception of ideology in a very particular way. 'Theoretical practice' works to transform its own particular raw materials, such as concepts, facts, ideas, and received wisdom, into new knowledge via an already established system of theoretical and analytic tools, which are its unique means of production. Unlike the raw materials transformed by other social practices, the raw materials of 'theoretical practice' are themselves byproducts of other social practices. Figured in this way, the concept of 'knowledge as production' debunks humanist ideas of advances in knowledge being caused by individual geniuses, and instead suggests new knowledge is developed out of complex processes of social mediation, involving numerous actors remodelling already existing ideas over time. In this sense it is complementary to Kuhn's (2012) understanding of the 'paradigm shift' in scientific thought. Conveniently, Althusser's approach also affords 'theoretical practice' the luxurious position of quasi-autonomous critical interlocutor to the other social practices.

Althusser's epistemological objection to empiricism (2015: 34-40) results directly from his insistence on the social production of knowledge and his anti-humanism, which in fact are two sides of the same objection. For him, empiricism implies that a given object of study contains some sort of essential information that a properly trained or sensitive human observer can extract, in order to construct knowledge. This process of abstraction, performed by a subject, recentres the human with the process of knowledge production, thus denying the dependency of 'theoretical practice' on extant raw materials from other social practices within a complex social formation. It also involves an uncritical fidelity to a subjective division between essential and inessential essence to be extracted as evidence for new knowledge. Althusser's rejection of empiricism, and his insistence on the social mediation of knowledge, led him to the neo-Kantian conclusion, albeit from a radically

different angle, that we can never have knowledge, or extract knowledge from, the real object as such. Instead, we simply have theoretical knowledge of the real object, which is not the same thing.

Furthermore, empiricism, as method, is a theory of reading that privileges yet anonymises the reader. As Althusser argues, 'there is no such thing as an innocent reading' (12). The ideological function of empiricism, whether rational or sensuous, in either the sciences or the human sciences, is to disguise the historically located and historically produced observer as a neutral and universal subject, thus presenting the partisan and subjective as factual, objective, and scientific. In the humanities, particularly literature studies, the history of art, and related disciplines, the ideology of empiricism manifests itself in a very particular way. Here, it has a dual effect, which not only privileges the observer, qua connoisseur, but also presupposes the existence of that same hidden essence for connoisseurship to uncover. This art historical mode is precisely the 'expressive reading', critiqued by Althusser (34). It figures the material and/or textual evidence of artworks as mere conduits from human subject to human subject. This fetishisation of the human disguises the socially mediated nature of creative production and reception. Barthes' 'Death of the Author' (1977: 142-9) thesis partially recognised the hopeless illusion of the singular author as sole site of meaning in a text. However, his suggestion that this heralds the birth of a plurality of readers, each authoring their own texts at the point of reception, remains in the sway of a humanist and to a lesser degree empiricist ideology. This essentialist and empiricist ideology of 'epiphanic transparency' weighs heavily on discussions of art and aesthetics, rendering much art historical work ideological.

To emphasise then, for Althusser, humanism is fundamentally a form of ideology, and humanist epistemology is an ideological form of cognition; the other of theoretical practice. However, though critical of the teleological and humanist aspects of Marx, Althusserianism remains a defence of the critical core of Marxism. As he argued in 'Marxism and Humanism' (1965), 'humanism-socialism' is an oxymoron because 'the concept 'socialism' is indeed a scientific concept, but the concept 'humanism' is no more than an

ideological one' (1979: 223). As such, the epistemological break that he locates in Marx's work in 1845 essentially represents the jettisoning of ideology for theory, or in Althusserian terms, the rejection of an idealist philosophical 'problematic' and its replacement with a superior materialist one (227). Empiricism, as method, is one symptom of the rejected bourgeois-humanist philosophical 'problematic'.

Another two texts, 'Theory, Theoretical Practice and Theoretical Formation' in 1966, and 'On Theoretical Work' in 1967 (1990: 1-42, 43-68), were published shortly after 'Marxism and Humanism', both expanding on Althusser's concept of ideology. The former explicitly, containing lengthy passages discussing the function of ideology, and the latter implicitly, by positioning Stalinism as the ideology to which historical materialist science opposes. Both passages insist on the critical distinction between science and ideology. In the years 1967-68, Althusser convened a famous seminar at the *ENS* called the 'Philosophy Course for Scientists' where he cryptically attempted a further clarification of this dyad, distinguishing between science in the singular, presumably referring to the professional discipline, which is characterised as ideological, and the sciences, in the plural, which connotes theoretical method in general and thus not ideological. Rancière is quite rightly sceptical about this dubious distinction, which he regards as contributing to, rather than clarifying, the social effects of ideology (OTII: 14). In his later ISA essay, Althusser would also argue that 'scientific' discourse is subjectless, in contradistinction to ideological discourses, especially those with pretensions to scientificity, such as humanist empiricism (1971: 171).

The ISA essay also supplements the above, and indeed Marxist ideology studies generally, in its explanation of the reproduction of ideology through 'interpellation'. Prior to this essay, Marxian theories regarded ideology as either false consciousness or reflection of the sociological in consciousness. The revolutionary significance of Althusser's contribution to the field of study of ideology largely resides in his complication, if not outright rejection, of these two commonplace assumptions. Because of its influence, the Althusserian theory of ideology often is located solely within this text, which is both problematic and reductive. Both 'interpellation' and 'reproduction' needs to be understood as clarifications to the concept of

‘ideological practice’, outlined in the texts above. This clarification concerns the centrality of ‘ideological practice’ within the reproduction of the relations of production, necessary for the reproduction of capitalism itself in turn. As Althusser acknowledges, this latter object of study is both ‘very familiar’, since both its causes and effects are ingrained in the very fabric of socially productive activity, and ‘uniquely ignored’ since it is ‘extremely hard, not to say impossible, to raise oneself to the point of view of reproduction’ (128). In many ways, the analysis of the reproduction of the relations of production has been the core concern of much Western Marxist, particularly Western Marxist aesthetics, that followed.

From the position of those with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo, the desirable relations of production are those that involve a compliant, pacified, but hardworking proletariat on one side, and on the other, a bourgeois boss class, whose hegemony remains unchallenged in perpetuity. Althusser demonstrates that the reproduction of these relations of production requires two operations. The first of these involves the physical reproduction of the labour force by means of wages, kept deliberately at a ‘historically variable minimum’, out of which the labourer purchases means of subsistence, maintains a home and family life, from which the next generation of prospective labourers is produced, as progeny. However, as most revolutions begin from the basis of miserable living conditions and a hatred of the ruling class, a second and complementary process is required where the working class are won over at the realm of ideas. This is largely achieved by institutions which Althusser calls ISAs, distinguished from RSAs, such as the military, police, courts, and prisons (142-3), which maintain social order and the authority of the ruling class through physical coercion. ISAs, which include schools, the family, law, the media, the political system, and culture generally (143), control the proletariat by subtle forms of indoctrination which lead to gradual behavioural adjustment. For example, the school, which Althusser famously considers to be the most potent ISA in developed capitalist society (151-7), teaches not only the knowledge and skills required of a future labouring force, or indeed administrative class, but also the attitudes necessary to maintain the status quo. Alongside the overt curriculum, children are taught a hidden curriculum containing lessons of morality, civic and professional conscience,

manners, and behaviour appropriate to one's station in the world. In short, the attitudes of a compliant and deferential working class (1971). This is the same conclusion drawn by much Marxist educational theory (Bowles and Gintis 1976).

This thesis is justified by Althusser on the grounds of its intensity, whereby children are submitted to an industrial type production line of ideological and behavioural training daily from infancy, where people are at their most vulnerable (1971: 155). However, despite this apparently bleak analysis, Althusser does briefly acknowledge the heroism of those educational labourers whom, although apparently destined for disappointment and failure in this regard, nevertheless attempt to 'teach against the ideology' (157). This defence of the teacher, though not without justification, effectively echoes the defence of the university lecturer that Althusser had mounted six years earlier in 'Student Problems' (2011 [1964]). As such, this statement has a similarly self-serving quality; a quality which Rancière identified as reactionary politics quality in Althusser's work. Finally, though discussing 'the school' throughout this passage, Althusser opens the discussion by using the more expansive term 'educational ideological apparatus' (1971: 152), implying that colleges, universities, apprenticeship schemes, and other institutional forms of education serve much the same ideological function as schools. Such an interpretation, whilst perhaps more in keeping with Althusser's penchant for creating dualistic discussions of the general and specific instances of his objects of study, obviously contradicts his specific defence of the university in the earlier essay, which is figured as the site where future cadres and teachers are scientifically and critically trained, whom 'the government fear above all' yet are 'nonetheless obliged to train' (2011: 15).

In the same essay, Althusser forwards a 'theory of ideology in general', distinct from an analysis of particular ideologies, which, whatever their form (religious, ethical, legal, political), always express class positions' (1971: 159). As such, the latter are firmly entrenched within the historical development of the productive forces of society and associated relations of production. Ideology in general is a structural yet 'imaginary assemblage [*bricolage*], a pure dream, empty and vain, constituted by the 'day's residues',

and as such, though it relates to, and is influenced by, real historical events, it is effectively estranged from them. It is this generality and distance that allows Althusser to argue for the eternal nature of ideology, which is outside of history, in the same way as Freud would argue that the unconscious is (161). Though it contains traces and inverted reflections of reality and history, it has no history of its own (160). It is 'omnipresent, trans-historical and therefore immutable in form throughout the extent of history' (161).

By suggesting ideology as a structural generality mediating between the individual, social, political, and economic, Althusser is able to forward a theory of ideology which is based neither on false consciousness, nor contained within the 'material alienation which reigns in the conditions of existence of men themselves' (163-4). Althusser:

> All ideology represents in its necessarily imaginary distortion not the existing relations of production (and the other relations that derive from them), but above all the (imaginary) relationship of individuals to the relations of production and the relations that derive from them. What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live (164-5).

In situating ideology in such a way, Althusser's analysis moves away from a causal analysis of ideology to structural. In this general sense only, ideology can be understood as eternal, similar to the class struggle in general, which perpetually motors history. Thus, an imaginary, and usually compensatory, 'ideological practice' operates as mode of production within any given 'social formation'. As such, Althusser can argue that all ideology has a material existence (165-70) because of its inseparability from palpable ISAs which generate, inculcate, and reproduce specific ideologies. Ideology then is inscribed within these real-world ISAs, and though they may reproduce illusory 'false consciousness', that 'falsity' is nevertheless materially produced as 'mode of production' and articulated as 'instances' of practice by ideological subjects. Therefore, all 'social practice' exists within ideology, which in the final analysis is produced 'by the subject and for subjects' (170).

Though superficially suggesting a humanist recentring of the subject, Althusser's position differs radically from humanism in that it explains ideology not as 'false

consciousness', nor as a product of subjective alienation, but as mediated 'social practice' determined by an underlying 'mode of production'. Though history proceeds without a subject, as 'immense natural-human system in movement' (1976: 51), Althusser argues, 'there is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects', and furthermore, 'there is no practice except by and in an ideology' (1971: 170). In figuring ideology in this way, Althusser centres 'ideological practice' within the 'social formation', thus denying the possibility of a humanist, de-alienated 'outside' of ideology (175). Furthermore, by emphasising the subjective and institutional reproduction of ideology through 'instances' of 'ideological practice', Althusser's theory has a dialecticity which other explanations lack. This dialectic is articulated through the concept of 'interpellation' (170-83), the most important conceptual contribution of the ISA essay, and in many ways Althusser's 'scientific' response to Kant's subjective deduction (Kant b129-69 1998: 245-66; Wolff 1968: 130-1).

Though obviously differing in many ways, most significantly that it attempts to prove the material existence of apparently *a priori* knowledge, not vice versa, Althusser's outline of the process of interpellation relates to Kant's Subjective Deduction in the sense that it describes an epistemological process whereby social practice, sensory information, and forms of cognition are made comprehensible, and the subjective and objective worlds unified, by subsuming them under general laws. In this case, the Law of dominant-hegemonic ideology; a process of the introjection of the Law which, given its roots in the social relations of production, guarantees the reproduction of social power via the production of deferential subjectivities (Althusser 1971: 180-1).

'Interpellation' involves a four-stage process which begins by the subject being 'hailed' by ideology and recognising themselves within its discourse (173). From this position a 'concrete individual' is transformed into a 'concrete subject', who simultaneously submits to and affirms the ideological master discourse which interpellates them. This master discourse operates as a meta-subject, a Subject with a capital 'S', to whom the interpellated actor is held in a process of perpetual becoming. At the same time, a process of mutual recognition occurs, cementing subject to Subject in a relationship of co-dependency. Without the

subject, the Subject is effectively immaterial and therefore socially meaningless, yet the apparent freedom of the subject is conditional on submission. Within this closed loop of co-dependence, the status quo is perpetually reproduced and through this process all components parts are entrenched and validated (181). Ideology, therefore has a doubly speculary effect (180). It necessitates 'the duplication of the Subject into subjects and of the Subject itself into a subject-Subject' (Ibid.). This offers consolation and compensation by validating the interpellated subject's position within the 'social formation' and guarantees the ongoing necessity of the Subject as an ISA discourse. This immutable character of ideology is the reason why its discourses seem to recycle 'obviousnesses as obviousnesses' (172); concepts such as 'natural', 'eternal', and 'common-sense' are always symptomatic of ideology.

Ideology then is not simply the phantom delusions of an individual subject, but a 'practice' through which all other social practices are mediated. At a macro-social level it constitutes the general structural relation between social actors and the relations of production. Its dynamic relation to both the historically specific class struggle and the hegemonic 'mode of production' gives ideology a material not phantom existence (166). This material existence is constituted in specific ISA forms through which individuals psycho-socially adjust themselves to the relations of production (the class struggle) in unreal and usually compensatory way. Therefore, despite the unreality of ideology it is determined by, and reflects the relations of production (the class struggle). As such, the ISA 'may not only be the stake, but also the site of the class struggle' (147). Though ISAs might reproduce an incorrect, distorted, inverted, or downright false, explanation of the prevailing class relations, they nevertheless have real world effects on those subjects who pass through. Alternatively, through ideological practice, and ISAs men can become conscious of the conflict inherent in relations of production and fight it out. In both instances, ideology is the form of 'social practice' through which subjectivities are produced, determined in the last instance by the relations of production (the class struggle). Therefore, Althusser can conclude that ideology is 'material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are

themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of that subject' (169).

For Althusser, we live spontaneously or naturally in ideology (171), which mediates all 'social practice'. There is no outside of ideology, and the illusion that one can step outside of its grasp is ideological in itself (175). As such, we are always already constituted as subjects, arguably from birth, where the ISA of the family has already determined our familial names, race, identity, class, gender, values, and so forth (176). In this reading, even though 'concrete subjects only exist insofar as they are supported by a concrete individual' (174), the latter seems to retreat to the status of an unknowable Kantian *ding an sich*, given the omnipresence of ideology. This conclusion that individuals are 'abstract' with respect to the subjects which they always-already are' (176) is catastrophic for bourgeois-humanism, which is precisely Althusser's intention. Yet, in striking this target so squarely his argument seems to weaken his own case for the necessity and potency of 'scientific practice' contra ideology. This seems to be left as a matter of hope or fidelity that 'from within ideology [Marxist science can] outline a discourse which tries to break with ideology, in order to dare to be the beginning of a scientific (i.e. subjectless) discourse on ideology' (173).

4.3: Rancière's Theory of Ideology

When published in 1974, Rancière's 'On the Theory of Ideology (The Politics of Althusser)' was immediately received as 'the most powerful critique of Althusser's work so far to have been produced from the Left' (Benton 1974: 27-8). Like *Althusser's Lesson*, its *ad hominem* tone is overdetermined by '68. It explicitly seeks to demonstrate Althusser's political revisionism, alongside his structuralist deviation from Marx, as reflexes of a politically conservative, and self-serving, defence of the Party intellectual. Though predating Althusser's ISA essay by a year, and therefore presumably ignorant of the more sophisticated conception of ideology Althusser was developing, Rancière's essay remains useful not simply as an early critique of Althusserianism, produced in the moment when it was gaining most traction internationally, but also as a conduit to the Rancièrean thought which would follow.

This essay isolates the concept of ideology as the site where the reactionary nature of Althusser's thought could be best exposed. Ideology is similarly central, albeit in an unusual form, within the Rancièrean wider philosophical system. More interestingly, in the interstices, elisions, and modifications of that critique, a number of embryonic theoretical concerns can be revealed that would come to dominate much of Rancière's later work. Given the volume of commentaries on Althusser's ISA essay, many of which miss its sophistications, this earlier Rancièrean critique remains a useful starting point for a comparative assessment of both thinkers contributions to ideology studies.

Rancière's attack centres on a lengthy quote from Althusser's 1965 essay 'Theory, Theoretical Practice and Theoretical Formation: Ideology and Ideological Struggle' (1990: 1-42).

> Ideology, in class societies, is a representation of the real, but a necessarily false one because it is necessarily aligned and tendentious - and it is tendentious because its goal is not to give men objective knowledge of the social system in which they live, but on the contrary to give them a mystified representation of this social system in

> order to keep them in their 'place' in the system of class exploitation. Of course, it is also necessary to pose the problem of ideology's function in a society without classes - and this would then be resolved by showing that the deformation of ideology is socially necessary as a function of the very nature of the social whole: more specifically, as a function of its determination by its structure which renders this social whole opaque to the individuals who occupy a place in it determined by this structure. The representation of the world indispensable to social cohesion is necessarily mythical, owing to the opacity of the social structure. In class societies, this principal function of ideology still exists, but is dominated by the additional social function imposed on it by class divisions. This additional function thus by far outweighs the first. If we want to be exhaustive, if we want to take these two principles of necessary deformation into account, we must say that in a class society ideology is necessarily distorting and mystifying, both because it is made distorting by the opacity of society's determination by the structure, and because it is made distorting by class divisions (Althusser 1990: 29; OTI: 2).

The use of signifiers such as 'distortion' or 'mystify' to characterise ideology has the unfortunate effect of foregrounding the humanist connotations rejected in his later ISA essay. To clarify, the distortion at work here is not one of 'false consciousness' but the 'opacity' of the 'social formation' to its actors, as mediated by 'ideological practice'. By emphasising 'ideological practice' as a 'necessarily imaginary distortion of the existing relations of production' Althusser 1971: 165), essential for the cohesion of the 'social formation', Althusser demarcates a clear theoretical distinction between his position and earlier subject-centred humanist accounts of ideology, even those of 'early' Marx. However, Rancière recognises that this 'structural turn' also allows him to mount a cynical defence of the Soviet Union and its apparatus.

Given its presumed classless character, ideology in the USSR was supposed to wither in direct proportion to, and as an objective necessity of, the withering of the state; 'false consciousness' being a presumed reflex of the structures of capitalism. However, by the 60s, to 'all but the most ideologically self-deluding' (Davis 2010: 5), neither ideology nor state was withering. Yet, liberal period, post-1956, had created a space for Marxist-Humanist thinkers to blame this inertia on Stalinism. For Rancière, Althusser's structuralism was motivated by neither theoretical fashion, nor by the exactitudes of theoreticist Marxist 'science', but by his proximity to these reactionary Communist Party structures. Indeed, the paradoxical structural defence of the ongoing necessity of ideology in an apparently

emancipated workers' state seems to compromise the Althusserian claim for the 'relative autonomy' of 'Theory'. Instead, 'Theory' seems to be politicised in the defence of Soviet policy, and as an apology for its theoretical trajectory, in the face of resurgent humanisms, especially the *gauchiste* 'politics of the street' (Benton 1974: 27). Furthermore, for Rancière, this paradoxical position was synonymous with the defence of Althusserian theoreticism *per se*. As he argues, the disastrous cost of this rear-guard is an over-emphasis on the structural at the expense of the class struggle.

For Rancière, Althusser's theory of ideology is further compromised because of three general assumptions, all of which recur as symptomatic effects in his wider work. Firstly, that Althusser proceeds from a generalised and abstracted idea of ideology. Secondly, that this abstracted concept of ideology in general is necessarily structural in the first instance, and only class-based secondarily. Rancière, the strategy of proceeding from a structural concept of ideology, rather than a critique of ideology qua dominant ideology, leads to a woolly and universalising sense of the concept that loses its class connotations (OTI: 3-4; Benton 1984: 27). Therefore, instead of being a theory of class conflict, Althusser outlines a theory of social cohesion or totality, which Rancière equates to bourgeois sociologists such as Durkheim or Comte. Furthermore, when utilised within what purports to be a Marxist analysis (the so-called 'class struggle in theory') a peculiar 'double-determination' is enacted which figures ideology simultaneously as structure and effect (OTI: 3). At times, this can suggest a top-down process of ideological subjectification where, as in the inverted illusion of a camera obscura, 'the effects reproduce the law of cause' (Ibid.). Finally, and most significantly for Rancière, Althusser's writings on ideology depend upon a false insistence on the binary opposition between ideology and 'science'. This false dualism, where ideology is the opacity of the social structure to its actors, but 'science' is the tool which renders that transparent, creates an epistemological hierarchy which finds its equivalence in the authoritarian and hierarchical structures of the Communist Party, and the pedagogical logic of the university ISA. Science and ideology, teacher and student, vanguard party and proletariat, organisation and spontaneity; these interdependent and self-reproducing couplets of oppression and

inequality are recognised by Rancière as intrinsic to Althusserianism. For Rancière, in the face of the 'mass ideological revolt' of '68, Althusserianism was in fact used 'by the hacks of revisionism in a theoretical justification for the anti-leftist' offensive and the defence of academic knowledge' (2). Academic Marxism therefore repackaged the orthodox Leninist critique of spontaneity within the language of theoreticist structuralism.

For Rancière, all three of these theoretical weaknesses result from Althusser's private motivation to defend his particular brand of structural Marxism against theorists of de-alienation. For example, Althusser contends that under Communism, systems of representation will still continue to bind men to their real conditions of existence (Benton 1974: 27). Problematically, as Rancière recognises, when this structural explanation of ideology is 'extended beyond class societies, this effectivity of the structure becomes a completely undetermined concept - or alternatively, it is determined by standing in for a traditional figure of metaphysics: the evil genius or the cunning of reason' (OTI: 3). Yet, though the structural is given precedence in Althusser's theory, the concept of class struggle 'will subsequently 'overdetermine' the principal function of ideology' in his analysis (OTI: 3). The disastrous effect of this is that Althusser's theory of ideology presents itself as a schizophrenic fusion of bourgeois left-functionalist sociology and Marxism, the latter of which is claimed as dominant, after the fact.

Instead, Rancière insists that the class struggle determines the structure of society, and following that its ideologies. Indeed, the structure of society is nothing more than the relations of production, contradictorily and antagonistically responding to the demands of the forces of production. In a class society, where one class owns the means of production and the other sells its labour this 'structure' can be nothing other than class antagonism and class conflict. For Rancière, it is the section on fetishism, from *Capital*, that reveals the true nature of ideology. Fetishism is the 'manifestation-dissimulation of the relations of production' (OTI: 3) where the true nature of commodity production is hidden behind a phantom use-value, seemingly embedded in the concept itself, and human labour is

abstractly compared as a reified equivalent at marketplace. It is not then the social structure that is hidden by ideology but class conflict.

However, the English Althusserian Paul Hirst celebrates Althusser's work as significantly reanimating a previously 'moribund region of Marxist theory' with new questions and problems (1979: 40; Brown 2011: 16-24). Specifically, Althusser's insistence that 'ideology is not a distorted representation of reality' (1971: 165), and instead an 'instance' of the articulation of a specific practice within the totality of a 'social formation' (Hirst 1979: 40), destroys reductionist and sociologist analyses, as well as 'false consciousness', 'reflection', and 'end of ideology' theories (39). Against Rancière's critique, Hirst argues that 'Althusser, unlike Rancière, challenges conceptions of the structure as generating appearances' (80). For Rancière, in these 'early' essays at least, ideology is a 'manifestation-dissimulation' of the economic base, which not only implies the existence of a given subject to experience that distortion, but also suggests a sociologist and reductive causality between 'the order of the structure' and 'a given experience', which 'creates a slide away from structural causality toward expressive causality' (78). The danger of this regression is a reductive understanding of subjectivity. By insisting that the sociological real determines experience, the possible viewpoints in a society at a given time are radically limited, unlike Althusser's theories of structural causality or 'interpellation'. It suggests that any 'social formation like, for example, capitalism or feudalism can only create certain types of experience-effects because of the structure of 'places' within it, capitalist and worker, serf and lord, etc.' (24). Such a reductive and universalising sociologism, especially regarding the concept of the working class or the proletariat, has been one of the reasons why Marxism has historically failed to account for the specific exploitation of women, or black and minority workers. For Hirst, 'Althusser's significant innovation is to challenge the concept of a given subject and to attempt to replace it by one constituted by the structure' (80).

As suggested before, by generalising ideology as structural practice within a social formation, which as an organising principle remains constant in whichever society one is analysing, Althusser can argue that ideology is eternal, thus dispatching with the 'end of

ideology' theses prevalent in humanist and utopian Marxisms. However, by insisting on the specificity of that structural relation as being located in the subjective imaginary, a figure borrowed from psychoanalysis (Althusser 1971: 189-93), Althusser's theory surpasses, and thus critiques, generalised and reductive theories of ideology as class reflection or falsehood. The important epiphany which follows is that the *origin* of ideology is not located in material reality (Hirst 1979: 41). The *origin* of ideology is located in the individual, in the process of subjectification as the act of misrecognition within an 'ideological practice' reworking extant discourses produced by historically specific ISAs. Because of its emphasis on the ISA as constitutive of the imaginary relationship that is ideology, this concept of ideology could not be regarded as wholly subjective, as with humanism. However, because of its emphasis on the individual act of interpellation, neither can this concept be regarded as proceeding from an illusory and generalised objectivity, as with sociologism.

The claim that ideological practice 'has no history' should therefore be understood as a denial of the sociologism that would explain all social phenomena as constituted by class or social position. This is equally true of the related concepts of 'economic practice', 'political practice', and 'theoretical practice'. However, sophisticated a definition of class one works with, that position has to proceed from the assumption that there are a finite number of classes or social positions within the social formation. Class based sociologism is necessarily reductive as a result; if one regards the sociological as sole generator of experience-effects then logically the conclusions drawn from such investigations must equate the amount of experience-effects, or ideological positions, available to the number of class positions. As argued above, Althusser regarded the social formation as an 'immense natural-human system in movement' (Althusser 1976: 51), in perpetual flux and thus unknowable as totality to any one of its actors. The complexity of Althusser's reading of the ideological, before even beginning to reckon with 'economic' or 'theoretical' practice, makes claims to understand the totality of the historical process, common to much twentieth century Marxist thought, appear either naive or reductive. His claim that 'ideology has no history' is not a rejection of the material basis of ideology, but the insistence of the perpetual necessity

of ‘ideology in general’, which is a totality of ideological ‘instances’, within the wider totality which is the social formation. This thesis acknowledges that there are as infinite a number of ideological ‘instances’ as there are subjects, yet is saved from total relativism by its situation of the ideological as an imaginary relation between subject and historically specific ISAs. In its emphasis on the radical difference of subjectivity, and the incomprehensible variety of imagined relationships formed between subject and ISA through ‘ideological practice’, Althusser’s position complicates the analysis of ideology to a degree previously unreached by Marxist theory. By attempting to situate ideology as a structural component of the ‘social formation’, constitutive of subjectivities, Althusser also shed the baggage of humanism, which itself is tainted by ideology. At the same time, by bridging the unknowable individual and historically specific ISA in the imaginary, Althusser opened up a whole field of new study which would regard ideological struggle as the equal of class struggle in terms of importance for Marxist analysis.

Rancière’s critique amounts to an Althusserian ‘symptomatic reading’ turned against its inventor. Here, Althusser’s apparently authoritarian-theoreticist problematic is revealed in the symptomatic slippages between ideology as structure, ideology as commitment, and ideology as manipulation. The denouement of this ‘symptomatic reading’ is the transformation of the Althusserian ‘problematic’ into a new one which reasserts the primacy of the class struggle. This ‘problematic’ will form the basis of the Rancièrean conception of ‘politics’, whose foundational premise of equality stands as a conceptual rejection of the hierarchised, binarised, and logocentric thought which Rancière regards as endemic not only to Althusserian thought but political philosophy generally. However, Rancière’s anxiety to distance himself, in every way, from the Althusserianism which was irrefutably formative for his development, means that his position also contains the *déclages* he locates in Althusser. Indeed, there are many moments when his critique of Althusserianism sounds suspiciously like the ‘metapolitics’ he rejects in *Disagreement*, only with the figure of ‘equality’ substituted for class.

In retrospect, perhaps what is more interesting are the continuities between the two thinkers, as much as the professed 'disagreements'. Yet, even when apparently closest to Althusser, his position was noticeably distinct from Althusserian orthodoxy, particularly regarding the concept of ideology. Despite being indebted to the Althusserian problematic (David 2010: 4), this difference is clearly marked in his contribution to *Reading Capital*, 'The Concept of Critique and the Critique of Political Economy in the *1844 Manuscripts* to *Capit*al' (2015 [1965]: 73-174). Contained within this essay is a concept of ideology that can be argued to lay the conceptual groundwork for much of Rancière's later philosophy, despite his subsequent disavowal of this essay as juvenilia.

As suggested above, Rancière's critique of Althusser's theory of ideology rests on his rejection of ideology as trans-historical structure affecting and unifying the elements of any 'social formation'. For Rancière, proceeding from 'structure' obscures the class struggle which, following his reading of *The Communist Manifesto*, is the sole motor of history. Whilst outlining a quintessentially Althusserian epistemological shift from 'early' to 'mature' Marx, this early essay contains a concept of ideology that differs from Althusser's in a number of significant ways (Hirst 1979: 76). Most notably, that Rancière does not conceive of ideology as a 'practice' within a 'social formation', but as a 'structure-effect' of the economic relations of society. According to Rancière's reading of Marx, the Feuerbachian anthropological problematic employed by Marx throughout the 1844 Manuscripts and the 'Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law' of 1843 (Marx and Engels 2000: 3-130), figures ideology as a movement where a predicate originating from a human subject is separated from that subject in discourse and hypostatised by that same discourse 'into an abstract category which is then incarnated in some empirical existence' (Althusser et al 2015: 102). The inversion often used to describe this ideology effect rests on the conversion of the 'empirical into speculation (abstraction and autonomization) and of speculation into the empirical' (102). The given example of this movement is the analysis of Hegel's concept of sovereignty in Marx's 1843 critique. Sovereignty, which Marx argues is nothing but the 'spirit of the subjects of the state' (101), is dissociated from the generative subject in Hegel's

discourse which speculatively transforms this into an autonomous idea which is then argued to be incarnated into real world. The revelation of this process, which can be summarised as 1) separation of subject and predicate 2) autonomisation and abstraction as mystical idea 3) incarnation and hypostatisation (102), is the shared ambition of all anthropological or humanist theories of ideology. It is the conceptual model that underpins ideas of false consciousness, alienation, and also humanist versions of the theory of reification. All of these proceed from the assumption of a subjectivity which is separated into essence and appearance, and therefore all of which depend upon a problematic of subjective causality.

To demonstrate that this problematic has been entirely transformed by the publication of *Capital* (1867), Rancière turns to the section analysing value and commodity fetishism (1995: 42-50). Here Marx famously reveals the phantasmagoric objectivity of commodities to be located in their sensuous-supersensuous character, derived from their simultaneous status as products of human labour, with a social use-value, and as bearers of abstract value. The fetish value of commodities, which presents itself as a social quality, apparently independent of the labour of their creators, initially appears to equate broadly with the anthropological theory of ideology as alienation. Indeed, Rancière admits that the earlier critique of incarnation and the later critique of value are homologous (Althusser et al 2015: 112), given that both theories present an apparent split between subject and predicate, the latter of which appears abstracted and autonomous. However, under close scientific scrutiny, this homologous relationship is more precisely revealed as 'homonymy'. Rancière does not use the term homonymy in this essay, and it will only emerge as an explicit concept in *Disagreement* (DS: 83-91). His explicit ambition in *Reading Capital* is to disprove the Della Volpe school (Althusser et al 2015: 111) of Western Marxism, who wished to argue for a continuity between early and mature Marx, and thus demonstrate proof of the Althusserian epistemological break. Nevertheless, his critical method, which is to expose radically different epistemic foundations between apparently similar concepts precisely echoes the sections on homonymy in *Disagreement* and, as such, should be considered a precursor to that work.

The ‘homonymy’ between the conception of ideology as alienation and ideology as fetishism is caused by the removal of a central human subject, and therefore subjective effectivity, in the latter process. Rather than a separation between the human and the sensuous, in *Capital* the separation is between the sensuous and supersensuous. The analysis of estranged labour in the *1844 Manuscripts* revealed that the products of men’s labour appear increasingly imbued with the human qualities stripped from their creators in inverse proportion (Marx 1970: 106-20). It also locates the antidote to this in the human subject, which can ultimately be restored to completeness by the revolutionary transformation of society. Similarly, the inverted concept of sovereignty analysed in Marx’s *1843 Critique* is demonstrated to be a product of human subjectivity, albeit abstracted. In this instance, Hegelian discourse ‘translates’ the reality of human subjectivity into the universalising mystical idea, which is then mistakenly figured to constitute human subjectivities, following a problematic of ‘expressive causality’. The apparent remedy to such discourses, which is to turn them on their heads, does nothing to decentralise the human subject from this problematic, nor transform its expressive character.

However, in the process of commodity fetishism a whole layer of abstract exchange-value, in no obvious way determined by, or reflecting, an active human subject is generated. The dual nature of labour, which is revealed by Marx as simultaneously a human product and an abstract value of exchange is the key to understanding commodity fetishism (Marx 1995: 45). Commodities, originally produced by human labour, appear simultaneously as social use-values and abstract exchange-values, both of which disguise the human labour necessary for their production. This creates a new mode of alienation, produced not by a human subject but by the economic structure of society, in which the ‘predicates’ cannot be restored to a ‘subject’ except by a new form of perception’ (Hirst 1979: 83). This sensuous-supersensuous abstraction is a new and very specific type of ideology. The new mode of perception needed to perceive it marks the epistemological shift from ideology to science in the problematic of Marxist critique.

Regardless of the debates concerning the correctness or otherwise of the theory of the break in respect to Marxist epistemology generally, the critical bifurcation between the human-sensuous and the sensuous-supersensuous is decisive for the critique of ideology. Rancière:

> This means that the pattern which designated the speculative procedure in the anthropological critique, here designates the process which takes place in the field of reality itself. The concept of reality (*Wirklichkeit*) must be understood to mean precisely the space in which the determinations of the structure manifest themselves (the space of phantasmagoric objectivity) (Althusser et al 2015: 111-12).

The deception is in the economic structure of society itself, not in the manipulative discourse of some oppressing class or ideology. More precisely, ideology is itself the 'function of a space created by the structuration of the economic; the absence of the cause in its effects, and the necessary distance between the 'visible' effects and their determinations' (Hirst 1979: 76). Though this conception of ideology sounds like textbook Althusserianism, it actually diverges markedly. Whereas Althusser insists on ideology as 'practice', and an imagined relation to nevertheless real conditions of production, Rancière regards it a 'structure-effect' of the economic. This is not quite the same as Althusserian 'structural causality', and in fact is nearer to a problematic of 'expressive causality' given its economism. More problematically, as Hirst has argued 'Rancière's 'fetishism' depends on a causality which actualises an empiricist mode of knowing in the real, which stages a confrontation between a concrete subject and the 'appearance' of concrete objects' (84). Therefore, Rancière's theory of ideology, even in this embryonic form, not only recentres the human subject, who is implicitly indexed as she/he who recognises the structure-effect of ideology, but also constitutes a slippage back towards the empiricism apparently rejected by Althusser et al in *Reading Capital*. This also begins to suggest an essential human subject, instead of the constituted subject insisted on by Althusser. Finally, it also begins to resemble a sociologism that would imagine a social reality that is present to experience, whereas

Althusser would insist that social reality is knowable only in the imaginary, which is to say via ideological practice (41).

The conditions of the Althusserian theory of ideology then are as follows: 1) ideology is a form of 'practice' within a social formation; 2) ideology is an imagined relation to nevertheless real conditions and relations of production; 3) ideology results from structural not subjective causality. That is, ideology is not the false consciousness of a subject but the process of subjectification within the social structure; 4) ideology must be conceived of as purely 'signs and representations [...] having no originary meaning outside the process of signification in objects which that process represents' (Hirst 1979: 75).

Despite the majority of the secondary literature, including his own commentary, presenting Rancière's 'mature' work as a clean break with Althusserianism, the contention of this thesis is that Rancière's signature theory of *le partage du sensible*, and the related concept of political *subjectivation*, must be regarded as meeting these conditions. As such, *le partage du sensible* could be considered as a Neo-Althusserian theory, or at least a supplement to the Althusserian concept 'ideological practice', despite Rancière's lack of attention the economic base (Davis 2010: 9-10), traditionally the locus of Marxist analyses. This argument is made on the following evidence.

1) Rancière's account of *le partage du sensible*, and the nature of 'democracy' from which it is inseparable, is structural. *Le partage du sensible* is explicitly characterised as a 'system of self-evident facts of sense perception which discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it' (PA: 12). Alternatively, in *The Philosopher and His Poor*, the cutting up [*découpage*] of the perceptual world that anticipates, through its sensible evidence, the distribution [*partage*] of shares and social parties' (PP: 225). Finally, in *Disagreement*, 'there is always a partition of the perceptible [*le partage du sensible*], a configuration that determines the way in which the different parties have a part in the community' (DA: 125). Each of these tentative definitions insists that *le partage du sensible* exists structurally *a priori* of either the politics or political subjects produced therein.

2) Rancière's 'mature' work focuses mainly on the imaginary, as the epistemic field wherein politics is constituted. He describes the *Les Révoltes logiques* project as exposing 'indistinct barriers, at which shifts in the relationship of words to the 'real' that they represent define fragile productions of meaning and moveable plays of identification' (STP: 14). This shift of representation and real was at the core question of the floor-layer Gauny's counter-hegemonic attempt to 'establish, in the intervals of servitude, the new time of liberation' (PN: 67). Like the other dissensual subjectivities in *Proletarian Nights* and *Les Révoltes logiques*, the central issue for Gauny was not seizing the means of production, nor taking self-gratification 'over the beautiful work that nostalgics pine after' (Battista 2017: 23). Instead, the question was how to 'live out his dream and its contradiction' (24). Rancière's work continues the work instigated by Althusser of renewing the study of ideology, as the imaginary relation to real conditions of production. In focusing so much on the subjective imaginary, his historical work also reveals the 'archipolitical', 'parapolitical', 'metapolitical', or in other words, ideological, character of much political philosophy.

3) Rancière argues clearly throughout *Disagreement* that 'politics' is firstly and foremostly a struggle to be recognised as a speaking subject, within *le partage du sensible* (DA: 16-19). As Chambers (2013: 95) argues, in Rancière's reading '*logos* is not merely the possession of the political animal. The sign of the *logos* makes politics possible'. The political subject which is formed in 'disagreement', as the impossible *sans-part*, presupposes the existence of a structural *partage* within which that 'disagreement' is made visible. The difference between Althusser's and Rancière's accounts resides in the latter's focus on heterological disidentification rather than recognition with the process of interpellation.

4) Rancière's account of *subjectivation* describes a process of becoming-political as a 'mode of expression that undoes the perceptible divisions of the police order by implementing a basically heterogeneous assumption, that of a part that has no part' (DA: 30). In *On the Shores of Politics*, Rancière insists politics can only occur by 'effacing the image of the centre and the imaginary tensions which bear upon it or radiate from it' (SP: 15). Later in the same volume, he outlines at length the centrality of the 'use of words and

the use of forms' within emancipatory politics (45-58). *The Flesh of Words*, *Mute Speech*, *The Names of History*, and *The Politics of Literature* all outline the anarchic political potential of 'literarity', the conceptual elaboration of what *Disagreement* states directly, 'the supreme political destiny of man is attested by a sign: the possession of logos, that is, of speech, which expresses' (DA: 2). All of these suggest 'politics' as the effectivity of an 'ideological practice' reworking extant signs and representations within an existing structure or sign system.

4.4: Aesthetic Practice.

Le partage du sensible could then be regarded as the ossification and 'polemical distribution of modes of being and 'occupations'' (PA: 42) yet at the same time it is also the 'space of possibilities' for the disruption of that order (Ibid.). It therefore represents the ideological field which frames the 'practices' of 'police' and 'politics'. 'Politics' is the force that 'shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a place's destination. It makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise' (DA: 30). The 'political' is the explicit rejection and disruption of the economic causality between social roles and subjectivities (33), through the articulation of impossible aberrant subjectivities hitherto unthinkable within the prevailing social *dispositif*. As such, 'politics' signifies the total 'reconfiguration of the field of experience' (35). This reconfiguration not only describes the effectivity of a 'practice' on its structure, but one which is equivalent to the Althusserian conception of 'ideological practice'. Finally, though it appears a disingenuous claim, given Rancière's disregard for dialectical materialist analysis, 'politics', as 'ideological practice', in no sense contradicts the Althusserian schema of ideology as 'material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of that subject' (169). Of course, Rancièrean thought works backwards through this chain, figuring the subjective as the locus of the political.

However, the key difference between the Althusserian and Rancièrean accounts is the latter's absolute insistence on heterology as the becoming-visible of 'politics'. Whereas Althusserian 'interpellation' is achieved by the absolute (mis)recognition between subject and Subject (Althusser 1971: 180), 'politics' only occurs by forcing apart the 'naturalised' bond between subject-Subject and generating the impossible image of the Subject-Subject or subject-subject heteron (Davis 2010: 87). Whereas Althusser's 'interpellation' insists that we cannot 'fail to recognise' ourselves in the subject-Subject formation (Althusser 1971: 172), thus silencing or repressing dissensus, Rancièrean *subjectivation* screams the voice of

the heteron in the face of the police order (Davis 2010: 86). As discussed, Rancière uses the figure of the 'theatocratic', emphasised in the secondary commentary (Hallward 2006; Davis 2010: 85-6), to underline the visual or spectacular core of 'politics'. This focus on the making visible of the egalitarian claim of the *sans-part* means that 'politics' has an inescapably aesthetic character. However, as Rancière insists, to state this is not simply to insist that politics '*must* take on an aesthetic dimension' nor that it must 'be added as a supplementary ornament [but] that it is there in every sense as an immanent given' (TBD: 1). Because Rancière argues that aesthetics is an immanent given of both knowledge and 'politics', and because this thesis has argued that Rancière's process of political subjectivation essentially describes an 'ideological practice', the contention here is that Rancière describes a Neo-Althusserian 'practice', supplementing 'economic practice', but collapsing 'ideological practice', 'political practice', and 'theoretical practice'. Therefore, this thesis forwards the Neo-Althusserianism label 'aesthetic practice' to describe it.

The immanence of aesthetics to both knowledge and 'politics' rests on Rancière's reading of Kantian aesthetics, all of which in turn will allow him to develop a rereading of aesthetics, or 'counter-history of 'artistic modernity' (AIS: xiii). However, though his case studies are obviously historical, it is not aesthetics qua academic study of art which interests Rancière, which for him is always already 'police'. Instead, he focuses on the disruptive duality of aesthetic thought, drawn mainly from a reading of Kant's third critique, which has parallels to the heteronomous effectivity of 'politics' which this thesis is calling 'aesthetic practice'. Just as the process of commodity fetishism in Rancière's early analyses reveals a duality that cannot be reconciled without an improved cognitive mode of scientific critique, the aporia opened up by aesthetic thought renders a similarly irreconcilable duality visible, which Rancière will call an 'aesthetics of knowledge'. The gambit of this thesis is that this 'aesthetics of knowledge' (TBD: 1) is the epistemological effect of 'aesthetic practice'.

As suggested, Rancière's aesthetic theory is developed from a reading of Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgement* (2000 [1790/93]), the final work in his series of three critiques. Reductively put, the first critique focused on knowledge, metaphysics, or the limits

thereof, the second critique on ethics, and the third critique on aesthetics. Put another way still, the first critique could be said to mount an epistemological investigation of theoretical knowledge, the second an epistemology of practical knowledge, and the third representing an attempt to synthesise the two preceding critiques. Because of its focus on aesthetics, the third critique has proved to be the most influential in the fields of visual arts practice. In particular, its controversial call for the necessity of disinterestedness as a precondition for judgements concerning the beautiful found particular currency among interpreters, and to a lesser extent practitioners, of twentieth century abstract art. Kant's third critique also provided the catalyst for an entire canon of aesthetic theory, developed by German Idealist thinkers such as Friedrich Schiller (1795 [2004]), and most influentially Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1975 [1835)].

That the third critique was successful, or even resolved, enough to provide a sound philosophical basis for the subsequent development of this theoretical canon is far from universally agreed. More so, the levels to which the lessons concerning the troubling disconnect between the faculties of theoretical and practical knowledge suggested in Kant's work were recognised or acknowledged by these subsequent thinkers is open to question. More accurately, what one finds alarmingly in Kant's third critique is an inability to completely synthesise pure and practical reason, via the category of the aesthetic, and what one finds subsequently, in the work of the thinkers who immediately follow is a revisionist attempt to claim the aesthetic as just such a synthesising force, ignoring the danger and complexity of Kant's critique. Rancière's interest in Kantian aesthetics then focuses directly on its dangerously aporetic nature and, as such, must be considered alongside a relatively recent deconstructive tradition of continental aesthetics, typified by the work of Paul de Man (1996) who seeks to utilise this immanent instability within aesthetics as a weapon to reveal its wider canon as foundationless or ideological.

Kant's refers specifically to the ancient etymological roots of 'aesthetics', firstly from *aisthanomai*, and then *aisthetikos,* meaning that which is received or cognised through sense perception. These connotations were shared by the ancient Greek philosophers and

are invoked by Kant at the start of the first critique to set up a clear critical distinction between the 'science of the rules of sensibility in general', which Kant calls aesthetics, and 'the science of the rules of understanding in general' (1998: 194), which Kant calls logic. This rigorous critical distinction between the sensible and intelligible is famous reinforced throughout the architectonics of the first critique, right from the beginning. The critique opens with a defence of the possibility of *a priori* intuitions, called the 'transcendental aesthetic', followed immediately by an investigation into the possibility and character of *a priori* concepts. This critical distinction serves two important functions. Firstly, as methodology, it seeks to outline a critical response to the scepticism of Hume and empiricism on the one hand, and the rationalist metaphysics of Leibniz and Wolff on the other. As such, Kant's philosophy explores a critical third way that attempts to synthesise the opposing stances of the parties above. It also attempts to do this without diluting the scientific method or value of either side of the argument. Kant:

> It is just as necessary to make the mind's concepts sensible (i.e., to add an object to them in intuition) as it is to make its intuitions understandable (i.e., to bring them under concepts). Further, these two faculties or capacities cannot exchange their functions. The understanding is not capable of intuiting anything and the senses are not capable of thinking anything. Only from their unification can cognition arise. But on this account one must not mix up their roles, rather one has great cause to separate them carefully from each other and distinguish them. Hence we distinguish the science of the rules of sensibility in general, i.e., aesthetic, from the science of the rules of the understanding in general, i.e., logic (Kant a51-21; 1998: 194).

The critical synthesis achieved by Kant then is on the back of a rigorous critical and scientific separation of the sensibility and the understanding, which is then used as the basis for a proof that these separate faculties of knowledge work at all times independently. The damning verdict that Kant proclaims on aesthetics as a discipline is partly due to the way its chief exponents attempted a synthesis which blurred the two sides of this dyad. Aesthetics, from which Kant is keen to distinguish his project, was therefore not invented by Kant; neither was he its chief proponent. The discipline's proper name was in fact cemented by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, with the publication of his *Aesthetica* in 1750. The project of Aesthetics, as a sub-discipline of philosophy proper, emerged out of a European

enlightenment tradition, which encompassed philosophy but also already established theories of taste, beauty, and genius, and the newly emergent classificatory system of *Les Beaux-Arts*. In short, Aesthetics was simultaneously a systematic investigation of the possibility of knowledge (Kant) and an explanation and codification of a divergent system of the liberal arts. Baumgarten was explicitly aware of the dual nature of aesthetic investigation, using the term 'confusion' to describe the attempt to mediate or reconcile between the rational and generalisable and the sensible and particular. 'Confusion' would be a pejorative for Kant, but for Baumgarten it celebrates a synthesis between the art historical and philosophical which cannot unproblematically be found in Kant.

As Jacques Rancière highlights, the 'confused' nature of the discipline of aesthetics has come in for much criticism over the last two centuries (AD: 1-15), not least from Kant himself. These contestations have come from sources internal to philosophy itself, from both the analytic and continental traditions, and externally, from sociology, the social history of art, and the position of artistic practice itself. The latter invariably positions aesthetic discourse as a kind of obfuscating discourse preventing immediate access to the singularity of the art object, or the event of art. The sociological critique, whether invested in art or not, attempts to materialise the so-called 'aesthetic experience' by highlighting a complex variety of economic, cultural, and socio-political factors mediating both the production and reception of art, thus making any claims to the 'disinterestedness' of aesthetic experience problematic, if not impossible.

The case for the aesthetic 'denial of the social' is most famously mounted within Bourdieu's *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984), albeit only in its postscript (1984: 484-500), after a voluminous range of primary sociological data on working class behavioural patterns and cultural attitudes 'having produced the truth of the taste against which, by an immense repression, the whole of legitimate aesthetics has been constructed' (485). Here the figure of Kant is taken uncritically as representative of the entire aesthetic tradition, and the 'Vulgar Critique' is opposed to the 'Pure Critique'.

Predictably, it is Kant's concept of the 'disinterestedness' of aesthetic experience that is singled out for particular attention and held as a metonym for the malaise of the canon of philosophical aesthetics generally. Bourdieu argues that the entire canon of aesthetics is figured around a valorisation of difficult, demanding, complex, or simply mystified experience (Berger 1972: 12-16) legitimised through a false and exaggerated caricature of everyday experience as vulgar, facile, sugary and so forth (Bourdieu 1984: 485-6). Such a distinction has a recognisable class basis. In contradistinction, the sophistication of high culture is equated with the superiority of bourgeois culture, and by inference the bourgeois classes. Thus figured, aesthetics becomes the discourse which naturalises bourgeois hegemony by valorising its culture as the modern extension of the classical world, whilst disguising class contempt for the working class as aesthetic judgements. A similarly Bourdieusian critique is mounted by Eagleton's *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990), where Kant's seemingly paradoxical and monstrous theoretical inventions, such as 'subjective universality' and 'concepts without categories', are held as symptomatic of an underlying problematic which attempts to disguise and repress class bias whilst universalising it in theory. From this position, a second argument is developed which insists that the very possibility of 'disinterested' experience, aesthetic or otherwise, could only possibly be available to those bourgeois classes who can indulge themselves in the pretence of 'adopting the position of universal thought and disinterested taste' (TBD: 2). 'Disinterestedness', in other words, is the privilege of those who are both free from the constraints of labour and the financial and material anxieties caused by a precarious existence.

The Bourdieusian critique of 'disinterestedness' centres on Kant's example of the contemplation of a palace at the beginning of the third critique (§2, 5: 205; 2000: 90-1). For Kant, the 'disinterested' judgement claims a universality precisely because it is freed from any subjective agenda, be that personal or political, which in their partiality always link judgement to the 'faculty of desire' (90). Instead, 'one must be entirely indifferent in this respect to play the arbiter in matters of taste' (91). For Bourdieu, this claim to indifference or ignorance is the illusion of the petit-bourgeois philosopher. More so, this illusion is a reflex of

the relative social freedom of the bourgeois classes in capitalist society, who neither own said palace nor are its makers. The figure of the *flâneur*, 'botanising on the asphalt' (Benjamin 2002: 372), freed from the constraints of either labour or statesmanship is the exemplary figure of this class consciousness. However, for Rancière, this 'dimension of ignorance' connoted by the Kantian aesthetic suggests an aporia which can be weaponised into a critical conception of interstitial practice which 'divides the idea and practice of knowledge themselves' (TBD: 1).

Kantian aesthetics situates judgements of beauty in a liminal space in between knowledge and desire, as art does not operate under any concept, nor is governed by the partiality of interest. As such, aesthetic judgement effects a 'double negation' which, for Rancière, reveals a *dispositif* regulating at least two possible orders of knowledge, whilst suggesting the possibility of thinking within their interstices or suspending them completely. 'Disinterestedness', or the 'will to ignorance' (TBD: 2), cannot simply be dismissed as an structure-effect of one's class position, but must be considered epistemologically as a mode of critical cognition which challenges the prevailing *partage du sensible*. In contradistinction, Bourdieu's sociologism affirms it by insisting that one's worldview is precisely determined by one's position within the social order. Simultaneously, this sociologism also implies that there is a 'true' order of knowledge, revealed by the science of sociological method, and a 'false' or illusory order of knowledge, afflicting its objects of study. As such, there is little distance between the Althusserian distinction between science / ideology and the Bourdieusian critique of aesthetic ideology. As 'metapolitics', both police as much as emancipate.

The aesthetic experience deconstructs the strict binary logic of this *dispositif* by revealing both its chiasmic internal structure and its systematic, cyclical reproduction of its component orders of interdependent knowledges and ignorances. Rancière:

> There is not one knowledge but two and that each knowledge [*savoir*] is accompanied by a certain ignorance, and therefore that there is also a knowledge [*savoir*] which represses and an ignorance which liberates. If builders are oppressed, it is not because they ignore their exploitation put in the service of the inhabitants of the palace. On the contrary, it is because they cannot ignore it, because their condition imposes on them the need to create another body and another way of

> seeing than that which oppresses them, because what is oppressive prevents them from seeing in the palace something other than the product of the labour invested and the idleness appropriated from this labour. In other words, a knowledge [*savoir*] is always double: it is an assemblage of knowledges [*connaissance*] and it is also an organised distribution [*partage*] of positions (TBD: 3).

This *dispositif* of knowledges and organisation of positions is *le partage du sensible*, which determines not only what one can know, and what is proper to know, but also ossifies a strict correlation between knowledge and social position. Workers' knowledge is supposed to be confined to the haptic pleasures associated with manual and technical labour; they are presumed ignorant of abstract aesthetic pleasure precisely because of their 'interest'. This correlative distribution of 'occupations' and 'aptitudes' is policed as much by the so-called 'science' of sociology as it is by bourgeois ideology.

For Rancière, this equation of 'occupation' and 'aptitude' is not simply the result of sociologist 'metapolitics'. It also contains the remnants of a Platonic 'archipolitics' which insists that the artisans, with iron souls, have different aptitudes from the philosopher-kings, with souls of gold. Furthermore, by strictly determining the limits of the thinkable according to vocation, this 'archipolitical' *partage* becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy keeping everybody in their proper place. In *The Republic*, Socrates concedes that his foundation myth will have dubious credibility initially, but will become more convincing as the generations live through and reproduce it (Plato 415d; 1974: 182). In a similar way, within the contemporary 'distribution of the sensible' it is not necessary for everyone to believe that occupation accords to aptitude, but simply 'enough for them to act on an everyday basis as if this were the case' (TBD: 5).

The equation of social roles and aptitudes is also confirmed in the interpellative act of (mis)recognition. However, Rancière's work develops the Althusserian position in that it highlights the extent to which subjectivity is constituted negatively in the act of interpellation. For him, 'interpellation' not only involves (mis)recognition but the rejection, even wilful ignorance, of all other possible subjectivities. Proletarian subjectivities are constituted largely by the denial of all discourses outside of the proletarian sphere and validated through the

othering of those discourses as bourgeois ideology. Accordingly, Rancière describes sociology as ‘a war machine invented in the age of the aesthetic’ (TBD: 7). Bourdieu employs the ‘war machine’ for the ‘metapolitical’ mission of exposing aesthetics as bourgeois ideology. To accomplish this task, sociology presupposes a certain ‘commitment’, regarding politics and socio-scientific method. This oppositional, but still ideological, model of scientificity insists that ‘what science knows is precisely what its objects do not’ (9). As Althusser argues, subjects are always already ideological subjects. Rancière’s conclusion insists that this applies equally to ‘scientific’ subjectivities.

For Rancière, recognition of the Kantian duality of aesthetic experience is a conduit to both the disruption and revelation of this chiasmic ideological structure of knowledge and ignorance. The epiphany which follows reveals 1) alternate and legitimate are possible and available; 2) though coexistent and viable, these alternatives are rendered invalid by *le partage du sensible*; 3) recognition of 1) and 2) reveals the absolute contingency of the prevailing social order and its attendant subjectivities. When constituted within dominant hegemonic discourse, ‘ideological practice’ can only ever generate police order subjectivities which act as barriers to emancipation. Emancipation requires subjectivities which not only oppose the dominant ideology, but refuse all its categorisations and, as such, redistribute the entire epistemic field. As Rancière argues, oppression doesn’t begin from the subjective ignorance of exploitation. It precedes this, originating in a *partage* which denies the very possibility of thinking in any other way than the police order distribution of roles and lots. Exploited subjects are not simply ignorant of their oppression, they cannot ignore it, and as such ‘need to create another body and another way of seeing than that which oppresses them’ (TBD: 3).

Given that aesthetic experience generates this ‘heterological disidentification’, this thesis argues for the legitimacy of ‘aesthetic practice’ as a significant extension, or clarification, to the Althusserian notion of ‘ideological practice’, which reinterprets the act of interpellation into a dynamic form of political ‘disagreement’, contra dominant-hegemonic ideology. Rancièrean *subjectivation* involves an active refusal of the hegemonic subject-

Subject formation, and a radical demonstration of the equality of all knowledges and all subjectivities. As such, 'aesthetic practice' is a vehicle of dissensual agency for the *sans-part*, and the beginning of politics proper against the police order. The dissensual subjectivities resulting from this practice index a transformation of the limits of the thinkable. Unlike Althusserian 'ideological practice', this implies a much greater sense of political agency on behalf of the subject, who is not always already in the yoke of ideology but instead reworks and redefines it at the point of interpellation. The tragic other to this form of emancipatory politics is the subject of proletarian ideology, traditionally understood. Believing themselves to be politicised, those subjects are constrained by their subjectivity in the very act of recognition because it prescribes, indeed insists on, a preordained worldview and its limits. This process of subjectification fundamentally mistakes policing for politics.

Rancière's worker-poets refused this strict correlation between social position and knowledge. For Rancière, this moment of deliberate disidentification is equivalent to the will to ignorance implied by aesthetic thought. Instead of sociologism, which declares inequality to be entrenched and determinant, 'what the philosopher declares is that inequality is an artifice, a story which is imposed' (TBD: 8). Whilst this declaration might appear scandalously close to idealism or bourgeois ideology to the sociologist, it also suggests that the imposition of programmatic 'metapolitics', even when employed for ostensibly democratic or emancipatory ends, function as 'police' more than 'politics'. Furthermore, it also begins to suggest that the temporal logic of the factory has an uncomfortable resemblance to the world view of the sociologist. By insisting on a 'science of man in time', which is always an 'organised distribution of time', sociological thought 'opposes the material reality of long cycles of life to the agitations which disturb the surface'. In contradistinction, as part of his wider philosophical project, Rancière's archival work uncovers singular instances of 'aesthetic practice' which reject the preordained *partage du sensible* in favour of the emancipatory potential of the 'suspended time of aesthetic experience' (Ibid.).

For Rancière, 'disciplinary thought', be it sociological or philosophical, always involves the drawing of boundaries between how and what can be known - 'it is first the

constitution of this territory itself, and therefore the establishment of a certain distribution of the thinkable' (Ibid.). Against this, 'aesthetic practice' demonstrates the boundaries [*barrières*] of disciplinary thought as co-existent and in irreconcilable disagreement. However, by choosing disidentification over interpellation, it can suggest that the *barrières* separating sociology from philosophy are more contingent than dominant disciplinary narratives suggest, whilst countering such narratives with oppositional ones. For Rancière, 'to trace these boundaries [*barrières*] is to trace the question between those who have thought this question and those who have not [...] Only the language of stories can trace the boundary, forcing the aporia of the absence of final reason from the reasons of the disciplines' (TDB: 11). By willingly disidentifying from both one order of knowledge and *le partage du sensible* which fixes it in place, the 'possibility of an 'in-disciplinary thought' is raised which can traverse the expected *partage* of roles and aptitudes, as 'politics' and 'aesthetic practice'. This mode of 'in-disciplinary thought' doesn't discredit disciplinary knowledges, it simply reveals them as disciplinary, and renders their claims to absolute authority as foundationless.

However, at the same time as describing the condition of an 'indisciplinary' thought in motion, Rancière's work also highlights the extent to which 'aesthetics' is also the site of 'an historically determined concept which designates a specific regime of visibility and intelligibility of art' (TBD: 1). He argues that the history of artistic production can be broken down into three specific ideological regimes (PA: 20-30), each of which functioning as its own *partage du sensible*, determining what is knowable and understandable as art. Rancière's approach here is to suggest how these regimes *precede* the creation, interpretation, or social function of art, and in fact produce the singularity 'art' itself. From one regime to another, the meaning, aims, and the societal importance given to art change. Though these regimes appear historical or teleological, like the phases of Hegel's account of history, they are in fact trans-historic and often coterminous. They overdetermine each other in complex and contradictory ways within specific historical conjunctures.

The first of these 'regimes' is called the 'ethical regime of images' (PA: 20), which Rancière largely draws from the discussion of the arts in Plato's *Republic*. 'Art' in the singular sense does not exist under this regime, hence the more universal signifier 'images' connoting representational activity in its broadest sense. The 'ethical regime' determines the appropriateness, or inappropriateness, of art based on its alignment with the presumed ethos of society. In the case of Plato, this meant the fitness for purpose of images as representations of lofty Republican ideals. Art therefore primarily exists as a propaedeutic for ethical values and is either censored or celebrated accordingly. Cultural production declared to be merely imitative, or culturally, spiritually, and intellectually inferior (these are in fact synonymous) are strictly proscribed under this disciplinary regime. It is on this basis that Platonic thought rationalises the banishment of poets, whose products were damningly labelled as 'inferior products of inferior children' (Plato X 1974: 433).

The seeds of the second regime are contained in the first. The 'representative' or 'poetic' regime of art is governed by the principle of *mimesis*, the products of which are triply inferior, representations 'thrice removed from reality', according to Plato (424-5). This regime is where art becomes properly defined in the singular sense, recognisable as artistic production now according to its mimetic not ethical value. Yet, this is also the regime where 'art' becomes hierarchically sub-categorised and normative value systems appear for the regulation, assessment, and standardisation of artistic production (PA: 21-2). Here, the idea of the 'Fine Arts' emerge, in contradistinction to the applied or 'lesser' arts, but also the constitutive ideological field 'that organises these ways of doing, making, seeing, and judging' (22). The titular concept of representation then refers both to the regime's overarching principle of *mimesis*, and that regime's capacity to completely determine what is represented by artistic production.

Larry Shiner's *The Invention of Art* (2001) supports the argument that an ideological system for the regulation of 'Art', akin to Rancière's 'representative' regime, emerged more in tandem with the emergence of aesthetics as a subdiscipline of philosophy (130-53). Supporting Ranciere's claims (AIS: ix), Kristeller (1951/52) had already historically located

the emergence of a similarly singular and regimented idea of art to the mid-eighteenth century (1951: 496-7), alongside the now commonplace disciplinary *partage* of artistic production along the lines of the *Beaux-Arts* model. Going further than Rancière, Shiner argues that the valorisation of the 'Fine' or *Beaux-Arts* over the artisanal or applied arts, which becomes a defining mission of aesthetics, is a direct reflex of the development of the art market at the same time (2001: 99-130). Here, the decline in aristocratic patronage forces artists to the market to earn a living, whilst in an increasingly saturated market, it becomes necessary to distinguish the artistic production of 'genius' that can be sold for a premium. Within this marketisation, concepts such as 'originality', 'genius', 'individuality' emerge as specific pseudo-individualising sales pitches. Simultaneously, aesthetics provides the scholarly rigour to entrench these as philosophical concepts. Thus, a self-reproducing system of 'aesthetic ideology' emerges, which one can readily recognise as the target within the sociological critique of Terry Eagleton (1990) or Janet Wolff (1983).

As suggested, Rancière is not concerned with the chronological history of aesthetics, nor its categorisations. For example, the label 'modernity' is substituted in Rancière's schema for the 'aesthetic regime', which avoids the implicit historicism that 'masks the specificity of this regime of arts and the very meaning of the specificity of regimes of art' (PA: 24). Instead of tracing 'a simple line of transition between the old and the new, the representative and the non-representative' (Ibid.), the 'aesthetic regime' constitutes a perpetual, non-linear, and most importantly productive, re-evaluation of the artistic production of the previous regimes of art. Rancière:

> In the aesthetic regime, artistic phenomena are identified by their adherence to a specific regime of the sensible, which is extricated from its ordinary connections and is inhabited by a heterogeneous power, the power of a form of a thought that has become foreign to itself: a product identical with something not produced, knowledge transformed into non-knowledge, logos identical with pathos, the intention of the unintentional, etc. (PA: 23).

What is extracted through this process of re-evaluation is the singular idea of art itself, which is therefore not produced via a single discourse but by a new mode of cognition.

Thus Manet, at the *Salon des Refuses* in 1863, abandons perspectival depth to extricate art from its mimetic chains. Or, in the examples given by Rancière, Vico (1948: 269-95) discovers the 'true' Homer, Schiller locates the 'aesthetic state' in between the sensible and the rational (PA: 24), and, much later, the Surrealists identify the artist's unconscious in otherwise randomly produced collages and assemblages. Self-evidently, the central impetus driving the 'aesthetic regime of art' is not specifically located in any historic moment. This latter regime, as *partage du sensible*, is distinguished from the other two due to the destructive potential of the new mode of cognition it heralds. Whilst the 'ethical' and 'representative' regimes could be clearly considered ideological, the 'aesthetic regime' would seem to constitute an anarchic or radical mode of thought that works perpetually contra ideology. As Tanke argues, its anti-historicism 'cuts across the divisions that organise museum collections and shape the picture of twentieth-century art handed down in many art history textbooks and survey courses' (Tanke 2011: 71).

In fact, the 'aesthetic regime' must also be regarded as the generative site from which an epistemological critique of *le partage du sensible* can be mounted, in microcosm. Rancière uses the term *aisthesis* to simultaneously refer to the regime where 'we perceive very diverse things, whether in their techniques of production or their destination, as all belonging to art' (AIS: x). As proposed *aisthesis* is also the radical other to *mimesis*. Against aisthesis as regime, his book *Aisthesis* outlines fourteen 'instances' of artistic production which instigate 'transformations of the sensible fabric' and 'interpretive network that gives it meaning' (ix). Rancière terms these instances variously as 'transformations', 'events', and most regularly as 'scenes'. Rancière:

> The scene shows us thought busy weaving together perceptions, affects, names and ideas, constituting the sensible community that these links create, and the intellectual community that these links create, and the intellectual community that makes such weaving possible. The scene captures concepts at work, in their relation to the new objects they seek to appropriate, old objects that they try to reconsider, and the patterns they build or transform to this end. For thinking is always firstly thinking the thinkable - a thinking that modifies what is thinkable by welcoming what was unthinkable (Ibid.).

Explicitly, the act of work being described in the verbs ‘modify’, ‘appropriate’, ‘transform’, ‘create’, is a ‘practice’ in the Althusserian sense. Therefore, what Rancière describes as a ‘scene’, this thesis regards as ‘instances’ of ‘aesthetic practice’ whose raw materials are precisely the hegemonic norms represented by aesthetic ideology. ‘Aesthetic practice’, either as mode of cognition the singularity of art objects, outlines ‘ways of doing and making that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility’ (PA: 13).

In *Disagreement*, Rancière insists that ‘the autonomisation of aesthetics means first freeing up the norms of representation, and second, constituting a kind of community of sense experience that works on the world of assumption, of the *as if* that includes those who are not included’ (DA: 58). Freeing up ‘the norms of representation’ does not just imply the disruption of the normative codes and conventions governing artistic production. In its most expanded sense ‘norms of representation’ covers the entirety of signifying practice through which subjectivities are produced and communicated. The transformation or disruption of these normative modes is secondarily a call to community, or a process of *subjectivation* based on a speculative reimaging of the established social order. It is this speculative ‘as if’ that is the key to all Rancière’s thinking about *le partage du sensible*, *subjectivation*, and ideology, which in the final analysis are all inseparable. ‘Politics’ begins when the subject denies the preordained destiny determined by *le partage du sensible* and begins to act ‘as if’ an oppositional subjectivity were possible. For Rancière, ‘social revolution is the daughter of aesthetic revolution’. The final chapter of this thesis outlines four ‘scenes’ or ‘instances’ of ‘aesthetic practice’ which effect just such a revolutionary transformation within the sensible fabric of *L’École des Beaux-Arts*, the institutional scene of the reproduction of the ‘representative regime of art’, alongside countless layers of aesthetic ideology.

Fig. 7: Henri Cartier-Bresson (1968) *Paris. Rue de Vaugirard. 1968*. © Magnum Photos.

Fig. 8: Bruno Barbey (1968) *Paris. Médecine University. Political Posters. May 1968*. © Magnum Photos.

Chapter 5: The Politics of *L'Atelier populaire de l 'ex-École des Beaux-Arts.*

> The posters produced by the ATELIER POPULAIRE are weapons in the service of the struggle and are an inseparable part of it. Their rightful place is in the centers of conflict, that is to say, in the streets and on the walls of the factories. To use them for decorative purposes, to display them in bourgeois places of culture or to consider them as objects of aesthetic interest is to impair both their function and their effect. This is why the ATELIER POPULAIRE has always refused to put them on sale. Even to keep them as historical evidence of a certain stage in the struggle is a betrayal, for the struggle itself is of such primary importance that the position of an "outside" observer is a fiction which inevitably plays into the hands of the ruling class. That is why these works should not be taken as the final outcome of an experience, but as an inducement for finding, through contact with the masses, new levels of action, both on the cultural and the political plane (*L'Atelier populaire* in Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: n.p.).
>
> Consequently they gave the ordinary man not only a taste for breaking the laws of music but the arrogance to set himself up as a capable judge. The audiences, once silent, began to use their tongues; they claimed to know what was good and bad in music, and instead of a 'musical meritocracy', a sort of vicious 'theatrocracy' arose (Plato *Laws* 700-1; 1975: 154).

As suggested in the first chapter, the Sorbonne became arguably the pivotal site of symbolic and strategic interest for the March 22nd movement. Wary of the encroaching threat, the Sorbonne had closed its doors from May 4th. Gradually, the streets of the Latin Quarter were controlled by students, leading to the violent eruption of the infamous 'night of the barricades' (May 10th), as the CRS were called in to clear the area. Witnessing the violence of the barricades, Jean-Jacques Lebel, the Parisian correspondent to Tariq Ali's radical *Black Dwarf* magazine, drew equivalences to the Paris Commune of 1871 (Ali and Watkins 1998: 94-5). Most sources date the beginnings of the Sorbonne occupation to the morning of Monday 13th May, shortly following its reopening by its Rector, who presumably imagined a return to normality would follow the governmental concession to release all arrested students without charge. Instead, the impetus of a wave of high school occupations, and the million strong mass demonstration organised by the CGT and CFDT, acted as the catalyst for the call for the occupation of all French universities (Fraser 1988: 215). Very quickly after, the newly reopened Sorbonne was occupied by a crowd of 20-30,000 students

(Ali and Watkins 1998: 100), who occupy every room, covering its walls with graffiti, revolutionary posters, and banners, all of which proclaimed the death of the Sorbonne and its rebirth as the 'Autonomous People's University' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 78). In another report for *Black Dwarf*, Clive Godwin labelled it 'The Sorbonne Soviet' and quoted a firebrand speech from a young *révolutionnaire* which declared that 'this revolution is for the red flag of socialism and the worker's state, and for the black flag of anarchy and the individual' (Goodwin 1968: 4). To add to the spectacle, a large piano was dragged into the university's main quadrangle and the occupation was soundtracked to a live jazz score.

Within twenty-four hours of this initial occupation, a decision was taken to occupy the historic art school of the Sorbonne, *L'École de Beaux-Arts*, and use its print rooms to rationalise and accelerate the production of propaganda leaflets and posters, which already covered the walls of the university. The release of a manifesto statement on May 14th publicised the formation of *L'Atelier populaire*, whilst giving an ideological identity to the occupied art school, its aesthetic outputs, and its model of democratic co-production. By the 15th, organised committees for the design and distribution of this agitprop had been formed. Inspired by these images of revolution, a wildcat strike at the Nantes *Sud-Aviation* factory occurred on May 14th, immediately followed by the occupation of the Renault factory at Cléon by its workers. Similarly, red and black flags flew over the Doric columns at the entrance to the historic and symbolic Odéon theatre, now hosting a sister occupation of 2,500-3,000 students (Kugelberg and Vermès 2001: 78). Banners proclaiming solidarity between students and workers flew above a notice proclaiming the closure of 'l'ex-Théatre de France' as imagination took power [*l'imagination au pouvoir*] (Lewino and Schnapp 2018). By the 16th May, wildcat strikes were erupting across France and significant solidarity actions had taken place at 'Flins, Le Mans, and the 30,000 strong Renault-Boulogne-Billancourt factory' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 79).

In *Declaration* (2012: n.p.) Hardt and Negri suggest that 'an occupation is a kind of happening, a performance piece that generates political affects'. These affects are spatial, physical, and ideological. As a self-published volume this work embodies at least one of

those affects, relevant to this thesis, namely the visible and politicised display of autonomy. Beyond this, for Hardt and Negri, the prevalence of 'occupation' as the primary political strategy for the twenty-first century global resistance movements is explained as a result of its effectiveness at communicating an essential political truth - that 'the class and the bases of political action are formed not primarily through the circulation of information or even ideas but rather through the construction of political affects, which requires a physical proximity' (Ibid.). For them, 'nothing can replace the being together of bodies and the corporeal communication that is the basis of collective political intelligence and action', and this is therefore the essential component for building the commons, superseding even the internet.

This focus on the bodily core of the political distinguishes them sharply from the Rancièrean politics of equality and subjectivation, let alone the Althusserian 'class struggle in theory', or the economisations of 'vulgar' Marxisms. Their more abstracted and vague ideas of the commons must also be distinguished from the Rancièrean *dēmos*. However, this is not to imply that these approaches are mutually exclusive and, indeed, it is the contention that the occupations of the buildings of the Sorbonne, as 'politics', 'event', or 'happening' are where these divergent theoretical and political approaches were made visible in their heterogeneity. Perhaps the signifier 'happening' has unfortunately retro connotations today, invoking frivolity or perhaps what Adorno infamously dismissed as the 'pseudo-activity' of student activists in '68 (Adorno 1988: 289-93).

However, making the association between artistic and political practice, through the figure of the 'happening', draws attention to the aesthetic affects of political struggle; an ambition shared with this thesis. Though the argument below focuses on 'occupations' and not 'happenings' every attempt will be made to underline their bodily aspects, especially in regard to how they affect the communal aggregation and disaggregation of bodies and aptitudes within *le partage du sensible*. Via Bakhtin's (1984) concept of the 'carnivalesque' and 'grotesque realism' the following readings of 'aesthetic practice' will hopefully suggest a consistency between Hardt and Negri and Rancière. Critiquing Paul de Man's (1996) conception of 'aesthetic ideology', which 'involves a phenomenalist reduction of the linguistic

to the sensuously empirical', Eagleton (1990: 10) suggests the cost of purely linguistic or semiological politics is a denial of the bodily, and in turn 'the sensuous, creaturely aspects of human existence, [or simply] pleasure'. He suggests Bakhtin as the critic with which de Man would be the least enamoured. The aim, following this warning, is to avoid the phenomenalist reduction of these occupations, and whilst emphasising their Rancièrean 'literarity', also account for the ways reordered the physical, sensory, spatial, psychological, and relational aspects of their worlds.

Slightly differently, but again not incompatibly, Gerald Raunig has recently discussed recent occupations within both contemporary universities and the artworld in terms of the concept of 'modulation', which extends upon Deleuze and Guattari's notion of 'deterritorialisation' and 'reterritorialisation' (1988: 3-21). For Raunig (2013: 29), the occupation of a social space modulates between 'a striating, standardizing, modularizing process and at the same time a permanent movement of remodelling, modulating, re-forming and de-forming the self'. In the contemporary neoliberal academy, the 'striated space' to which Raunig refers is the space of disciplinary divisions and subdivisions, modular curricular and assessments, performance metrics, institutional league tables, and so forth, all of which supplement the fixity of subjectivities and expected behaviours within its institutional frame. The activist Edu-Factory Collective, with which Raunig is associated, have similarly described the above as the 'system of measure' to underline its disciplinary character, which amongst other functions, economises all cultural and educational functions to the accountancy logic of the modern business firm (Brown 2015: 17), in a globalised market, to which more or less all contemporary universities now conform. University occupations, as politics, work to both expose these striations and proceed towards smoothing them into nomadic spaces of becoming. Defined thus, the university 'in occupation' embodies what Deleuze and Guattari call the 'war-machine' (2010) in-becoming.

As they explicitly highlight, the 'war-machine' is absolutely other to the militarised RSAs and the striated hierarchies of their institutions. The military connotations of its name are therefore misleading. Conceptually, physically, and psychologically, RSAs exist in

regulated, static, and immutable space, whereas the space of 'war-machines' is 'vortical', heterogeneous, unregulated, and perpetually in-flux (20-21). It defines itself in opposition to the state-form, whose disciplinary structures it counters with a 'fundamental indiscipline' (13-14), by which it can only ever be regarded as incomprehensible monstrosity, or 'a pure form of exteriority' (6). Deleuze and Guattari:

> The war machine is seen to be of another species, of another nature, of another origin. One would have to say that it is located between the two heads of the State, between the two articulations, and that it is necessary in order to pass from one to the other. But "between" the two, in that instant, even ephemeral, if only a flash, it proclaims its own irreducibility (7).

Concerned with the consolidation and maintenance of power, the state does not, and cannot, have a 'war-machine' of its own. In fact, the 'war-machine', as irreducible exteriority, can only exist in the deconstruction and metamorphoses of regulated and striated state spaces or institutions (16). The examples Deleuze and Guattari offer of the 'war-machine' are numerous, such as the roaming, nomadic, warrior-tribes, contrasted with the static bases and hierarchised battalions of a state infantry, or simply the anarchic reversals, and absolute equality at a component level, of the game of *Go*, compared with the fixed rules, movements, and hierarchies of *Chess*. Metaphorically, the 'war-machine' strives to become the storm stirring the infinitely open, and tempestuous ocean which state sponsored naval armadas try in vain to control. If Althusser and the Edu-Factory Collective are correct that the contemporary university or 'knowledge factory' (Caffentzis and Federici 2007) is mere ISA, then the occupation and subsequent metamorphoses of these spaces into 'war-machines' becomes a political act. Chaos, incomprehensibility, flux, becoming, and the issuing of apparently impossible demands all become the affective evidence that such politics is having an impact.

Self-evidently, the striations of the pedagogic space of the 60s French academy differed greatly from those of European HE today. The homogenising forces of globalisation, alongside standardising policy such as the Bologna Process (1999) and Europe-wide league

tables have caused a narrowing of national and cultural differences among universities. Most, if not all, have followed the trajectory outlined in Bill Readings much discussed critique of *The University in Ruins* (1996), from Humboldtian 'university of culture', governed by a cultural mission or *Bildung*, to the techno-bureaucratic 'university of excellence', run according to quantifying performance management metrics and the empty managerial rhetoric of 'value for money'. However, as Picard (2012: 156-69) points out, the French university system has a different history to the Humboldtian university, which is generally thought to provide the model which most modern research universities have followed. Instead of autonomous institutions, governed by *Lehrfreiheit* (freedom to teach what one chooses) and *Lernfreiheit* (freedom to study what one chooses), the French university has always operated to a radically centralised model. Ever since their Napoleonic inauguration in 1803, following the revolutionary death of the universities which represented the *ancien régime* in 1793, the universities have been subject to state-politics, and part of a totalising nationalising system which included primary and high school education. Their guiding principle is republican *égalité* [equality] and *laïcité* [secularism] not *Bildung* or *Lehrfreiheit*. In fact, the notion of 'academic freedom became almost obsolete' (158) within these early modern universities, and institutional dissent was met with governmental censure or foreclosure. Given that all institutions are ostensibly equal, academics associated primarily with their discipline rather than their university. The principle of *laïcité* also had the effect of creating an *exception française* which distinguished sharply between intellectual education, the business of universities, and socio-cultural or moral education, the preserve of families and governments (Pepin 1998; Chadwick 1997: 47-59). This model remained more or less consistent throughout the twentieth century.

Two significant revolutionary policy events altered the shape of the contemporary French university. Firstly, the eruption of '68, which as chapter one argued was partly the consequence of a centre / periphery dynamic created by the hasty expansion of historic city universities to the suburbs. This moment of rupture led to the formation of the new universities, which diversified the HE system pedagogically and geographically, many of

them being established in towns which had no previous history of university provision. As well as rewriting the French HE landscape, the Faure Act (1968) also broke up the historic universities, seeing the Sorbonne split up into thirteen separate universities, *Paris VIII* being the designated space for 'radical thought'. Secondly, the neoliberal reforms contained in the 'University Freedom and Responsibility Act' (2007) (Picard 2012: 161), which granted universities more autonomy, and opened the institutions to a new managerialism, typical of Readings' 'university of excellence' model. As Picard suggests, the presumption of equality ingrained in the ideology of French universities raises interesting questions concerning their historiography. Logically, this should be discussed in the singular rather than plural, if the foundational premise of equality is correct (157). Such universalising ideology however masks over the institutional inequalities that were becoming unavoidably apparent by the 1960s. If the history of the French university then is marked by revolution (1793, 1968, 2007), perhaps Cohn-Bendit's defence after arrest for riot ('violent revolt is in the French culture') (Kurlansky 2004: 226), partly in defence of a certain idea of the university, perhaps should not be surprising.

As well as the apparent disconnect between the ideology of *égalité* and its institutional realities, or the centre / periphery tensions between the Sorbonne and Nanterre, other striations governing the space of the *University of Paris* were noticeable in 1968, many of which were recognised by Rancière in *Althusser's Lesson*. Firstly, the political schism between the Maoist UJC-ML and the UEC, itself riven between Stalinist, Maoist, and Trotskyist elements. As discussed previously, Althusserian theoreticism became positioned as the mediator between these sectarian student disputes, the PCF, and even the idea of the university itself (AL: 23). Even before '68, theoreticism had introduced a further class division into the university conjuncture following Althusser's self-serving invention of the 'technical division of labour' (Althusser 2011: 11; AL: 11, 137-44), which defended the technical necessity of the university and its professorial class, by implication even post-revolution (AL: 190n20). The '*explication de texte*' is the performative pedagogy of this 'technical division of labour'.

Fig. 9: Anon., (n.d.) *Workers Outside The Lip Watch Factory*. *Autonomies.org* [internet] <https://autonomies.org/2018/04/the-winds-of-may-68-in-france-the-lip-factory-takeover/> [Accessed 1/9/2019].

Fig. 10: Bruno Barbey, (1968) *Strike At The Renault Plant. 1968.* © Magnum Photos.

Such divisions were compounded by the elite status of the students of the *Cercle d'Ulm*, who after securing university places following an infamously exacting selection process (181), felt themselves superior enough to mock the politics of both UEC and UEF (42), opening a theoretical division between spontaneous and rational revolt. A proposal was floated to create a separatist branch of the Leftist *Syndicat national de l'enseignement (supérieure)*, specific to the professors and students of the ENS (178). Of course, the *Cercle d'Ulm* did not extend to *L'École Nationale des Arts Décoratifs*, neighbour of the ENS and, alongside the *Beaux-Arts*, base for *L'Atelier Populaire*, meaning even the *Rue d'Ulm* itself was hierarchised. Perhaps due to an existing *partage du sensible*, the activity of *L'École Nationale des Arts Décoratifs* remains largely ignored in the published literature, collapsed into *Les Beaux-Arts*, in a similar rhetorical elision to how applied art and design subjects generally get hidden beneath the supposedly inclusive signifier 'art' in 'art school'.

Internecine disputes between rival bureaucracies also constantly threatened to undercut the student movement. Knabb (1997) maintains that the Situationists played an active role in the early days of the Sorbonne Occupation Committee only to leave to 'continue their agitation independently' following bureaucratic inertia and sectarian squabbling. Regarding the class divisions between worker and student, Glucksmann maintains that 'very effective barriers [were] raised wherever possible by the PCF and the CGT' (Posner 1970: 190). All these divisions, which Deleuze and Guattari would conceive of as striations, could equally be figured as the work of the police order within *le partage du sensible*.

Writing specifically about these various factory and university occupations, Kristen Ross draws attention to the extent to which they draw attention to the prevailing relations of production, class divisions, and their inversions (2002b: 71). For example, the occupation of a factory, and the expulsion of its director, does not simply announce the seizure of the means of production by the workers. It also signifies an immense transferral of power from boss class to worker which has significance beyond mere productivity. Part of the force of this comes from the visible demonstration that workers have capacities beyond what their

allotted position within *le partage du sensible* would allow them, from the assumption of responsibility for basic services, or administration, through to strategic planning and management.

The example of the LIP watch factory in Besançon, France is a favourite of Rancière's (AL: xx). Threatened with redundancy on 17th April 1973, over 1,600 workers decided instead to cast out the management and run the factory as a cooperative, under the rousing slogan *"C'est possible! On fabrique, on vend, on se paie!"* [It's possible! We make, we sell, we pay ourselves!] (Fig. 9). This occupation survived as an experiment in workers' self-management, albeit perhaps without the revolutionary fervour of the early months, until foreclosure in 1976. Besançon encapsulated the dialectic between 'politics' and 'police' (Ibid.). For Rancière, the 'police' reality-principle was not just the eventual demise of the LIP occupation but the metapolitical scepticism about its merits from the authoritarian Left.

Nevertheless, the *Beaux-Arts* occupation was as productive as LIP, with over 400 original images produced during its short life span. In one sense then, *L'Atelier populaire* represents the transformation of *Les Beaux-Arts* into something akin to a factory production line for revolutionary agitprop, whose productivity puts Fordist and Taylorist factories, let alone commercial design studios, or the *grandes-écoles* to shame. Of course, to measure the successes or failures of any occupation by productivity alone is simply to internalise the logic of the boss class. However, one of the contentions of this thesis is that the productivity of the *Beaux-Arts* occupation is a result of a spontaneous pedagogic mode, born out of non-hierarchical collective production, akin to what is called 'militant co-research' [*conricerca*], which stands against the cynical or scientific model of increased productivity through the division of labour.

The specific nature of the collaborative model which transformed the *Beaux-Arts* into *L'Atelier populaire* will be dealt with below. However, before that reading it is necessary to underline the inescapably belligerent, as well as productive, character of occupations. According to Ross, occupations demarcate boundaries, establish strategic defences, thus operating as *barrières*, in the Rancièrean language from the previous chapter. Ross:

> Advocates of occupation see it less about taking charge of the factory as a center of production, than about taking charge of a nonneutral space in which the opposing class is constituted as an adversary: taking possession of the logical categories that govern institutions and not the institutions themselves. Occupation is in this sense akin to the student barricade: the dominant class is never as present as it is at the moment of occupation; the enemy is never clearer than when seen across a barricade. Occupation, like the barricade, reveals class conflict, the relation to the adversary. According to the case made for occupation, the appropriation of the space of the dominant power would ideally be accompanied by an expansion of the workers' movement outside of the limits of that space (Ross 2002b: 71).

This more nuanced strategic, political, and psychological reading is lost within most journalistic accounts, which understandably focus on outward appearance not essence, especially seeking spectacular or world-historic events. Kurlansky, for example, describes this moment as 'a frenzy of free expression' where 'a whole system of order and authority and tradition was swept aside' (Kurlansky 2004: 227). Subsequent accounts, even those of political theorists, also lapse into similar hyperbole, repeating specific linguistic tropes which are put to use, for divergent political ends, across a range of discourses. The most common of these tropes narrates the events of May '68 as a 'carnival' of youthful libidinal excess, typified by the *Egalité! Liberté! Sexualité!* mantra which, via its popularisation and circulation has now reached the fullest levels of recuperation, currently being put to use by the culture industry to sell condoms (calvin.com 2019), and Gucci clothes (Cochrane 2018), as signifiers of edgy youth cool. So omnipresent is this trope, it functions almost as an Althusserian meta-discourse interpellating all other discourse, regardless of political ideology. For example, Ali and Watkins' (1998) euphoric account describes the tone of the graffiti as 'joyful', whilst Fraser (1988) characterises it as a 'festival' which lasted through the night. The Situationist accounts, whilst offering valuable psychological insights into the events, are also especially susceptible to recycling this tropology. Ken Knabb's *The Joy of Revolution* (1997) from the title onwards, employs the figurative and metaphorical language of Bacchanalian excess to dramatise an otherwise 'scientific' analysis of revolutionary situations. This produces a peculiarly schizophrenic effect, where ostensibly scientific analyses of 'theory versus ideology', the difference between false and real choices, or strategic differences between

wildcat, sit-down, and consumer strikes, are eroticised into subheadings entitled ‘foreplay’ and ‘climaxes’.

Ken Knabb characterises revolutionary situations as ‘collective awakenings’ energised by ‘open-ended public dialogue and participation’. Such situations amplify critical and satirical attitudes to the status quo, resulting quickly in the revelation of the normal as abnormal, and qualitative change as becoming conceivable and achievable. For Knabb, the escalation of the Sorbonne occupation into the revolutionary situation of multiple workers’ factory occupations throughout France depended on the dialogic character of its initial events (Fig. 6). The images proliferated by *L’Atelier populaire* multiplied this effect, and its circle of influence, exponentially. His account of the revolutionary situation in general seems to also speak to the specifics of the Sorbonne occupation with uncanny accuracy. Knabb:

> In such situations people become much more open to new perspectives, readier to question previous assumptions, quicker to see through the usual cons. Every day some people go through experiences that lead them to question the meaning of their lives; but during a radical situation practically everyone does so all at once. When the machine grinds to a halt, the cogs themselves begin wondering about their function. Bosses are ridiculed. Orders are ignored. Separations are broken down. Personal problems are transformed into public issues; public issues that seemed distant and abstract become immediate practical matters. The old order is analyzed, criticized, satirized. People learn more about society in a week than in years of academic “social studies” or leftist “consciousness raising”. Long repressed experiences are revived. Everything seems possible — and much more is possible. People can hardly believe what they used to put up with in “the old days”. Even if the outcome is uncertain, the experience is often seen as worthwhile for its own sake (1997).

Knabb contests that most accounts of revolution have little to say of the qualitative aspects of such revolutionary situations, focusing instead on a descriptive analysis of historical events. This lack is certainly evident from the treatment of *L’Atelier populaire* posters in both general published literature on ‘68, where these images usually serve as illustrative backdrop to the revolutionary events on the streets. Even specialised studies, such as Kugelberg’s *Beauty is in the Street* (2011), back away from a direct commentary on

these posters *as artworks* or as political interventions. At best, academic journal articles reiterate the slogans of specific images or offer translations of francophone puns.

This chapter doesn't claim to offer a transcendental phenomenology of 1968, read through the evidence of these images. However, it does begin by situating these works of *L'Atelier populaire* within the complexity of what Husserl (1970: §33-38) has called their 'life-world(s)' [*Lebenswelt*]. Indeed, though there is no space to develop this here, a comparison between the 'pre-scientific' and *a priori* regions of the 'life-world', especially as it functions as a critique of the foundations of the scienticity of scientific knowledges, and counterpoint to Rancière's concept of *le partage du sensible*. In particular, Husserl's suggestion of the life-world as the 'realm of original self-evidences' is a fruitful point of comparison with both Rancière and Althusser's conception of ideology. Husserl suggests that one could undertake an ontology of the life-world (§37; §51), in the manner of natural science, which would carefully differentiate the cluster of related notions which it encompasses, 'including 'horizon', 'surrounding world', 'environment', 'generativity', [meaning] the manner in which human lives intersect across generations' (Moran 2012). It is also the theme of historians who wish to reconstruct the lifeworlds of their objects of study (224; Husserl 1970: 147). Neither an adequate ontology, nor a reconstruction, of the 'life-world' of revolutionary students in 1968 can be accomplished here. However, following Husserl, and as a segue into Rancièrean politics, I emphasise the 'life-world' as both the 'pre-given' and as 'the universal field of all actual and possible praxis, as horizon' (Husserl 1970: §51). To reinsert the *L'Atelier Populaire* images artworks into their 'life-worlds', albeit tentatively, is to understand them in a manner beyond mere illustrations of political struggle, or aestheticisations of a political struggle. Instead, they operate as reminders of radical subjects 'constantly and directly "conscious" of the world and of [themselves] as living in the world, actually experiencing and actually effecting the ontic certainty of the world' (Ibid.). In their case, the 'ontic certainty' thus effected includes not only the distinctions between 'student' and 'worker', but also between 'art' and 'politics', and perhaps even the hierarchical logic of the ontology of art, reproduced the art school ISA, typified by the *Beaux-Arts* model.

Eagleton is sceptical about the aspects of Husserl's project which he characterises as attempting to demarcate 'an elusive third way between the vagaries of subjective feeling and the bloodless rigour of the understanding' (Eagleton 1990: 17). In this sense, Husserl's work is a modern iteration of the central argument of all aesthetic theory dating back to Kant. For Eagleton, the 'spontaneous consensus' which aesthetic theory imagines between the subjective and objective worlds is akin to a form of Gramscian hegemony of the rational over the sensual; a rational law 'ruling and informing the senses from within while allowing them to thrive in all of their relative autonomy' (Ibid.). At the same time, he concedes that this illusory autonomy, disguising 'internalised repression', can also exemplify 'new forms of autonomy and self-determination, transforming the relations between law and desire, mortality and knowledge, recasting the links between individual and totality, and revising social relations on the basis of custom, affection, and sympathy' (28).

Althusser's structural theory of ideology could equally be accused of attempting to find a third way between the rational and psychological. As the last chapter highlighted, Rancière's theory of *subjectivation* remains structural (Davis 2010: 80), as a form of ideological practice within *le partage du sensible*. To reiterate, following the classic definition in Althusser's 'On the Materialist Dialectic' (1979: 166-73), 'practice' signifies the 'transformation of a determinate given raw material into a determinate product, a transformation effected by a determinate human labour [...] which sets to work , in a specific structure, men, means and a technical method of utilising the means' (166-7). The 'raw materials' reworked by both Rancièrean *subjectivation* and Althusserian 'ideological practice' are the representations, concepts, and facts which are given, *a priori*, in hegemonic meta-discourse. Rancièrean *subjectivation* follows the sequence of Althusserian 'interpellation' (social formation - meta-discourse - subjective (mis)recognition), right until emphasising heterology rather than homology in the final phase. Althusserian interpellation concludes with an absolute recognition between subject and Subject which hails it; in Rancièrean *subjectivation* the process concludes with a seemingly impossible and paradoxical 'heterologic disidentification' (Davis 2010: 87). For this reason, it cannot be dismissed, qua

ideology, in the manner which Eagleton dispatches much aesthetic theory from Kant onwards, as an attempt to find an artificial synthesis between sensible and intelligible worlds. Instead, Rancièrean thought emphasises the disconnectedness of the aesthetic experience, which de Man recognises in Kant, and recognises as wilfully ignored for the sake of enabling praxis in Schiller and, by extension, the aesthetic theory which follows (de Man 1996: 129-63). Though Rancière is always critical of Kant, this interest in duality, heterology, and the aesthetic as disruptive, maddening, or irreconcilable is the reason why he cites Kant so frequently. It is for these reasons that I have emphasised the term 'aesthetic practice' rather than 'ideological practice' to characterise the politics of his thought. As Rancière argues, political philosophy depends on the presumption that the world is ordered into false (ideological) knowledge and true (scientific), and that it is the task of the political philosopher to debunk the former for the sake of the latter. However, the task of 'aesthetic practice' is to reveal 'that there is not one knowledge but two, that each knowledge [*savoir*] is accompanied by a certain ignorance, and therefore that there is also a knowledge [*savoir*] which represses and an ignorance which liberates' (TBD: 3).

The above quote, taken from the longer extract cited in the previous chapter is key to understanding the specific effectivity of 'aesthetic practice'. This practice not only reworks its raw materials, which are the naturalised discourses, concepts, and categories of aesthetics, but enacts 'a labour of transformation' of the regime which underpins and reproduces them. This not only reveals the ignorant knowledges repressed by this *partage du sensible*, nor simply offers a reversal of 'vulgar' knowledge over 'pure' knowledge but intervenes as a disruptive and impossible interstitial agency within this seemingly ossified chiasmic structure. This heterology substitutes binary modes of cognition for an infinite array of 'lines of flight', revealing the subject-Subject formation to be radically contingent, and through the impossible Subject-Subject formation generate the epiphany that *le partage du sensible* can be redistributed. 'Ignorance' then, is not the other to 'knowledge', but the handmaiden of a 'politics' which would reject and destroy all orders of domination. Inversely, the denial of this

essential political truth by political philosophy limits enlightenment to the maintenance of the status quo.

As discussed in the first chapter, many contesting narratives attempt to claim the 'truth' of 1968 as their own. Kristen Ross (2002b: 99) has highlighted how these could be generalised into two antagonistic camps. On the one hand, the 'self-abnegating "reality principle" of the Maoist practicing militant discipline among workers on the factory line—a zone presumed totally pleasure-free—and, on the other, a purely hedonist anarcho-libertarian "thrill-seeker" throwing off the fetters of bourgeois constraint'. Though certainly not Maoist, Adorno's critique of the 'pseudo-activity' of May certainly falls into the former camp of an imposed pleasure denying 'reality-effect'. Alternatively, the New Philosophers celebrated May as the death of an authoritarian Communism which for them led only to the gulag. The more cynical of their number, such as Gilles Lipovetsky, saw in May '68 not only the death of collectivism but the birth of a narcissistic individualism (Ross 2002a: 652) which, for Boltanski and Chaipello (2007) would embody the 'new spirit of capitalism'. The editorial boards of underground press publications, such as *Black Dwarf*, alongside numerous political sects, and militant student *groupusculles*, recuperated it, into the language of Leninism, as they understood it. Contemporary manifestations of these militant groups continue this recuperative orthodoxical mission fifty years later. The Situationists in turn emphasised the qualitative aspect of imagination in power and surrealism in the streets. The purpose of this final chapter is not to decide between the validity of these divergent claims to the event of '68, but to reveal them as co-existent yet deaf to each other.

Rancière argues that 'to speak of an aesthetic dimension of knowledge is to speak of a dimension of ignorance which divides the idea and the practise of knowledge themselves' (TBD: 1). In their own ways, each of the divergent approaches are 'practices', operating within discrete epistemological orders, which as 'practices' consciously employ specific techniques appropriate to those epistemological modes. As rival 'practices', these rework, to appropriate, May '68 into an image which reconciles it to their particular 'problematic', or perhaps 'life-worlds'. Following the suggestion of an 'aesthetics of knowledge' which renders

these rival ‘theoretical practices’ visible and structured, the ambition of this concluding paragraph is to read the image-politics of *L’Atelier populaire* as ‘instances’ of ‘aesthetic practice’, beyond ‘theoretical’, ‘political’, or ‘ideological’, which intervene within *le partage du sensible* of May ‘68 to an aesthetics of its coterminous yet non-congruent knowledges. As ‘aesthetic practice’ itself, this concluding reading aspires to a similar ‘politics’, which is not entirely negative but productive. Paraphrasing Che Guevara, this ‘aesthetic’ practice will hopefully constitute one, two, many May ‘68s.

The manifesto of *L’Atelier populaire* is quite explicitly clear that the works discussed below should not be regarded as aesthetic objects in the traditional sense. They are to be regarded neither decoratively nor commercially. Instead, they ‘are weapons in the service of the struggle’ and to dissociate them from their revolutionary contexts is to do violence to their radicality, perhaps even to recuperate that radicality absolutely. Even to use them as historical evidence is considered as a betrayal. Figured thus, the poster-works produced by them, May 14th - June 27th 1968, must be considered as the technical methods of a ‘practice’ which not only intervened into the conjuncture of 1968, but acted as one of its transformative and dialogic catalysts. With this understanding, the treatment of them in much of the published literature needs to be questioned, especially when they are relegated to the status of illustrations to the event of ‘68. Whilst not completely avoiding discussion of these works as aesthetic objects or historical evidence, the discussion developed below attempts to avoid the ideological pitfalls of many art historical monographs by emphasising the material relations of production and social spaces to which these works intervened and refashioned. To avoid any possible assimilation of the ‘practice’ of *L'Atelier populaire*, specific images are discussed in situ, as documented in the photographs of Bruno Barbey, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Martine Franck, Marc Riboud, Guy Le Querrec, and even forgotten photographers now attributed as anonymous. As well functioning as a reading of the work of these photographers, beyond mere documentation, this gesture will also hopefully counter the ideological incorporation of these images into the sanitised spheres of academia, not to

mention the processes of their commodification as precious art objects which continues at pace.

In *Disagreement*, Rancière characterises the industrial strike action as a 'polemical scene' which paradoxically 'bring(s) out the contradiction between two logics, by positing existences that are at the same time nonexistences' (DA: 41). This occurs, in part, because of a reordering of the expected behaviours and hierarchical positions of employer and employee. Extending on this, Chambers insists that Rancièrean '*subjectivation* only makes sense as a political process, and politics only takes place in and through 'modes of subjectivation' (Chambers 2013: 102). Following this example, and Rancière's argumentative mode in *Aisthesis* (2013a: xi), outlined below are four 'polemical scenes' of 'aesthetic practice' by *L'Atelier populaire* which represent not just 'surrealism in the service of a revolution', but a 'total redistribution of the sensible'. Here 'modes of subjectivation' replace (student) 'existences' with (lecturer) 'nonexistences', and vice versa, within the conjuncture of May '68. As the declarative and argumentative stage of Rancièrean politics, these 'polemical scenes' articulate the egalitarian claim of the student, as *sans-part*, as well as the relationship between 'life-world' and 'social formation' that is at the core of the process of *subjectivation*. Each 'polemical scene' is chosen specifically to allow a more extended reading of Rancièrean politics, as 'aesthetic practice', to develop. Furthermore, this reading will demonstrate the impossible 'heterologic disidentification' at the heart of Rancièrean politics, and indeed his idiosyncratic understanding of the aporetic paradox at the core of democracy. Of course, such a reading steers dangerously close to 'explication', the most fundamentally un-Rancièrean of activities. To wit, following Tanke, the commentary which follows should be considered as reading not exegesis (2011: 1). Furthermore, following Davis (2010: ix-x), that this reading does not claim to be Rancièrean with any confidence.

For Rancière, Althusserianism was a 'theory of education', in the last instance, and he pessimistically concludes that 'every theory of education is committed to preserving the power it seeks to bring to light' (AL: 52). Althusser's *Réponse à John Lewis* (1973) was

published in the same year as the LIP factory occupation (Fig. 9). As Rancière remembers, Theory intervened 'at the precise moment when we were singing in Besançon that nothing would ever again be the same, [and] we found ourselves being forced to face our illusions' (AL: xx). In *For Marx*, almost a decade earlier, Althusser also coined the term 'eclecticism', the antonym of 'theoreticism', as a pejorative to describe the surface comparison of theories and concepts, outside of their specific problematics (1979 [1965]: 57). For him, naive comparison between dissimilar problematics always results in superficial and misleading conclusions (Smith 1989: 500). Althusser drew these conclusions from his readings of the methods of 'Early Marx', to which many scholars now return with renewed interest, despite their eclecticism (Musto 2015). Therefore, despite the 'lesson' of science against ideology, and Theory against eclecticism, and against the 'metapolitics' which undercut all 'politics' proper, the reading which follows embraces eclecticism as a counter-lesson to Althusser's. This reading is as open as possible, and sensitive to the 'radical otherness' which Rancière characterises as an immanent characteristic of democratic practice (DA: 118-9; Derrida 1993: 81), yet distinct from Derrida's endlessly deferred and 'infinite openness to the Other' (DS: 59). In opposition to the pedagogical mode of domination constituted by theoreticism, as a heuristic, this concluding reading hopes to conjure an image of '68, befitting the 'practice' of *L'Atelier populaire* and the concept of 'aesthetic practice' which I have sketched. This reading will attempt to conjure the dialogic plurality of '68, rather than bifurcating it into two codependent but irreconcilably antagonistic spheres. As a propaedeutic, it aims to outline a pedagogy consistent with what Biesta insists is the double-duty of all democratic education, which is 'the creation of democratic worlds and their undoing' (Biesta 2015 n.p.; Hudson-Miles and Broadey 2019: 64).

In the face of theoreticist charges of eclecticism, the deliberate schizophrenia of this approach will circumscribe 'the democratic shape of an otherness that has a multiplicity of forms of inscription and forms of alteration or dissensus' (DS: 61). The delirium of this final reading is deliberate, invoking on the one hand, the apparently possessed state of artistic creativity sarcastically dismissed as irrational by Plato and the frenzied rabble of the 'fatal

theatrocracy' of the theatre-goers of ancient Athens, wherein both Rancière and Plato recognise the anarchic impulse for democratic and creative autonomy (Plato *Laws* 1975: 153-4; PP: 45-7). On the other hand, the psychedelic delirium of the 1960s counterculture, retrieved recently in Mark Fisher's attempt to describe an 'Acid Communism', described posthumously by collaborator Matt Colquhon as 'a project for the recuperation of the counterculture's lost potentials but also the expression of a desire for an *experimental* (rather than prescriptively *utopian*) leftist politics (Colquhoun 2018). Whilst being experimental rather than utopian, this reading is certainly against the 'anti-utopianism' of metapolitical philosophy which would demolish all myths and all utopias (DA: 118). The 'textual promiscuity' of this literary mode has a critical function, akin to the Bakhtinian 'carnivalesque', which is set to work as a specific 'politics' against the striated space of the contemporary university and its regulations and orthodoxies, especially in respect to argument development, thesis structure, and most importantly disciplinary focus. As such it embodies Rancierean 'indisciplinarity' as politics rather than offer an explication of the same, in the manner of a conventional academic thesis. Instead, it aspires towards the status of what Rancière has called 'bastard thinking' (PP: 35), where bastardy would be the designation of impurity that political philosophy employs to demonstrate its own purity, or perhaps the 'monstrosity' Derrida invoked with his critique of structuralism. As such, it refuses to avoid adjudicating truth from falsehood, via 'parapolitical', 'archipolitical', or 'metapolitical' strategies. Perhaps this could also be considered as a form of 'schizoanalysis', though its primary ambition is to describe the political affects of the 'war-machine' of *L'Atelier Poulaire* on the epistemic terrain of the Sorbonne, and also on the political thought of the conjuncture of Paris, May, 1968. Here, according to Glucksmann, 'the daubed walls of the faculties speak a language as old as revolution itself, a language the working class has known for more than a century. The young workers have become the madmen of society, insane with renewed revolution' (Glucksmann in Posner 1970: 187).

5.1: Carnival.

Fig. 11: Bruno Barbey (1968) *Paris. La Sorbonne University Occupied By Students. May 1968*. © Magnum Photos.

The undated photograph above (Fig. 11) was taken by Bruno Barbey in the Rector's office of the Sorbonne following the occupation of the university. Though it is undated, it must have been produced sometime after the initial moment of occupation on May 13th, due to the proliferation of *L'Atelier Populaire* art on the walls in the background. To the right of the composition, one of the most famous *Atelier* artworks, framed for added satirical gravitas, declares *"La chienlit, c'est lui".* The title of this poster refers to a notoriously condescending speech delivered by de Gaulle on May 19th, wherein he dismissed the demand the student movement with the loaded soundbite *"La réforme oui, la chienlit non!"* ["Reform yes, chaos no!"] (Posner 1970: 87). Delivered immediately after he returned from the 'diplomatic mission' to Romania, this comment signified a newly bellicose de Gaulle, employed deliberately to work as political commentary and as pejorative for a television audience, and invoking a scatological pun he used previously during the war. Beyond its direct denotation of 'chaos', phonetically the terms also connotes the phrase *"chie-en-lit"* ["shit in the bed" literally, roughly equivalent to "shitty mess", or the phrase "bloody mess" in English]. Readily aware of these baser connotations, the term was quickly rephrased as a counter-attack by *L'Atelier populaire*. This rejoinder, which now reads "the shitty mess - it's you!" [*"la chienlit - c'est lui"*] sits below a caricatured silhouette of de Gaulle, recognisable due to his signature military cap, pompous gesticulations, and prodigiously sized nose. Later images doubled down on the scatological connotations, depicting a similar caricature of de Gaulle, but with limp eagle's wings, possibly imperial or fascistic, dripping with excrement, which satirise both his personal military background and the colonial *Françafrique* policies he figureheaded. As if to emphasise this bathos, the figure stands above the phrase "the shitty mess - it's still you!" [*"la chienlit - c'est encore lui"*] (Fig. 12) (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 242n52). Aware of the offence caused by this term, French television reported it more softly as a reference to masquerade or chaos. Nevertheless, the ideological force of this phrase was such that it remained in operation within French political discourse throughout the twentieth century, used by French president Nicolas Sarkozy as recently as 2015.

To accentuate the farcical connotations, the three unidentifiable busts in the foreground have all been defaced and adorned with comedic hats. Instead of the etched names and dates of famous men, from left to right, the plinths now carry signs declaring 'he's a shitty mess' [*le chienlit c'est lui*], 'I'm a shitty mess' [*le chienlit c'est moi*], and 'what about me?' [*et moi?*]. At a time when de Gaulle had temporarily fled Paris, leaving a ministerial team seemingly bereft of strategic leadership (Dogan 1984: 245-77), this triptych would have immediately invoked both the slapstick of 'The Three Stooges' and the prevailing governmental chaos, incompetence, and baton passing. To add an extra layer of *ad hominem* to this governmental satire, there are two references to the Cross of Lorraine, a triumphalist symbol which de Gaulle appropriated following the Liberation to counter the ideological potency of the Nazi swastika. The poster in the background calls for revolution against the de Gaulle government and his symbolic image, which is also emblazoned at the front of what appears to be a pair of cuckold horns. This latter juxtaposition therefore mocks de Gaulle's political impotence as well as virility.

Furthermore, each of the busts has either right wing or far right regalia attached to them. The Lorraine Cross on the left was not only a metonym for de Gaulle; it was also adopted by French fascists from the 1930s onwards (Huston 1999). The bust in the middle sports a Kepi [*képi*] - a hat worn by both the French army and *Police Nationale*, and indelibly linked to de Gaulle in the popular consciousness. Instead of war medals, this bust sports a swastika and a celtic cross, another symbol used by European neo-Nazi movements. Finally, the third head wears what could equally be a dunce's cap or a Napoleonic bicorne made out of a copy of the right-wing newspaper *Le Figaro*. As discussed in the first chapter, the student movement's comparison of the French state and its RSAs to fascist dictatorships, or simply Nazis, not only made an ethical appeal about the brutality of the CRS, but also acted as an uncomfortable reminder of the recent collaborationist Vichy government. *L'Atelier Populaire* posters frequently employed such symbolism (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 241n26, n29, n31, n32, n33, n35).

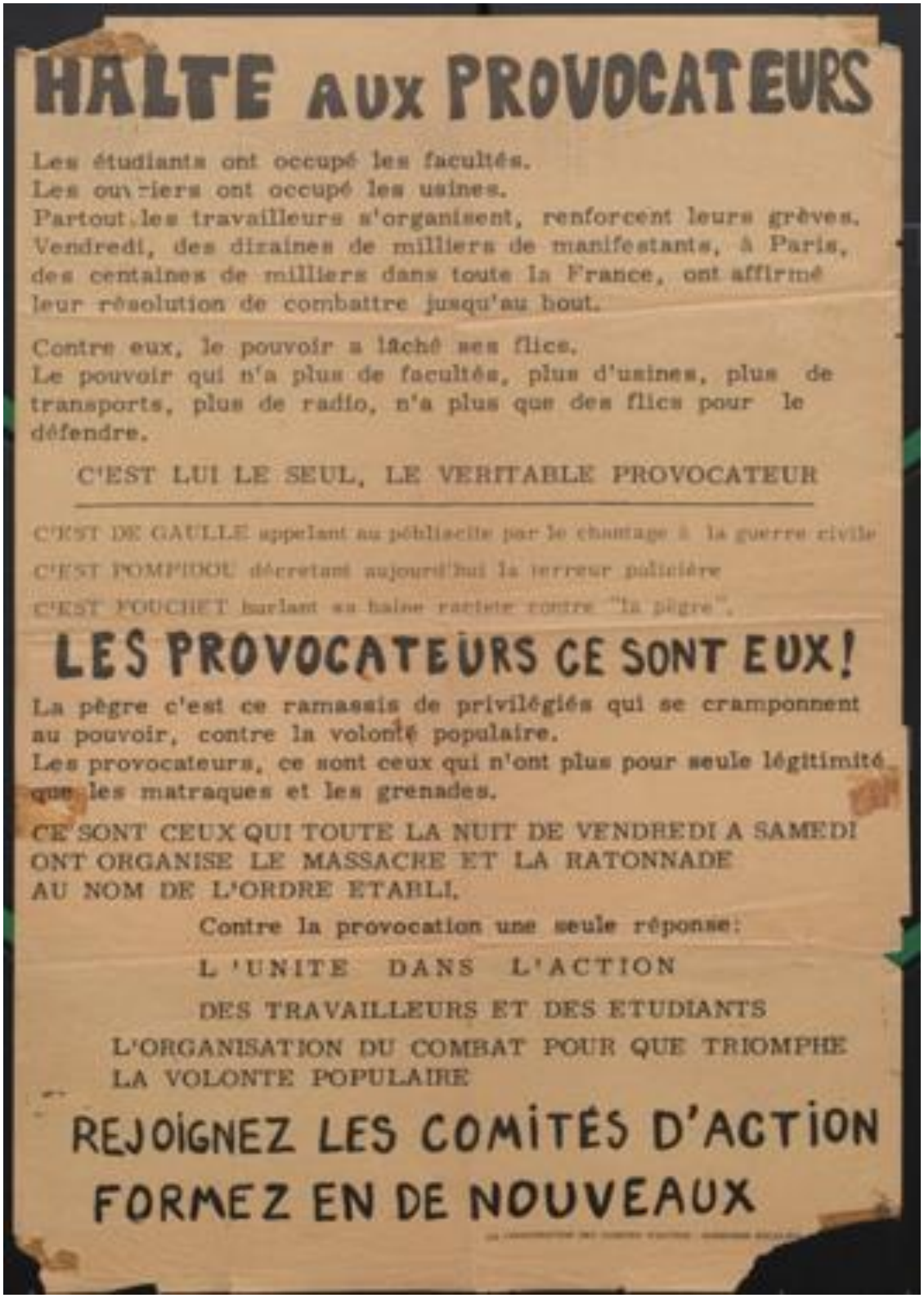
Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 12: L'Atelier Populaire (1968) *Le chienlit c'est encore lui.* Screenprint, © Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Finally, read left to right, the busts could be interpreted as being gagged, blindfolded, and most tenuous, deafened by the sides of the bicorne. Read thus, these three busts approximate the ancient Japanese maxim of the 'three wise monkeys' ("speak no evil", "see no evil", "hear no evil"). The satirical force of the simian comparison notwithstanding, the gagging of the bust on the left carries an extra critical function. Written across the gag are the words *liberté* and *expression*, references to the rights to freedom of expression enshrined under the French constitution, as formulated in the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen of 1789'. Given that both the law and its enforcers must respect this foundational freedom, in this context the 'politics' of this gesture contains a legislative, as well as ethical force.

Given that the central *chielit* poster represents the earlier, not later, series it seems logical to date the Barbey photo to the days shortly following de Gaulle's May 19th Speech, even though the Rector's office had been occupied since May 13th. A companion image by Barbey (Fig. 13) of the same scene includes 'beginning of June' in the title, seemingly corroborating this. Further evidence to date the first Barbey photograph comes from the militant CDA poster at the top-centre of the image, (Fig. 14) which encourages militants to stop governmental provocation by forming new action committees [*"halte aux provocateurs"; "rejoignez des comités d'action, formez en de nouveaux"*]. Alongside laying the blame for the escalation squarely at the feet of the state and its RSAs, whose 'only legitimacy comes from clubs and grenades' ["*ce sont ceux qui n'ont plus pour seule légitimités que les matraques et les grenades"*], this decree alludes to a number of significant events around the end of May and beginning of June. Firstly, the mention of a 'plebiscite', characterised as a blackmailed choice between the status quo or civil war ["*de Gaulle appelant aux pébliscite* [sic] *aux chantage à la guerre civile"*], is most likely a reference to the referendum de Gaulle called on his leadership on May 24th (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 79). However, the phrase 'civil war' could also refer to the 'state of emergency' de Gaulle threatened, should people not return to work as normal, following the dissolution of the national assembly and announcement of elections on May 30th (Ibid.: 80).

Fig. 13: Bruno Barbey (1968) *Paris. 5th Arrondissement. La Sorbonne University Occupied By Students. Director's Desk. May 1968. Beginning Of June.* © Magnum Photos.



HALTE AUX PROVOCATEURS

Les étudiants ont occupé les facultés.
Les ouvriers ont occupé les usines.
Partout les travailleurs s'organisent, renforcent leurs grèves.
Vendredi, des dizaines de milliers de manifestants, à Paris, des centaines de milliers dans toute la France, ont affirmé leur résolution de combattre jusqu'au bout.

Contre eux, le pouvoir a lâché ses flics.
Le pouvoir qui n'a plus de facultés, plus d'usines, plus de transports, plus de radio, n'a plus que des flics pour le défendre.

C'EST LUI LE SEUL, LE VERITABLE PROVOCATEUR

C'EST DE GAULLE appelant au pôbliscite par le chantage à la guerre civile

C'EST POMPIDOU décretant aujourd'hui la terreur policière

C'EST FOUCHET hurlant sa haine raciste contre "la pègre".

LES PROVOCATEURS CE SONT EUX!

La pègre c'est ce ramassis de privilégiés qui se cramponnent au pouvoir, contre la volonté populaire.
Les provocateurs, ce sont ceux qui n'ont plus pour seule légitimité que les matraques et les grenades.

CE SONT CEUX QUI TOUTE LA NUIT DE VENDREDI A SAMEDI ONT ORGANISE LE MASSACRE ET LA RATONNADE AU NOM DE L'ORDRE ETABLI.

Contre la provocation une seule réponse:

L'UNITE DANS L'ACTION

DES TRAVAILLEURS ET DES ETUDIANTS

L'ORGANISATION DU COMBAT POUR QUE TRIOMPHE LA VOLONTE POPULAIRE

REJOIGNEZ LES COMITÉS D'ACTION

FORMEZ EN DE NOUVEAUX

Fig. 14: *CDA poster* (1968). [internet] <https://digital.lib.umd.edu/image?pid=umd:699635> [Accessed 1/9/2019]. © University of Maryland.

The reference to the 'massacre' ["*le massacre"*] and 'racist attacks ["*la ratonnade"*] on Friday and Saturday night' is a reference to the 'Second Night of the Barricades', May 24th-25th. The use of *ratonnade* in this context carries extra ideological venom, originating in the French-Algerian war and adopted by the UJC-ML militants to signify anti-imperialism and solidarity with those it oppresses. Finally, the poster cropped from the top-right of (Fig. 11), but fully visible in (Fig. 13), proclaims "No!" to both de Gaulle and Mitterrand, but "Yes!" to popular or people's power. This is a reference to the proposal by the socialist Mitterrand of himself as head of a provisional government on 28th May (Ibid.: 200). This proposal was supported by the Communist Party but clearly rejected by the student movement. Most specifically, the reference to Pompidou 'decreeing police terror today' [*c'est Pompidou décrétant aujourd'hui la terreur policière*] could refer to his decision to move tanks to the outskirts of Paris on May 29th, as well as the heavy-handed police tactics employed during his watch (Dogan 1984: 259-62).

Both de Gaulle and Pompidou would have recognised the literary connotations of the term *chienlit*, especially the latter who was a classics teacher (Marshall 2004: 16) and understood its roots in the work of Rabelais. The term appears in Rabelais' *The Life of Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532-64) to designate lowly breadmakers, branded as annoying or inferior. The French Academy dictionary of 1835 also refers to the use of the term to characterise a specific figure, or fool, in the Carnival of Paris who runs through the streets in a nightdress, with his buttocks smeared in mustard (Fleur 2018). Writing about anarchic, symbolic, subcultural challenges to the symbolic order, Hebdige suggests they tend to be assimilated either through commodification, which has certainly been the fate of the *L'Atelier* posters since put into circulation, or through an 'ideological form' wherein 'the 'labelling' and re-definition of deviant behaviour by dominant groups' (Hebdige 1979: 94) neutralises their apparent threat by claiming ownership over them. Beyond the baser connotations, the invocation of *chienlit* to characterise the events of the French May instigated a twofold manoeuvre of ideological incorporation. Firstly, recognition of the literary reference opens an interpellative process which equates the French state with French culture, *per se*. Secondly,

the self-satisfied subject 'hailed' by this interpellation, recognising themselves in both literature and the status quo, depends upon an ignorant, chaotic, and base subjectivity as its other. In Rancierean terms, by labelling the student movement as its 'May Fools', the 'police order' discourse of the French government simultaneously determines their impropriety and the propriety of *le partage du sensible*.

Yet, the characterisation of the May events as a 'student carnival' (Dogan 1984: 252), is now equally commonplace in Leftist commentaries; an association influenced by Henri Lefebvre's famous characterisation of the Paris Commune of 1871 as a carnival or festival [*fête*] of revolution (Lefebvre 2003: 188). Reflecting on the events of May 1968, Philippe Vermes (co-founder of *L'Atelier populaire*) uses an old French saying – *"Au mois de mai, fais ce qu'il te plait"* [in the month of May, do whatever you please] (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 9). This characterisation interpellates, and in a sense legitimises, May '68 into French history and tradition, evoking the positivity and bucolic of early Summer *fêtes* and medieval feasts. The *chienlit* is thus recuperated as a libertarian carnival of creativity and collective release. For Mark Fisher, the latter half of the twentieth century has been spent 'exorcising of "the spectre of a world which could be free"' (Fisher 2019); a spectre which was created from the carnival of May '68, and not by the spectre of Marx's 1848 manifesto. This image of joyful creativity as revolutionary method, which Fisher hoped to retrieve in the unrealised Acid Communist project, has recently been revived within the global Occupy movements. In the wake of these, Yates McKee has recently forwarded *Strike Art* (2016) as an entirely new category in the ontology of art. The contemporary activist collective *Reclaim the Streets* explicitly acknowledge May 1968 as a formative influence, alongside the storming of the Bastille (1789), the Paris Commune (1871), and the Irish, Russian, and German Revolutions (1916-18), all of which they regard as 'enormous popular festivals' of 'free celebration' (Reclaim the Streets 2009). This revolutionary heritage has been distilled by RTS, and other similar activist groups, like *Extinction Rebellion* most recently, into the somewhat dubious spectacle of the 'protestival' (Carmo 2012: 103-118). This collapsing of protest and party could be argued to be the quintessence of the 'pseudo-activity' Adorno famously accused

the student movement of popularising. Vermès himself warns that the positivity of the carnival image can disguise the 'economic issues and political strife' May '68 sought to overturn (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 9). However, for *RTS*, the 'protestival' is a revolutionary situation, heralding

> temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and the established order; it marks the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions. Carnival is not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates because its very idea embraces all the people (RTS 2009).

This quotation about Saturnalian freedom or release from the established order on the RTS website, just like their conception of the revolutionary festival, is stolen verbatim from Bakhtin's concept of the 'carnivalesque' developed from his work on Rabelais (1984: 7-8). For Bakhtin, the carnival is a suspension of social hierarchy where all, albeit temporarily, are considered equal, and people are reborn into 'new, purely human relations', somewhere in between the utopian ideal and the real (10). These masks of its central characters are adopted, and old subjectivities discarded for new in a 'merry negation of uniformity and similarity' (40). These new identities stand 'on the borderline between life and art, in a peculiar midzone as it were, they were neither eccentrics nor dolts, neither were they comic actors' (8). In this carnival scene of subjective metamorphoses, satire and humour become especially important. The fearless laughter of the carnival is the experience of freedom, whereas the seriousness and narrowmindedness of the everyday social order is regulated by fear (41).

In the Bakhtinian 'carnivalesque' then, the mode of literature itself undoes the prevailing social order. Lachmann has suggested that Bakhtin's concept of carnival laughter can be read as subversive critique of the Stalinist purges of Russian folk culture. As well as this seditionary character, Baktin's carnivalesque inverts the everyday social order and anticipates 'another utopian world in which anti-hierarchism, relativity of values, questioning of authority, openness, joyous anarchy, and the ridiculing of all dogmas hold sway (Lachmann 1989: 118)'. In this sense, the carnivalesque triggers a political redistribution of

le partage du sensible, albeit only temporarily. However, for that fleeting moment the carnival creates an image of joy 'against the loss of utopian potential brought about by dogma and authority' (130) and granting the masses a palpable sense that another world is possible.

One of the most potent satirical and political weapons of the carnivalesque is the literary trope which Bakhtin refers to as 'grotesque realism'. The term implies a mutation of accepted literary genres and conventions into something monstrous. As such, 'grotesque realism', which is generally explained by analogy to the body, sets itself against the conventions of established regimes of artistic production. The grotesque body is born from the carnival, writhing, contorted, and disindividualised, amongst a mass of flesh and carnal lust. The grotesque body is an act of degradation, which opposes the idealised body of Renaissance aesthetics, or the individualised and regulated bodies of 'private egoistic 'economic man' (Ibid.). The essence of the 'grotesque body' is degradation and is concerned 'with the lower stratum of the body, the life of the belly and the reproductive organs; it therefore relates to acts of defecation and copulation, conception, pregnancy and birth. Degradation digs a bodily grave for new birth' (Bakhtin 1984: 20). Both the 'degradation' and 'new birth' imply radical politics. Degrading the bodies of kings and queens brings divine right back to the gutter. Furthermore, the degraded body mocks the anthropocentrism of all ideologies, especially those of science and aesthetics. Most importantly, the 'grotesque body' is situated within a politics of 'immanence and unity' (Robinson 2011). Bakhtin: 'The material bodily principle is contained not in the biological individual, not in the bourgeois ego, but in the people, a people who are continually growing and renewed' (1984: 19).

The representation of the head of state de Gaulle as 'shitty mess' not only satirises, but via grotesque degradation invokes a completely different order, which 'signifies that kings are dead as centres and forces of history' (NH: 11). Lachmann et al (1989), suggest that within the scatological grotesque is an unnatural inversion of the 'natural' boundary between body and world. As agent of this 'redistribution of the sensible', 'excrement, as a carnival substance, becomes the mediator between earth and body, between the living body which gives birth to the dead body and the dead body which gives birth to the living one; [...]

scatology replaces eschatology' (149). On May 21st, 1968, the radical newspaper *Action* equated the culture of the university to 'dead festivals of the spirit' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 207). The occupation of the Rector's office, and its degradation, turns its authoritarian figureheads into carnival fools, whilst invoking its 'deeply positive character' in the articulation of a politics of abundance and increase (Bakhtin 1984: 62). Quoting Diderot's *Rameau's Nephew*, Glucksmann writes ''A really sensible person wouldn't have a jester. So anyone who has a jester is not sensible, and if he is not sensible he must be a jester and perhaps, if he is a king, his jester's jester". May belonged to Diderot's nephews rather than Lenin's children' (Posner 1970: 187).

Fig. 15: Bruno Barbey, *FRANCE. Paris. 6th Arrondissement. Studio at the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris.* © Magnum Photos.

La Mésentente [*Disagreement*] (1995) begins with a critique of the Aristotelian idea of the political animal, prefiguring the volume's broader attack on the political philosophy of Aristotle and Plato specifically through an account of language. Though not named as such, this critique overlaps with the concept of 'literarity' [*littérarité*] sketched in the *Les Noms de l'histoire* (1992) / *The Names of History* (1994: 52) (1992), and developed more fully in *La Parole muette* (1998) / Mute Speech] (2011b) and *La Chair de mots* (1998) / *The Flesh of Words* (2004a: 103). Like other Rancièrean concepts, 'literarity' combines a critique of political philosophy, ancient and (by implication) modern, with an articulation of political agency within, and against, *le partage du sensible*, which said philosophy otherwise polices. As politics, it is analogous to the democratising force of modern literature against the hierarchies and codifying systems of classical poetics (Battista 2017: 43). However, whilst 'literature' constitutes a general disagreement with the canonic *partage du sensible* of literary

aesthetics, ‘literarity’ exceeds mere theory of literary affects. Instead, the concept of ‘literarity’ articulates a general political mode, read metonymically through literary examples. The specificities of this prefigurative politics, which Rancière will call ‘the excess of words’ and ‘mute speech’, are developed from the elisions of the Platonic and Aristotelian systems, and analogous with the democratic impulse repressed by both discourses.

Famously for Aristotle, ‘voice’ (*phōnē*), being the capacity to vocalise displeasure or pain common to all animals, must be distinguished from ‘speech’ (*logos*), the capacity to articulate reasoned argument specific to the human. The possession of *logos* not only differentiates human from animal, but also evidences their naturally political character (Politics 1253a1-18; 1992: 59). However, for Rancière, language is not simply a tool to be put to use by political animals. Instead, language precedes politics and is moderated by the pre-political *partage du sensible*. Unlike *phōnē*, the possession of *logos* is not equally distributed amongst all speaking subjects. As Rancière argues, ‘the speech that causes politics to exist is the same that gauges the very gap between speech and the account of it (DA: 26)’. Elsewhere, more polemically, that ‘speaking is not the same as speaking’ as by the admittance of the Aristotelian account ‘slaves understand language but don’t possess it’ (Bowman and Stamp 2011: 2). As argued in the previous chapter, the metapolitical strategies of political philosophy are, amongst other things, mechanisms for distinguishing, demarcating and fixing in place *logos*, as the truly political, scientific, analysis of the world offered by ‘the philosopher’, and the *phōnē*, as the spontaneous or ideological mere speech of ‘the poor’. This analysis frames the right to language as a political question, and therefore language is the space where political subjects come into existence. Rancière:

> The modern political animal is first a literary animal, caught in the circuit of a literariness that undoes the relationships between the order of words and the order of bodies that determine the place of each. A political subjectification [*subjectivation*] is the product of these multiple fracture lines by which individuals and networks of individuals subjectify the gap between their condition as animals endowed with a voice and the violent encounter with the equality of the *logos* (DA: 37).

Insisting that man is a literary before political animal emphasises multiple fracture lines in the Aristotelian account. Firstly, that the universalising ideology that language is a tool employed towards the ends of political subjects is symptomatic of an anthropocentrism which unites the problematics of ancient and modern political philosophy. In contradistinction, Rancière's account emphasises that language is the vehicle for, and therefore precedes, *subjectivation* even if *logos* makes human subjects distinct (Chambers 2013: 104). Furthermore, *logos* cannot be considered as pure resource to be drawn by subjects in formation, but always already 'tainted with a primary contradiction' (DA: 16). The originary contradiction which 'gnaws away at any natural order' is precisely the paradox of slave, or by extension 'The Poor'. The slave demonstrably understands *logos*, as equal, by effectively following his master's orders, yet his inequality is also demonstrated in this enactment. Inversely, those reduced to *phōnē* within the *logos* of 'The Philosopher', and whose equality is effaced in self-(mis)recognition as inferiors or 'The Poor', merely have to disobey the interpellative hailing of the 'natural order' to reveal its absolute contingency. Rancière is explicit about the distinction between 'linguistic turn' of structuralist thinking (Saussure, Levi-Strauss, Lacan, Althusser) and his position. The former forwards a linguistic model as 'general law that structures the behaviour of individuals and societies', or the 'symptomatic analysis' revealing speech acts as ideology and collapsing into a 'policing of utterances', (Battista 2017: 82) which is anti-political, and not only because it preserves the privileged *logos* purely for philosophers. At the same time, he distances himself from hermeneutic critique, as a practice of reading working towards 'a profound secret', or Derrida's simultaneous 'denunciative critique' and 'practice of infinite critique' (83). Instead, Rancièrean 'literarity' combines 'a critique of the *langue* / infrastructure model [...] giving more favourable consideration of the political and the linguistic games therein' by celebrating the capacity of dissensual ideological speech acts to overturn *le partage du sensible* by 'emphasising the gap that separates subject and predicate' within its schema (82).

Alongside the 'magnificent myth', the *mythos* of all *mythos*, two Platonic myths epitomise for Rancière the ossification of the *langue* / infrastructure dyad into a regime and

also the threat of 'literarity' to expose the 'originary tear' in *logos* (Chambers 2013: 98), subsequently repressed through mythic exegesis. Both are found in the *Phaedrus* (1973). The first, towards the end (274b-278b; 1973: 94-101), introduces Socrates' version of an inherited 'tradition' (274c; 94), based on an exchange between King Thamos of Egypt, and the demi-god Theuth (Thoth) of Naucratis. Theuth's invention of writing, supposed to benefit both the wisdom and memory of all Egypt is dismissed by the King on two counts. Firstly, that the written word makes living memory redundant, thus spreading laziness; secondly, that the proliferation of words through writing substitutes quantity of information for knowledge. The second part of the *Phaedrus* which interests Rancière is Socrates' invocation of the myth of the Cicadas (259b-e; 70) to distinguish workers, who rest under the trees from 'sheer mental indolence', from the dialecticians who occupy the same space to refine their mastery of *logos*, and are thus conferred the honours of the heavens. This strict segregation of social roles and capacities thus demonstrates 'the indignity of a mode of life separated from true modes of seeing and speaking' (NH: 103).

In the former, the 'dead speech' of writing is attacked as the bankrupt other to the presence of 'living speech' (*logos*). The latter myth metaphorically equates 'living' and 'dead' speech to the respective capacities of philosophers and workers within the natural order. Yet, the problem with writing is not its 'solemn silence' to interlocutors but its 'promiscuity'; a 'promiscuity' which threatens this imagined social harmony. Writing 'circulates equally among those who understand the subject and those who have no business with it; a writing cannot distinguish between suitable and unsuitable readers' (275e). Its 'promiscuity' is a Platonic pejorative which disguises the begrudging concession that its unselective, and therefore democratic, circulation is beyond the control of its embodied origin. The scapegoating of writing into a 'pharmakon', which Derrida outlines in 'Plato's Pharmacy' (1981: 63-171) is not only symptomatic of the 'logocentrism' which Derrida more generally exposes in *Of Grammatology* (1997 [1967]), but of a 'logocentric' mode which proceeds to / from similarly ordering the world into 'modes of doing and modes of saying' (MS: 31). Writing then, for Rancière, is not simply and inferior form of speech, whose logocentrism needs

deconstructing, but actually ‘an imbalance of the legitimate order of discourse, of the way in which it is distributed and at the same time distributes bodies in an ordered community’ (Ibid.). In the sense that it represents a disorder which would overturn the order behind all paternal *logos*, its ‘promiscuity’ is oedipal.

This ‘anti-oedipal’, disordering literary proliferation is similar to the democratic potential which Benjamin recognised in the technologically reproduced art forms of the early twentieth century (2007: 217-53). Famously, for Benjamin, the rarefying institutional discourses which mystified the production of art, whilst securing a privileged position for their producers, were threatened by the advent of technological art forms, such as lithography and especially cinema. The withering of art’s ‘aura’ *vis-à-vis* its technologically reproduced simulacra is directly a result of the ‘promiscuous’ dalliances of art beyond its traditional power bases, which would otherwise control its meaning absolutely. Technologically reproduced art reaches out to the public, rather than vice versa with traditional ‘cultic’ art, and is experienced collectively. This collective experience is characterised by a sense of co-authorship and a renewed sense of the capacity of the public as expert. Put slightly differently, the possibility that culture can be written at the point of reception by a mass audience rather than fixed at the point of production by self-appointed experts. The thesis of the decline of aura is thus inseparable from the possibility of newly enabled and democratised public sphere, and a mode of critical cognition which Benjamin felt was ‘completely useless for the purposes of fascism’ and instead pivotal ‘for the formulation of revolutionary demands in the politics of art’ (218).

As discussed in Chapter 3, the theatre was dismissed as anarchic in part because of its propensity for encouraging the masses to believe themselves the equal judges of culture to their so-called superiors. The revolutionary potential Benjamin recognises in mechanical art is the acceleration and concentration of this process, a process whose effects have multiplied exponentially with the advent of the internet in the twentieth century. Contemporary with the events in France, May 1968, this democratising potential was also being recognised in the techno-utopianism of Marshall McLuhan, who recognised in the

invention of the Gutenberg press in 1487, the technology for the global democratisation of literacy, previously guarded by an elite cast who were self-appointed custodians of the world's knowledge, which would bring about similar globalisation of social democracy. The naivety of this thesis should not distract from the 'political' effects of technological reproduction on established cultural hierarchies.

What Rancière calls the 'excess of words' is at the same time the withering of the privileged status of the expert, whose claim to *logos* is dependent on the rigid policing of *le partage du sensible*. Writing of a sister occupation to *L'Atelier populaire* at Hornsey College of Art, Lisa Tickner has described the events as a 'Gestetner revolution' (2008: 31-59), referring explicitly to the role played by technological reproduction in the events. The Gestetner being a mimeographic duplicating device, pre-photocopier, which produced lo-fidelity short-run black and white reproductions, generally used in educational contexts to circulate the documents of college bureaucracies. During the during the Hornsey occupation this machine was repurposed for nocturnal creative production (121n1), counter-curricula, and agitprop, giving the occupation a literary character, which would justify its description as 'a revolution of Gestetners instead of guns, meetings instead of marches, seminars instead of riots' (31).

At the Sorbonne, the emphasis was similarly on harnessing the technological capacities of lithographic, and especially serigraphic or screen-printing facilities, to generate an 'excess of words'. This constant stream of media images, accelerated itself by the communal repurposing of the Taylorist scientific production line model, functioned as fuel to the developing protests outside, with a 250 print hourly serigraphic output guaranteeing the 'absolute interpenetration of art and event' (Ross 2002b: 15). Ross recognises that one of the remarkable features of this steady image-stream was how much they emphasised speed, acceleration, or momentum. Ross:

> The "message" of the majority of the posters, stark and direct, was the certification, and at times the imperative, that whatever it was that was happening — the interruption, the strike, the "moving train" — that it simply continue: "*Continuons le*

combat" "*La grève continue*" "*Contre offensive: la grève continue*" "*Chauffeurs de taxi: la lutte continue*" "*Maine Montparnasse: la lutte continue* (Ibid.).

However, what is also vital about this onslaught of mechanically reproduced 'literarity' is precisely its heterogeneity, which defeats reduction to any singular narrative. When viewed in their totality (Figs. 15 & 16), the images covering the walls of the occupied studios of the Sorbonne seem less like a coherent argument and more like parapraxis. Read thus, written on the walls is the unconscious of *L'Atelier populaire*, which itself could be figured as the unconscious of '68. Here speech-acts are not synthesised within interpellative discourse but riven with contradictions, tangents, and discontinuities.

Describing the 'desiring-machine', Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 6) assert that 'desire constantly couples continuous flows and partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented'. Here, a dysfunctional but maniacally productive 'desiring-machine', seems to have no other principle other than absolute difference. This outpouring, which attempts desperately to verify every struggle of '68, alongside verbalising its libidinal fixations and objects of desire, cannot be reduced to the logic of the *bricoleur* described by Levi-Strauss, or Hebdige (1979) in a subcultural context.

Instead, it follows the 'rule of continually producing production, of grafting producing onto the product' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 8) in a cumulative chain of delirium which is not 'a conscious delirium, or rather is a true consciousness of a false movement' (11). In this chain of unconscious flows, the authoritarian super-ego orders and insists - "make a poster expressing solidarity!" *["a la demande d'un employé faire une affiche exprimant la solidarité de ces travailleurs aux gréves et occupations d'usines des ouvriers"]* (Fig. 16); regulates - "sincerity is preferable to technique" *["pour les affiches la sincérité ç'est préférable à la technique"]*; even chastises - "Keep the studios tidy" *["tenir les ateliers propres"]*. Against this super-ego, the id articulates desires - "we want a people's university" *["nous voulons une université populaire"];* "unity" *["unité"]*; and aggressions - "The shitty mess is still you *["la chienlit c'est encore lui!"]*.

Fig. 16: Phillipe Vermès (1968) *Atelier Populaire, May, 1968* [detail]. In Kugelberg, J., and Vermès, P., eds., Beauty is in the Street., n.p.

This scene of *aisthesis* then is marked by its disorientating confusion of irrational and animalistic *phōnē* and rational claims to the authority of *logos*. According the the regulated harmony of *le partage du sensibl*e this is akin to a breakdown. However, as Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 9) argue, 'desiring-machines only work when they break down'. Regarding machinic breakdowns specifically, a co-authored *L'Atelier* essay refers to Jean Tinguely's kinetic sculpture *Homage to New York* (1960) (Fig. 17), as part of an effort to distinguish their project from the increasingly spectacular 'novelty' of contemporary art (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 209). Tinguely's dysfunctional 'machine' was constructed from salvaged mechanical junk in the gardens outside the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and built in such a way that when it was set in motion, it gears gradually ground to a halt and set the monstrous invention on fire. This mechanical self-immolation is commonly read as an artistic critique of the hubris of modernity generally, and the relation of art to institutional power, commodification, and the circuits of capital specifically. Tinguely himself supports such a reading in his declaration that '[t]he machines which we build today produce much more than we can possibly consume. I solve this problem of abundance in my own way!' (Chau 2014: 401).

However, *L'Atelier populaire* insist that 'fifty years of ethical and aesthetic 'rupture' does not challenge at all the power of bourgeois ideology on the landscape of art [nor] the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 209). As Benjamin argues in 'Author as Producer' (1998: 87, 93) it is not enough simply for radicals to supply a hegemonic apparatus with revolutionary content, they must fundamentally attempt to transform that apparatus through their practice. The sensationalism of incorporated contemporary art practices means they fail the latter condition and instead present an 'illusory freedom with which the artist plays and the public feels' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 209). As an officially commissioned work, Tinguley's practice is certainly vulnerable to such a critique and its effects on the prevailing apparatus must be distinguished from that of *L'Atelier*. However, there is one continuity worth 'grafting' on to this chain, concerning Tinguley's use 'abundance'. Presuming that his 'solution' to capitalist abundance is the

nightmarish auto-destructive machine, his reference to abundance should be taken to refer to the gross excesses of what Scott Wilson has called 'supercapitalism' (2008: 21-4); the Bataillean general economy of excess, exacerbated by the absolute economic and military hegemony of the US superpower, which manifests itself, and is spent, in forms of conspicuous consumption, renegade free markets, and militaristic aggression.

'Literarity', as the 'excess of words' which threatens the prevailing order can be recognised as its own form of general economy exceeding the restricted economy of *le partage du sensible*. As such it is a product of both the technological acceleration of writing and the proliferation of writing in a variety of commercial forms via the spectacle. Jean Tinguely performed, as potlatch, the exorcism of the excess energies of supercapitalism. *L'Atelier populaire* was a form of 'accelerationism' of this general economy to the level where it was impossible for the police order of logos to silence them. Nick Land recognises that the deterritorialising forces of supercapitalism have created 'an evaporating social field' where 'desire is irrevocably abandoning the social, in order to explore the libidinized rift between a disintegrating personal egoism and a deluge of post-human schizophrenia' (Land 1993: 481). If the 'social field' which Land mentions can be read as *le partage du sensible*, then the deluge of words produced by *L'Atelier populaire* can equally be read as an equally deterritorialising political force which exposes the gap between subject and social role. The 'posthuman schizophrenia' to which Land refers is the Rancièrean revelation that 'there is no single 'voice of the people'. There are broken, polemical voices, each time dividing the identity they present' (STP: 12). This recognition depends on the understanding that language precedes subjects, who 'do not exist prior to it' but only 'through the declaration of a wrong' (DA: 39) articulated within linguistic structures and discourses. From this, as Chambers rightly concludes '*logos*, tainted though it may be, can never be held by a subject' Chambers 2013: 105). The studio wall of *L'Atelier populaire* is not only the declaration of innumerable 'wrongs' but also the 'aesthetic practice' which makes visible the *partage* through which an infinite variety of subjectivities are formed, verified, silenced, or simply ignored. As such, it must always already appear as schizophrenic or delirious.

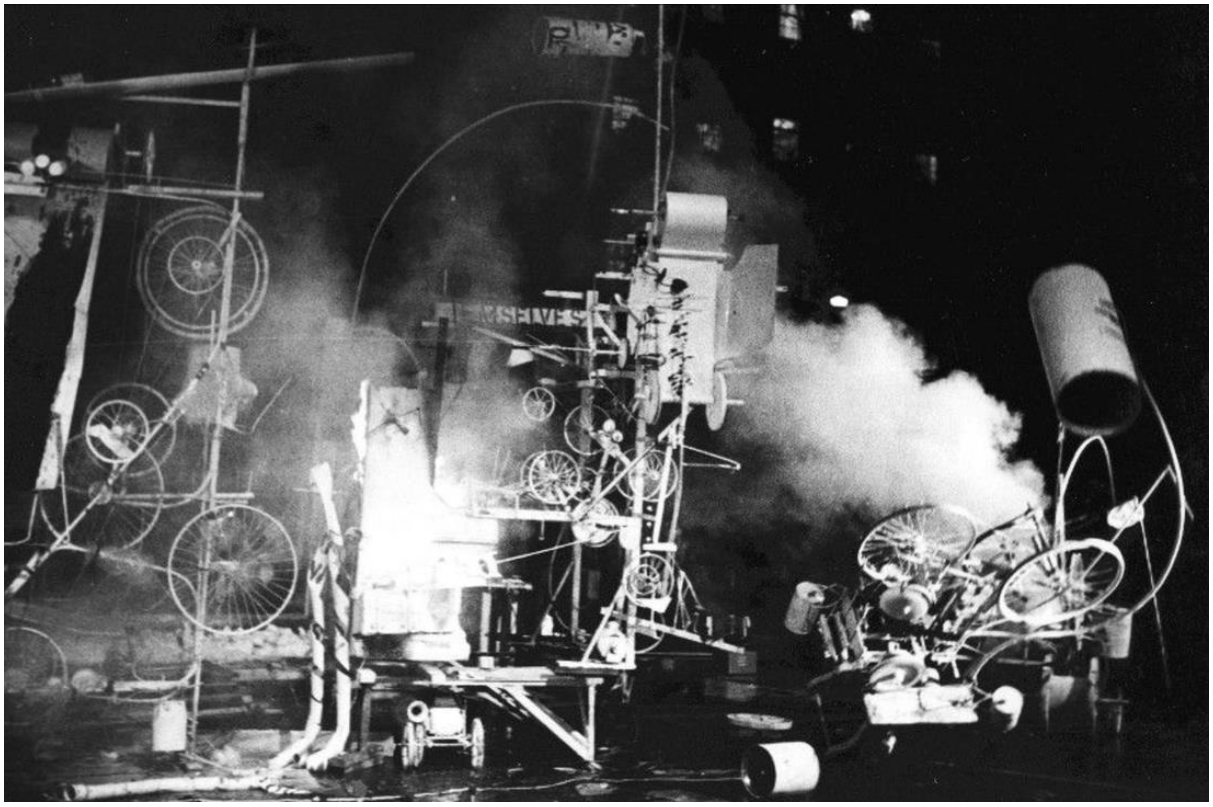


Fig. 17: Jean Tinguely (1960) *Homage to New York*. Mixed Media kinetic sculpture © MOMA, New York.

5:3: *Conricerca*

Fig. 18: Marc Riboud (1968) *Paris. May 1968. Secret Printer In The Arts Academy.* © Magnum Photos.

One of the defining characteristics of the occupation of *Les Beaux-Arts* was the model of collective production which emerged, apparently spontaneously, following the formation of *L'Atelier populaire*. The horizontality of this nascent 'war-machine' was reflected in both its structures and its chosen *nom de guerre*. Though it would be an overstatement to suggest the discarded proper name *L'École des Beaux-Arts* immediately connoted the *ancien regime* to a 60s French public, it certainly would trigger a chain of signification which stretched back through pre-revolutionary, aristocratic aesthetic theory, and the classificatory system which Kristeller would identify as the eighteenth century 'modern system of the arts' (1951; 1952). In addition, it would, and continues to, signify a range of mystifying 'auratic' distinctions layered onto artistic practice, as much by the marketing mechanisms of the expanding bourgeois art market as aesthetic theory, around this time (Shiner 2001: 99-129). Ultimately, this chain of signification eventually leads back to the original *partage du sensible* within the

philosophy of art, invoked by Aristotle's *Poetics* (1961). These distant connotations persisted in the popular image of *Les Beaux-Arts*, primarily because of its dogged commitment to a programme of classicism, though evidence suggests the school was regarded as an anachronism by a sceptical public (Boime 1984: 281). Renaming the occupied art school as the 'studio of the people' therefore doubled as populist or reformist critique and revolutionary 'political practice'. Furthermore, this declaration follows the *modus operandi* of Rancièrean 'politics', by incorporating the 'theatrical dramatisation' of a 'wrong', constituted in aesthetic theory, French society, and the French university, alongside an impossible and 'heterological disidentification' with all of the above.

The evidence of this 'disidentification' is explicit in the various co-authored texts and visual agitprop produced by *L'Atelier* during the month-long occupation. However, as Rancière insists, whilst 'politics implements a logic entirely heterogenous to that of the police, it is always bound up with the latter' (DA: 31). A careful reading of the 'politics' of the nascent *L'Atelier populaire* also reveals that the 'disidentification' of this occupation was interwoven with an immediate irruption of divergent and sometimes conflictual 'reidentifications'. A distinction needs to be drawn here between an inversion or reversal of the sensible order and a 'total redistribution' of all police order logics. What is remarkable about the early days of *L'Atelier populaire* is not only how much it creates a Rancièrean 'polemical scene' positing 'existences' against 'non-existences' (DA: 41), but also how much it makes visible the complex interplay of 'politics' and 'police' which constitutes and regulates subjects as political agents. For Rancière, politics is realised as divergent 'modes of subjectivation' within such 'polemical scenes'. Yet, 'a mode of subjectification does not create subjects *ex nihilo*; it creates them by transforming identities defined in the natural order of the allocation of functions and places into instances of experience of a dispute' (DA: 36). As Chambers puts it, 'polemical scenes are themselves constituted [...] at the very level of discourse - within the excess of words - that would precede the emergence (or foreclosure) of the subject' (Chambers 2013: 118).

L'Atelier populaire was, above anything, the inauguration of a mode of institutional and collective *subjectivation*. At the same time, it was also a mechanism for generating an 'excess of words' which exceeded, differenced, or problematised any collective or institutional identity. In Rancièrean terms, *L'Atelier populaire*, as form of litigation against the police order, opened the floodgates for a heterogeneity of new disputes to be immediately filed, each staking a claim for a new equality otherwise elided by the various discourses which claimed or counter-claimed them for their respective communities. Attending to the complexity of the 'disidentification' between existences and nonexistences at work within this polemical scene of *aisthesis*, one must at least sketch the heterogeneous discourses, contemporary and post-hoc, which frame *L'Atelier populaire* as either political dispute or 'event'.

Given the firebrand rhetoric of *L'Atelier'*s communiques, and the narrative of revolutionary heroism superimposed on this action by various discourses, it is worth noting the localised specificities of the trigger issues initially stated by the occupation, many of which seem parochial or even banal in comparison. Indeed, the 'wrong' declared by the inaugural *L'Atelier populaire* was the miscount of the French university in the first instance, and subsequently the French state and French society by index. The founding text of *L'Atelier populaire*, May 15th 1968, 12 noon, proceeds from a declaration of war against the 'bourgeois university', not the bourgeoisie in general. As such, its foundation could be considered as both an explicit institutional critique of the French university, and via its occupation, an attempt to appropriate the means of intellectual (re)production. Althusser's 'Student Problems' (2011), which localised the class struggle to the university, within a 'technical division of labour', nevertheless preserves both the university, its professors, and a form of the division of labour. Instead, *L'Atelier* attack the 'role that society expects of intellectuals' dismissed as a 'technocratic cadre' functioning to ensure 'everyone is happy in his place' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 205). Yet, they don't call for the dissolution of the university, but the reform of its class character via democraticisd access. The question as they frame it concerns the 'social selection that takes place at every level of education, from

primary to superior, to the detriment of working-class children and the children of poor farmers' (Ibid.). This peculiar *partage* between the children of farmers and children of workers makes perfect sense within the Maoist discourses of the UJC-ML militants, which insisted on a distinction between the revolutionary peasant classes and a more generalised industrial proletariat. However, it makes less sense within the communal and egalitarian title 'People's Studio'. As discussed previously, one of the remarkable successes of '68 was the introduction of 'student' as third term in the dispute between 'working class' and 'bourgeoisie'. As Rancière argues, 'there is no single 'voice of the people', [...] only broken, polemical voices, each time dividing the identity they present' (STP: 12). Similarly, there can be no 'People's Studio' which does not police a multitude of divergent subjectivities beneath its idealised politics of synthesis.

Against this dream of a 'rediscovered communication between art and people, of social peace and collective energies' (STP: 11), *L'Atelier*'s first manifesto attacks the tests, exams, and selection which characterise what the Edu-Factory (2011) collective now recognise as the 'system of measure'. The inference being, that if the 'terms of teaching and the pedagogical forms of its diffusion' were eradicated from the capitalist university ISA structures then societal alienation would wither accordingly. Towards this 'deschooling', but perhaps short of what critical pedagogy from the 60s onwards figured as a 'pedagogy of the oppressed' (Freire 2004; 1996), *L'Atelier* isolates five pedagogical forms for dissolution; a series of battlelines, which can be summarised as follows. 1) A struggle against the vocationalist reduction of education ('teaching the profession'); 2) a rejection of the master / apprentice dyad ('the system of bosses as pedagogical method'); 3) a stance against an instrumental education serving 'public or private' interests; 4) a struggle against conservative curricula characterised as a fight between 'rational or scientific' and 'ideological content'; 5) a fight against the illusion of academic autonomy and the false separation of worker's struggle from the university struggle. The *Prix de Rome*, established by Louis XIV as the singular pathway to academic excellence, and a professional career in the arts is singled out as the embodiment of the above. Whilst the revolutionary events of 1968 failed to overthrow the

Gaullist government, they did succeed in killing off the aristocratic *Prix de Rome*, the golden route taken by revolutionaries like David as much as countless bourgeois, which was scrapped by Minister of Culture André Malraux, alongside competition as a criteria for entry into the academy (Boime 1984).

As the last of the points above makes explicit, *L'Atelier populaire* insisted that 'the struggle against the bourgeois university should be organically linked to the struggle of all the workers against the system of capitalist exploitation' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 206). The successful achievement of such ambitions depended upon the transformation of spontaneous wildcat occupations into a coherent and organised revolutionary strategy. This strategy had two components. Firstly, the formation or co-option of extant CDAs to 'transform our reconquered colleges into an externally focused base of action' (207). Secondly, the repurposing of *Beaux-Arts* CDAs into vehicles for militant co-research and the co-production of agitprop. These CDAs were small and mobile, numbering roughly ten to thirty bodies to facilitate discussion and to prevent bureaucratic inertia. Each CDA would send a delegate to a daily coordination meeting at the Sorbonne and alongside this establish networks of horizontality with neighbouring or affiliate CDAs. Structurally, this system attempts to avoid the centrality of Communist Party structures as much as possible yet retain a dynamic and responsive model appropriate for immediate and responsive action.

Right from their formation, the texts of *L'Atelier populaire* reveal an anxiety to avoid the 'tyranny' of the 'opportunistic parliamentarism' of the 'leader's sectarian quarrels', whilst also insisting that to overthrow the regime 'it's necessary to organise the base, in action, for action' (Ibid.). By May 21st the radical newspaper *Action* was reporting with bemusement about the revolutionary trajectory of the *Beaux-Arts* CDAs despite 'this almost completely disorganised sector (no movement, no union)'. For *Action*, the embryonic *Atelier Populaire* had generated 'a quasi-autodidactic culture on the fly, a kind of maquis of understanding that mixes ideas at the level of everyday action' (208). The trade unionist pamphlet *Freedom* was similarly celebratory about this new model of collaborative production, as revolutionary praxis:

> And now everyone, worker and student, foreign and French, enthusiastically comes to participate in the production of the posters. Thus the bourgeois style of work that was in practice has completely disappeared: poster projects done communally, after a political analysis of the day's events or after discussions at the gates of the factories, are proposed at the end of the day in a General Assembly. Here is how they are considered:
>
> - Is the political idea correct?
> - Does the poster communicate this idea well?
>
> The accepted projects are realised in serigraphy by groups that take turns from each other day and night. Dozens of groups of poster-hangers are formed and meet up in cells from the district Action-Committees and the strike committees of the occupied factories, each one relating its experiences and its discussions with the population (237).

Described above is not simply 'a quasi-autodidactic culture on the fly', appearing as if from nowhere but a model of what Italian militants called *conricerca* [militant co-research], building upon existing cadres and organisational strategies. Gérard Fromanger's poetic recollection narrates the formation of *L'Atelier populaire* organically, as a revolutionary flow from Cohn-Bendit's speech at the million strong demonstration on the Champ-de-Mars (May 13th), to banner making with Jean-Jacques Lebel and Merri Jolivet to declare *"L'Odéon est occupé"* (May 14th), to the production of the first *L'Atelier populaire* image, UUU [*"Usine. Université. Union"*] (May 15th) (Fig. 19) (Fromanger 1998). In this reading, the revolution of May '68 shook the artists of *Les Beaux-Arts* out of their bourgeois consciousness and laid before them exemplars of praxis to replicate and accelerate.

What was initially designed as a cheap commodity to raise funds for the struggle was transformed, in the heat of demonstration, as its symbolic identity and plastered onto walls by revolting student militants (Considine 2015). According to Fromanger, this apparent 'spontaneity' was carefully cultivated, depending on preceding years of militant organisation within the *Salon de la Jeune Peinture*, an annual Parisian painting salon known for its links to the PCF and the avant-garde (Ibid.). The rhetorical binarisation of 'popular' and 'bourgeois' by *L'Atelier*, in both their name and early pamphlets certainly echoes Stalinist discourse. In their own words, bourgeois culture 'separates and isolates artists from other

workers by according them a privileged status. Privilege encloses the artist in an invisible prison' (Ross 2002b: 17).

According to Ross (2002b), *L'Atelier populaire* broke free from this 'invisible prison' following the forced coincidence of art education and '"the real," in the shape of the movement, [which] literally intervenes, short-circuiting the steps that art must take to be art in bourgeois culture and hijacking it, so to speak, off that path, bringing it into the now' (16). This 'hijacking' and 'short-circuiting' is what Rancière would call the 'reordering ways of being and ways of acting' with *le partage du sensible*. At the same time, the 'invisible prison' is also clearly the self-same described by Marx in the short passages on Raphael from *The German Ideology* (Marx and Engels 1986: 108-9). The famous argument therein outlines how a classless Communist society will make the professional subjectivity of 'painter' meaningless, and art will be simply one of an infinite array of emancipated human-sensuous activities available to pursue at leisure.

Notwithstanding Glucksmann and the New Philosopher's argument that Communism inevitably constructs its own inevitably horrific prisons, even in Marx's speculative utopia, the spectre of *le partage du sensible*, in this case between art and work, or work and leisure, presents itself immediately as it is imagined vanquished. Even when denouncing 'Cult of the Personality' to the twentieth congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev felt the need to hierarchise 'the people' who the Party had forgotten to serve, into 'workers, peasants, and the intelligentsia' (1956). Indeed, what is interesting about the first *L'Atelier populaire* image is not so much the utopian unity of student and worker which it desires, but unlike their *nom de guerre*, in its diagrammatic desire to function as propaedeutic for the post-capitalist relations of production, it makes manifest their absolute separation and impossible heterogeneity. The substructure of this imagined workers state being not the relations of production but the signifier 'union', which operates as the ideological social cement bonding all subjectivities together. Accidentally, the homonymy of 'U' and 'you' to an anglophone audience connotatively mixes imperative and pronouns in a chain of signification stretching back to the demotic speech of US and UK conscription posters.

Fig. 19: Bruno Barbey (1968) *Paris. May 68.* © Magnum Photos.

The illusory character of this 'union' of the people is further undercut by the bathos of Barbey's composition, which forces the *L'Atelier* poster into its own encounter with the real. The elderly spectator, regarding the image with indifference as he reads the CDA bulletin denouncing the 'anti-people Gaullist regime of unemployment and misery' [*a bas le régime gaullist anti-populaire de chômage et de misère*] emphasises intergenerational differences, and perhaps the mutual incomprehension between parent class and youth culture. In fact, the introduction of the elderly figure introduces three orders of life, perfectly conforming to the *partage du sensible* of capitalist working life into pre-work (education), work, and retirement. Indeed, the logical opposition to the anti-democracy [anti-populaire] of the Gaullist model, 'full employment' and 'joy' (or 'joyful employment') seems no less administered. In 'Student Problems', Althusser warned the student movement not to introduce false battlelines on the grounds of generational difference, insisting that the systematic opposition of old and new falls into the technocratic government trap of 'novelty', which is to be critically distinguished from 'a claim for renewal, scientifically based, which is always objectively progressive' (2011: 14). Of course, equating 'newness' with governmentality could also be read as a signifier of reactionary conservatism. At the same stroke as insisting that the 'pedagogical value' of a university subjectivity is absolutely indifferent to age, Althusser insists that 'no pedagogic questions can be settled on the basis of pedagogic equality between teachers and students' (Ibid.). The often-misconstrued argument of *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* is that it is a call for precisely the 'hopelessly anarcho-democratic conception of pedagogy' dismissed as counter-revolutionary by Althusser (Ibid.). However, Rancière actually insists that the question is not concerned with proving the 'equality of intelligences' but 'seeing what can be done under that supposition' (IS: 46). Furthermore, the task of 'the ignorant schoolmaster' it is not to ensure the absolute equality between all subjects within the educational ISA, or to argue for their own exclusion as a martyr for the cause a pure social-constructivist pedagogy, but to perpetually verify instances where claims to equality are staged (Biesta 2017: 68-9). Equality and intelligence are practiced and verified, and 'emancipation is the consciousness of that equality, of that

reciprocity' (IS: 39). Althusser claims that what governments fear above all is cadres and 'intellectuals with weak scientific training'. Instead, as Rancière argues, perhaps what all governments and all governmentalities fear are images which reveal the presupposition of the equality of anyone and everyone, or the paradoxical effectiveness of the sheer contingency of any order' (DA: 16).

In this sense, the inaugural UUU image of *L'Atelier* functions as a speculative proposal for a political 'redistribution of the sensible' which reveals the prevailing order foundationless and contingent. To simplistically declare either a 'union' of the people or a *People's Studio* is to risk invoking 'a polemical form of subjectification [*subjectivation*] that is drawn along particular lines of fracture, where the distribution of leaders and led, learned and ignorant, possessed and dispossessed, is decided' (STP: 15). Emancipation is thus presented as an overtly simple 'lesson'. In the UUU image, questions of 'learned and ignorant', 'leaders and led' could be argued to vanish the moment they are made manifest. Yet, what is persistently interesting about it is how much it demonstrates paradoxical 'gap created by the empty freedom of the people between the arithmetical order and the geometric order' (DA: 19).

Althusser's 'lesson', rehearsing Lenin's warnings against 'revolutionary spontaneity' in *What is to be Done?* (1969 [1902]), was that spontaneous activity is always ideological. The other side of this 'lesson' insisted that 'the *revolutionary* cause is always indissolubly linked with knowledge, in other words *science*' (Althusser 2011: 15). Rosa Luxemburg's counter to Leninist science, *The Mass Strike* (1906), emphasised the importance of organisation and cadre building in favour of direct revolutionary experience. The 'quasi-autodidactic culture' developed 'on the fly' by *L'Atelier* brought the classic question of spontaneity or organisation to the fore; a strategic question which has haunted most twentieth century revolutionary movements. Without rehearsing all of these debates, an instance of its occurrence within the radical feminist circles in the US is pertinent to this reading. Jo Freeman aka Joleen's 'The Tyranny of Structurelessness' (1970) insists that a structureless organisation is an impossible myth. All spontaneous revolutions are preceded

by laborious preparation. Cathy Freeman's 'The Tyranny of Tyranny' (1979) responds by highlighting the ways in which controlling or oppressive logics, especially those internalised from patriarchal socialisation, prevent activists 'from creating organisations in ways that do not obliterate individuality with prescribed roles, or from liberating us from capitalist structure'. Without rehearsing the numerous debates between the centralist models of Party communist and their anarchist others, it should be highlighted, following Murray Bookchin, that 'spontaneity does not preclude organisation and structure. To the contrary, spontaneity yields non-hierarchical forms of organisation, forms that are truly organic, self-created, and based on voluntarism' (1975). It is this sense of resistance to all forms of psychic and social tyranny where Freeman's model aligns with Foucault's characterisation of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* as an introduction to the non-fascist life (2004: xv).

Metapolitical critiques of spontaneous ideology, or the impulse to organise their spontaneity are examples of this fascist tyranny, which Rancière would call the 'police'. It's oppositional force, 'politics', 'only occurs when these mechanisms are stopped in their tracks by the effect of a presupposition that is totally foreign to them yet without which none of them could ultimately function' (DA: 19). This egalitarian presupposition is the major wrong of democracy itself; an impossible paradox revealed not just by the co-research of *L'Atelier populaire*, but by the history of *conricerca* itself, which is rooted in the struggles of the Italian *operaismo* [workerist] movement. Gigi Roggero (2012), writing the obituary of Italian Marxist Romano Alquati, describes how the young militants of the dissident socialist journal 'Red Notebooks' [*Quaderni Rossi*], and then 'Working Class' [*Classe Operaia*], began to use *conricerca* as a political strategy they were castigated form both sides - by the working class Marxists who regarded this as 'bourgeois science' and by academics who guarded their science in the ivory tower. 'Workerist' is often used as a pejorative in tradition Marxist circles to describe a fetishised and redundant obsession with the industrial working class amongst certain political groups (Murphy 2010: 328). For these young militants, seeking to find a path between the everyday experience of the workers on the production lines at Fiat, and draw connections between workers and militant students, in a way that the organised political

mechanisms of the workers didn't do, 'the prefix "con" meant to question the borders between the production of knowledge and political subjectivity, science and conflict. It was not simply a matter of knowledge but the organization of a threat' (Roggero 2012).

Hardt and Negri (2006) argue that there is a central point of commonality between *operaismo* and French theory 'that is a methodological point, or really an axiom of research. On Deleuze's side, this axiom is that desire is active and power is reactive. Or rather, with respect to power, *"La résistence est première"*. Resistance is temporally and ontologically prior to power'. However, the Rancièrean reading argues that 'for a thing to be political, it must give rise to a meeting of police logic and egalitarian logic that is never set up in advance' (DA: 33). 'Police' and 'politics' are ontologically coterminous, never causal in a linear sense.

Marc Riboud's photographs of the *L'Atelier populaire* in production (Figs. 18 & 22) not only document *conricerca* but also the 'organisation of a threat' which works on the *barrières* between institutional knowledge and political subjectivity. Overlooked by a crumbling marble statue of Eros, god of love, creativity, and adolescent rebellion, the French 60s youth align in co-production of shitty mess after shitty mess to disrupt the order of the Gaullist regime. Marcuse saw in the student movement of 1968 a proclamation of a 'permanent education' which forced 'the idea of revolution out of the continuum of repression' (1969: 11). Riboud's composition forces the conclusion that this same shitty mess was being piled upon the *Beaux-Arts* tradition, as well as the classical philosopher-kings who laid down its principles and orders of knowledge, and a 'Great Refusal' of the 'theory of education' which maintains the distance between political philosophy and its objects.

Fig. 20: Marc Riboud (1968) *Paris. May 1968. Secret Printer In The Arts Academy.* © Magnum Photos.

Rancière's *Aux bords du politique* (1992b) was translated as *The Shores of Politics* (1995b) for the English edition. This translation makes perfect sense, given the extended maritime metaphor of the book's preface, involving a '*mise-en-scène* of shifting images' from Platonic philosophy. Therein, Rancière highlights a logocentrism specifically concerning the binary of land and sea. The former connotes positivity, order, and civilization, being the 'solid ground of knowledge' and 'the isles of a refoundation'. Inversely, the latter represents baselessness and the negation of that order; a 'fatal and seductive seascape' propelled by the 'whims of tides and mariners'. In this metaphor, *terra firma* stands for both the political philosopher and the philosophical foundation or order which they bring to Athenian civilisation. The ocean represents the 'looming abyss' which threatens to swallow the rational order in the anarchic name of the *dēmos*, or simply democracy (SP: 2-3). In Plato's *Gorgias*, the ports spread the disease of avarice and possessive materialism to Athenian citizens,

drunken sailors are the embodied metonymic signs of this sickness. Alternatively, Plato's ‘cave is the sea transposed beneath the earth [...] men in chains instead of oarsmen’ (2). Here, the cave is the denial of the world of rational order, which can only be glimpsed through the false consciousness created by the illusory shadows on the wall. These ideological phantoms in people’s brains are the mystifications which political philosophy, as outside, or true consciousness to false, cuts through.

However, ‘shores’ is not the only available translation of *bords*. Also acceptable would be ‘edges’, ‘rim’, ‘(river) bank’, ‘(road) side’, ‘margin’, ‘fringe’, or as a verb, ‘to board’. All of these translative connotations suit the various ‘lines of flight’ taken by the four essays within this book. However, perhaps most pertinently to the idea of the *barrières* explored with the first ‘polemical scene’ of this chapter, *bords* can be translated as ‘border’ or ‘limit’. Rancière’s book then could be considered as an exploration of the wildest fringes of ‘politics’, or alternatively the dividing line between the political and not-political. As both preceding chapters have argued, and the majority of Rancière’s pre-aesthetic work, it is precisely the task of political philosophy to draw and then robustly police such borderlines. The nautical metaphor above is simply another way of illustrating a border, as is the metaphor of the cave, and so is the *arkhē* of the tripartite republic constituted by ‘the magnificent myth’. The former establishes borders between philosophy (the proper) and its others (the improper), the latter establishes a hierarchical *partage* of people and positions within that proper order. As Rancière argues, ‘the philosophical exploration of the borders that have to be traced in the effort to define the common power of thought was inextricably bound up with a political question about the community’. Such a question necessitates ‘identifying the *One* of the community with the very principle of the hierarchical distribution of bodies therein’ (Battista 2017: 41-2). Essentialising individuals with the modes and capacities associated with the exercise of a specific *tekhnē* is a strategy for establishing a coherent community of parts yet denying the egalitarian principle behind the common capacity of all to think and speak. The ‘political’, in Rancière’s sense, works against the borders and divisions which characterise *le partage du sensible*. The ‘polemical scenes’, or

what Rancière calls ‘the ‘raw materials’ (SP: 4), reworked by the ‘theoretical practice’ of these essays include the French presidential election, the tailors strike of 1833, and student protests of 1986. Both of these ‘polemical scenes’ sever the supposedly natural association between *technê* (artisanal or student labour) and social or cognitive agency, whilst also highlighting the ‘syllogism of emancipation’ (45). The major premise of this syllogism is the assumption of equality between citizens enshrined in the *arkhē* of French constitutional law. The minor premises, in turn the difference in pay and conditions between master tailor and worker, (45-8) or the proposed introduction of selective higher education (55-8), are the ‘words and deeds’ which expose the logical contradictions in that *arche* of equality.

As suggested by the previous ‘polemical scenes’ of this chapter, the inauguration of the *L’Atelier populaire* brought about a specific politics working and reworking the *partage du sensible* of the historic art school, whether the precise advent of that politics occurred with the production and dissemination of the first UUU poster (May 14th), the meeting of the ‘Strike Committee of *L’École des Beaux Arts*’ where the famous foundational manifesto was drafted (May 15th), or the occupation of the *Beaux-Arts* printrooms and studios (May 16th). This ‘politics’ demonstrates the limits and borders of art school politics, as wrong which could be overturned. Significantly, it sought to remove the border between teacher and student, by casting the former aside and reclaiming the space where she/he would otherwise have had absolute authority. This gesture thus erased the proper border between teacher and taught, and lesson and learning. As suggested previously, the model of militant co-research [*conricerca*] also sought to remove the borderline between subject and object of the research process, alongside developing an image of the socius beyond the atomisation of capitalist relations of production.

At the same time, it also made visible other borders internal to the Sorbonne, between the hierarchisations between the arts and the sciences, between the fine and applied arts, and between those students selected and those ignored. Furthermore, by turning the university outwards to face the world, it reveals the *partage* between manual and intellectual production, between French and immigrant labour, and between the politics of

the state and street. Specifically, this politics constituted in the collective figure of *L'Atelier populaire* issued and egalitarian imperative which highlighted a *partage du sensible* in politics itself, revealing the boundaries between PCF, PCF, CGT, UEF, UJC-ML, and so forth, as police forms. Yet, this declarative major premise of equality not only revealed the 'syllogism of emancipation' inherent in French constitutional ideology, but simultaneously revealed the precise same premise in operation in revolutionary, emancipatory politics themselves. As such, this work of the borders also immediately established new ones; *barrières* which were simultaneously 'weapons in the service of the struggle' and new ways of ordering 'ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying' (DA: 29).

As suggested, extant discourses within *le partage du sensible* tried to claim the Sorbonne occupations as their progeny. The commentary of *Action*, referred to previously, not only appropriates the student occupations of the *Beaux-Arts* and *Odéon*, as well as the joint action with Renault workers at Flins (Fig. 10) as 'spectacles', claiming ownership of this nascent politics in the name of the Situationist International. Moreover, it claims that the aim of this politics is to 'sabotage the spectacle' through 'ideological and scientific upheavals that shake everyday life' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 208). In one sentence, this discourse co-opts the actions of the Sorbonne into the ideology of Situationism by the language of Debord and Vaneigem. Yet, repeatedly the 'politics' of this occupation exceeds, and is thus created in the interstices, of this discourse. *Action's* claim that 'the rebel that results from the barricades [*barrières*] (even when he did not participate)' finds a bit of 'transitory truth' in the everyday (Ibid.). The primary aim of this assertion clearly is to demonstrate a concrete example of the 'revolution of everyday life', yet this is apparently a revolution without a subject, whose truth appears from the *barrières* and not from the conscious activity of an actor. A comparison is made between these student occupiers and the protagonists in Armand Gatti's *Thirteen Suns of the Rue Saint-Blaise*, produced in March 1968 for the countercultural *Théâtre de l'est parisien* (Gatti 2000: 13-14). Gatti's play is set in a night school, wherein thirteen different student protagonists are instructed to imagine themselves as suns rising over the titular street, emitting solar rays which herald its transformation

(Ibid.). Not only does this anticipate the actions of 1968, though apparently this play failed to achieve its consciousness-raising ambitions to politically motivate the youth of this area (Silverman 1990: 147), it also has an equivalence to the figures of Jacotot, the 'ignorant schoolmaster' who invites his students to emancipate themselves, and Gauny, the floor-layer who uses the 'nights of labour' to transform the subjectivity of worker into philosopher-poet. As *Action* suggests, 'it is with this perspective that the students, the workers of the spectacle, have worked in the Odéon Theater' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 208). Work, in this sense, being the 'labour of transformation' within a specific structure, which Althusser speaks of in 'On the Materialist Dialectic' (1979: 166).

It would be a mistake to think of this 'labour of transformation' as the pure political other to the police order though. Whilst this occupation-politics triggered a 'redistribution of the sensible', it also brought with it new forms of regulation. Reading against the grain of Todd May's *The Political Thought of Jacques Rancière* (2008), Chambers argues that by seeking to emphasise the continuities between Rancière's thought and the wider anarchist tradition, 'May 'elevates' politics to a pure form of action, while reducing police to an anti-political and implicitly repressive order of domination and injustice' (Bowman and Stamp 2011: 28). He does this by insisting on a binary opposition between 'politics' and 'police', which 'turns politics and police into versions of matter and anti-matter' (29). This makes perfect sense within an anarchist schema which presumes all forms of the state as oppressive and locates emancipation within the autonomy and self-determination of human subjects. However, as Chambers rightly highlights, Rancière is always insistent that politics 'is always bound up with' the police, and that 'politics has no objects or issues of its own' (DA: 31; Bowman and Stamp 2011: 30-5). This is precisely because 'politics' only exists as an impossible or egalitarian demand within the miscount of *le partage du sensible*. As discussed previously, 'politics' is not exercised by human subjects, but human subjects are formed through the political process of subjectivation. Chambers recognises a Manichean logic to May's anarchist-oriented reading, which envisages a pure revolutionary politics which, as the 'big Other' to the permanent evil of police, strives solely for its elimination (34-

5). By implication, the elimination of ‘police’ (as governmental repression) by ‘politics’ (as human capacity) heralds a utopia of autonomous human subjects beyond all possible forms of police order repression.

Against this Chambers insists on three interrelated points. Firstly, that the aim of ‘politics’ is not the elimination of police *simpliciter* (30), and that the relationship between the two is not dialectical, as this implies (36). Secondly, that democracy is not the utopian end of ‘police’, a ‘struggle that contains its own *telos*’ (36-7). Instead, democracy is the paradoxical condition of ‘politics’, which is in turn the impossible paradox of the claim of the *sans-part* within *le partage du sensible*. What Rancière calls the ‘democratic paradox’ (DS: 47), describing the irreconcilability of the democratic impulse and governmental forms of its management, is precisely this making visible of ‘politics’ of *le partage du sensible*. Such a ‘politics’ reveals ‘democratic governance’ as an oxymoron. Following this, Chamber’s reading insists that ‘we do not live in democracies, and we never will’ (Ibid.). Finally, Chambers counterintuitively suggests an apparently impossible ‘politics of the police’. Such an impossible ‘politics’ would perhaps function by ‘changing, transforming, and improving our police orders’ (Ibid.); beyond simply policing the ‘police’. Alternatively, this phraseology also foregrounds the police effect of all political discourses, no matter how emancipatory they appear. To this list, it is worth adding a fourth, on which Rancière is equally insistent; that democracy is a practice (DS: 59). ‘Politics’, as ‘democratic paradox’, continually creates newcomers who rework *le partage du sensible* making way for new subjects affecting renewed *partages*. The ‘opposition between an institution and a transcendental horizon’ (Ibid.), which is the case in May’s ‘pure politics’ as well as Derrida’s endlessly deferred ‘democracy-to-come’, is the disappearance of ‘politics’ as practice.

Fig. 21: Anon. (1968) *École des Beaux-Arts: 'Atelier Populaire Oui!'* © Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The occupation of *L'École des Beaux Arts* made visible not only the inscription of the *sans-part* within the art school *partage du sensible*, but also the inseparability of politics and police, especially the capacity of the former to generate new forms of the latter. Almost immediately after its occupation, two ad-hoc signs declared new *barrières* to the Beaux-Arts studios: '*Atelier Populaire: Oui, Atelier Bourgeois, Non*' (Figs. 20 & 21). *Barrières* in the plural, not simply because of the diptychal arrangement of these notices, but also because of multiple and divergent affects, as offensive and defensive weapons, as 'politics' and 'police'. On May 21st, *L'Atelier populaire* distributed a leaflet articulating these *barrières*, followed shortly after by a co-authored long form clarificatory essay. *L'Atelier populaire*:

> If we try to be precise about the words which we have written at the entrance to the studios and to comprehend what they mean, they will dictate to us the main lines of our future action. The words indicate that it is not in any way a question of reforming, that is to say bettering what exists. "Improvement" implies that basic principles are not to change, hence they are already the right ones. We are against the established order of today. What is this established order? Bourgeois art and bourgeois art and

> culture, What is bourgeois art and culture? The means by which the forces of oppression of the ruling class isolate and set apart the artists from the rest of the workers by giving them a privileged status. Privilege locks the artist in an invisible prison (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 34, 79).

For them, the purpose of *Les Beaux-Arts* was 'to spread and reproduce the point of view of the bourgeoisie' (208). Within this apparatus 'revolts are integrated', and the illusion of artistic freedom disguises the otherwise carceral function of the relations of production. Specifically, the art school ISA proliferates 'cultural novelties', stylistic and formal innovations which satisfy the demands of the market disguise the fact such art, the embodiment of which is the faux-university of the *l'art pour l'art* doctrine, which denies the social in favour of formal innovation and 'calls nothing into question' (Ibid.). Quite clearly then, the task is neither reform of the art school nor its modernisation, but its revolutionary erasure. Instead of the 'Houses of Culture', *L'Atelier populaire* establishes itself as 'a project in contradiction with the very essence of bourgeois culture: CULTURE THAT DOES NOT CULTIVATE CULTURED PEOPLE' (210).

Reading Schiller (2004 [1795]), de Man suggests that a conveniently neat structural chiasmus can be symptomatic of the ideological character of a discourse, especially when that discourse is tendentious or programmatic (de Man 1996: 147). For de Man, the 'perfect reversibility' of chiasmic discourse is a 'way to avoid the dialectic' (148), especially the possibility of one concept absorbing its other in sublation. Reversibility keeps concepts in perfect symmetry but also perfectly apart. Just like the Manichean opposition between 'pure' politics and 'evil' police, which Chambers finds in May, much of the discourse of *L'Atelier* depends upon chiasmic reversals. To list them, with the political term preceding its police negation, *populaire* / *bourgeois*; artist / critic; art / commodity culture; politics / ideology; freedom / servitude; education / indoctrination; anarchy (revolt) / culture; art / science.

Self-evidently, these binaries reflect those reproduced by the dominant political discourses of the 60s French left. Though unmentioned, organisation / spontaneity (in that order) could fits seamlessly with that list. A surface level reading then reveals an argument superficially indistinct from that of Zhdanovism, or the 'banner flapping in the void' of

Althusser's condescending police order dismissal. Indeed, Rancière's reflective foreword to the English edition of *Althusser's Lesson* concedes how much student political subjectivation was shaped by the framing of the May movement as petit-bourgeois by the intellectual classes (AL: xiv). Given this, the vanguardist character of these early *L'Atelier* outputs could be considered as an interpellation into the dominant-hegemonic Marxist science. If so, the *barrières* established at the threshold of their studios is a rear-guard against accusations of spontaneity; a demonstration of 'a theoretical tradition' (29) as much as declaration for the workers revolution.

In this sense, there is a controlling organisational police function to these discourses, which is opposite to the 'heterogenous assumption' of politics in the Rancièrean sense (DA: 31), even if the occupation was initially undertaken in the name of that assumption. Steering the heterogeneity of a politics which introduces the impossible subjectivity of student-educator-activist-worker into a *partage* of positive / negative binarisations is a form of policing. Unlike the chiasmus, politics must be thought of as 'the form of litigation, confirmation of the equality at the heart of the police order' (DA: 32). What is remarkable about these *Atelier* images is how much they reveal police and politics as co-existent, working and reworking themselves continuously. For example, in (Fig. 21) at the same time as the birth of the 'People's Studio' promises to free people from their gilded prisons, the demotic speech of a headmaster ("wash your brushes" [*"rincez vos pinceaux"*]; "store the material" [*"rangez le material"*]; "clean the sink" ["*nettoyez les châssis"*]) conjures a renewed spectre of the Stalinist gulag. Another poster on the wall of *L'Atelier* equates the discipline of the studio to participation in the workers struggle (Fig. 16).

One of the most significant images of the 1968 demonstrations, for Rancière, was the solidarity image that declared 'We are all German Jews' ["*Nous sommes tous des juif-allemands"*]. For him, this impossible image 'exposed for all to see the gap between political subjectification [*subjectivation*] - defined in the nexus of a logical utterance and an aesthetic manifestation - and any kind of identification' (59). Importantly, the political subject in litigation is 'always a one over'; a 'surplus' or 'distancing structure [...] between the common

and not common' (58). This supplementary aspect of politics is ignored by even the most radical of political discourses. For example, Hardt and Negri define the 'multitude' in the same way as Rancièrean 'politics' until this pivotal final term. For them, this is a deterritorialising force 'within Empire and against Empire', at once sustaining it and calling for its destruction. Within the 'multitude', new subjectivities are formed in struggle but are not reducible to 'simply negative forces. They also express, nourish, and develop positively their own constituent projects; they work toward the liberation of living labour, creating constellations of powerful singularities' Hardt and Negri 2000: 61).

The emphasis on positivity is significant here. Rancière's rejoinder to theoreticist sneers against the student movement of '68 insisted 'the issue was not the void, but the positivity borne by the manifest sense of a struggle' (AL: 29). In the case of almost all of *L'Atelier populaire* posters, questions of ideological interpellation within hegemonic political discourse coexist with the litigation of an agent in struggle demanding verification as equal. The work in production within Marc Riboud's photograph (Fig. 22) does not merely celebrate the occupation of a factory, but verifies that the negational and regulatory orders of the factory are absolutely contingent, and can be transformed into something other by the 'positivity of the *res gestae* of the multitude, an antagonistic and creative positivity' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 61).

However, the 'lesson' of Rancière suggests that whenever the multitude is demarcated as such by a collective noun, all 'antagonistic and creative positivities' are extinguished. Against such foreclose, truly 'political invention operates in [...] shows of strength that open, again and again, as often as necessary, worlds in which such acts of community are acts of community' (DA: 59). This paradoxical suggestion of communities against the foreclosure of the name community recurs whenever the *L'Atelier* images try to celebrate the specific effectivity of the politics which they have invoked. In the Bruno Barbey photograph (Fig. 23), the poster on the left issues the stirring call 'Power shaken, it's up to us to change it' [*"pouvoir ébranlé - à nous de la changer"*].

Fig. 22: Marc Riboud (1968) *Paris. May 1968. Secret Printer in The Arts Academy.* © Magnum Photos.

Fig. 23: Bruno Barbey (1968) *Paris. May 68. Posters made by the School of Fine Art*. © Magnum Photos.

The shaking of power by the movement of the people is signified by the cracks appearing in the profile, or perhaps marble bust, of de Gaulle who of course is a metonym for the state. The image on the right states that 'the state is each of us' [*"l'état c'est chacun de nous"*] underneath a diagram of oneness wherein a lonely figure withers into the square solidity of the supportive background. This is a *jeu de mots* on the boast of Louis XIV [*"l'état c'est moi"*], synonymous with pre-revolutionary France (Harline 1992: 185), which subsequently was employed to caricature de Gaulle's pomposity and failings (Kurlansky 2004: 229). This reversal brings two antagonistic ideas of the state into 'disagreement' - the absolutist monarch who embodies divine Law against a post-revolutionary society of popular sovereignty. The isolated figure seems to emphasise how the force of the latter has transformed the hubris of the Sun King into a dead king, 'a silent king, or a paper king' (NH: 11). Yet, this composition also appears always already riven by two rival visions of possible alternative worlds. Firstly, the Marxist-Leninist idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat,

connoted by the signifier *l'état*. Secondly the libertarian-anarchist idea of the free and self-determining individual. The former position is weakened by the emphasis on the individual, the latter similarly destabilised by the absence of collectivity, or void, behind the individual. Both images read as verifications that individuals have the absolute power to transform power relations and the status quo, or that individuals are complicit with their own oppression through inaction. However, this acknowledgement of the very possibility of 'politics' seems always haunted by the presence of 'police'. The image on the left is not a 'redistribution of the sensible' but a transferral of power from dictator to dictatorship of the proletariat. Similarly, in the image on the right, though the state is now all of us, it certainly has not withered. As parapraxis, these posters describe the political *partage du sensible* of May '68 with uncanny accuracy.

As product and producer of 'the excess of words' of '68, the spirit of both of these images seems closer to the doctrinaire discourses of organised Communism than the Rancièrean politics they nevertheless invoke. This paradoxical quality can be explained by the fact that they represent the opening up of a common (politics) which is closed when named. As Rancière argues, 'neither the we or the identity assigned to it, nor the apposition of the two defines a subject'. Instead *subjectivation* occurs only in the revelation of 'alterities implicated in the demonstration and the worlds - common or separate - where these are defined' (DA: 59).

Returning to the co-authored essay of *L'Atelier populaire*, the last dyad on the list above stands out from the rest, primarily because its 'reversibility', though still chiasmic, is more ambiguous. In emphatic capitals, *L'Atelier* insist that 'ART GIVES US REALITY IN THE FORM OF 'VISION', 'PERCEPTION', AND 'FEELING', and SCIENCE IN THE FORM OF KNOWLEDGE (in the strict sense: of concepts)' (Kugelberg and Vermès 2011: 210). Art and science are not the Manichean opposites in this reading but two possible ways of understanding the world. Here art is not the bourgeois or ideological other to proletarian science or theoreticism but one of two equally viable epistemological modes available to

subjects. This moment of uncertainty, which is also visible in the *L'Atelier* posters, is the political force, or 'aesthetic practice'. Rancière:

> The aisthesis that shows itself in this speech is the very quarrel over the constitution of the aisthesis, over this partition of the perceptible through which bodies find themselves in community. This division should be understood here in the double sense of the term: as community and as separation (DA: 29).

For Rancière, political acts are argumentative as well as poetic (DA: 59). Poetic, in his sense, does not refer to the artistic or affective other to rational argument, but like 'theoretical practice', designates a practice which invents 'languages appropriate to reformulating problems that cannot be dealt with in existing languages' (Ibid.). The invention of new languages therefore highlights the shortcomings of languages whose efficacy was previously unchallenged. It is in this sense that 'politics' makes visible the multiple orders and hierarchies of *le partage du sensible*. It is in this sense also that rational and poetic argument can be understood as separated but common epistemological modes within 'an aesthetics of knowledge' (TBD: 1). Rancière:

> It is this arrangement [*dispositif*] that aesthetic experience deregulates. It is thus that such experience is much more than a way of appreciating works of art. It concerns the definition of a type of experience which neutralises the circular relationship between knowledge [*connaissance*] as know-how [*savoir*] and knowledge as the distribution of roles. Aesthetic experience eludes the sensible distribution of roles and competences which structures the hierarchical order' (Ibid.: 4).

This 'aesthetics of knowledge' is *le partage du sensible* revealed in 'the democratic shape of an otherness that has a multiplicity of forms of alteration or dissensus' (DS: 61). The 'politics' which enables this visibility is not concerned with adjudicating between bourgeois and proletarian ideologies, nor the Kantian and Bourdeusian explanation of palatial beauty. What I have tried to describe as 'aesthetic practice' reworks to make visible the quarrel over the constitution of *le partage du sensible* by heterogeneous politics. Chambers' quarrel with May presents itself as 'disagreement' between (anarchist) politics and (hermeneutic) philosophy. As Chambers concedes, there is a repressive police function

to this reading (Bowman and Stamp 2011: 30) to which he does not entirely absolve himself with his formulation of the ‘politics of the police’. Perhaps an ‘aesthetics of knowledge’ would suggest that both Chambers and May are correct readers of Rancière, and it is through reading, as new form of writing and force of aesthetic deregulation, where the political is endlessly reinvented and renewed.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has focused on the occupation of the Sorbonne university, particularly *L'École des Beaux-Arts*, May 14th - June 27th, 1968. This political action was used as a limit case study to test a number of intertwined theses. These questions cross several disciplinary divisions, including but not limited to the social history of art, politics, philosophy (and its sub-category political-philosophy), education, especially the emergent field of critical university studies, critical pedagogy, and French studies. The research contained within can be considered as a small contribution to all these fields.

Primary among these intersecting questions has been the ambition to approach the photographic works which have hitherto been considered purely as documents of the event of '68 serious, as aesthetic affects. Lesser known photographs by Bruno Barbey, who has now become internationally recognised as a documentary photographer with the agency Magnum, alongside those by Marc Riboud, Guy le Querrec, and those of co-founder of *L'Atelier populaire* Philippe Vermès, have been used not simply as documents of this political occupation but as the evidence to reinsert the works of *L'Atelier populaire* into their social, political, and educational contexts. A secondary ambition of this discussion has been to approach these photographic works as both artworks and 'politics', offering aesthetic affects via their composition beyond the positivity of historical documentation. As such, this thesis has forwarded several readings of these artworks, each employing original interdisciplinary historical research to support novel interpretations and provide new insights into the 'life-world' of the militant art student within the conjuncture of 1968. Within this small 'redistribution' of the perceived aesthetic hierarchies between artwork and document, arguably the most famous of the '68 photographers, Henri Cartier-Bresson, whose work is supposed to transcend the snapshot through the mystifying art historical concept of 'the decisive moment', has been marginalised to a figure of mere documentation, in the first chapter.

A different ambition has been to use the case study of *L'Atelier populaire* to contribute to the ongoing theoretical discussion of occupation as a political strategy, which has become energised since the global 'Occupy' movement emerged following the occupation of Zuccotti park, NYC (2011-12). This reading has drawn upon the philosophy of Jacques Rancière, especially his concept of the political, to demonstrate how political occupations function as specific forms of 'practice', in the Althusserian sense. As 'practice', this thesis has argued that the occupation of *L'École des Beaux-Arts* constituted a 'redistribution of the sensible', reworking and overturning established hierarchies within both the French university and the theoretical and political conjuncture of France 1968. Out of this 'political practice', the counter-institutional collective subjectivity *L'Atelier populaire* emerged, which challenged both the collective name of the proletariat in Marxist theory and the student in Althusser. Specific to the French university, this collective identity challenged the stratifications of the university which persisted, even under the most progressive and radical professors. As such, this thesis has argued that this occupation, indeed all political occupations in general, are simultaneously forms of 'political' and 'ideological practice', which also contains an immanent 'theoretical practice' countering the Althusserian 'Theory of theoretical practice'. Against this 'metapolitical' hermeneutics of suspicion, occupation creates spaces where new subjectivities can be gestated, and new forms of equality vocalised and verified. It is in this latter sense specifically that this thesis has argued that occupation constitutes a radical and anti-oedipal pedagogic mode. If Althusserianism, as Rancière insists, is 'a theory of education' which is 'committed to preserving the power it seeks to bring to light' (AL: 52), then this thesis argues for occupation as a theory of education which transforms and destabilises all power bases. As the analysis of this case study has shown, this is not a pedagogical mode which follows any predestined learning outcomes, but an anarcho-pedagogic or radical social constructivist model where 'ignorant schoolmasters' are created at the same rate as emancipated learners.

At the same time, this thesis has also been a contribution to the field of ideology studies. Specifically, this thesis tried to situate Rancière's work within the wider Marxian

tradition, showing how his concept of *le partage du sensible* extends from, and in many ways depends upon, the Althusserian concept of 'ideological practice' and interpellation that Rancière otherwise rejects. In particular, this thesis has argued that Rancière's account remains structural in the last instance. However, this thesis has also demonstrated that Rancière's account contains a radical inversion of the Althusserian concept of interpellation. Whilst Althusser's theory insists that subjectivities are formed through interpellation by a Meta-Subject or Meta-Discourse, Rancière's concept of *subjectivation* articulates how new and unique subjectivities, which were previously unthinkable within the logic of Meta-Subject or Meta-Discourse, are endlessly inserted within and verified as legitimate and equal, with *le partage du sensible*. Rather than a movement towards ideological incorporation, identification, and homogenisation then, *subjectivation* articulates a radical disidentification and heterogeneity which remains positive not negative.

6.1: Rancière's Lesson

Towards the conclusions above, the first chapter contextualised Rancièrean thought within the conjuncture of May '68, locating the genesis of some of his most important works within the political challenges to both the French state and French university raised by the student movement. Through an extended reading of *Disagreement*, Rancière's most important contribution to political philosophy, and *Althusser's Lesson*, Rancière's most sustained analysis of the conjuncture of '68, this chapter mapped Rancière's concepts of 'politics', 'police', 'disagreement', 'democracy', and *le partage du sensible* onto the specificities of Paris, May 1968. The suggestion here is that the preconditions and trajectories of *la pensée '68* and *L'Atelier populaire* were congruent. Following this, the anti-authoritarian and libertarian politics of the student movement were suggested as a manifestation of 'politics', in the Rancièrean sense. As the chapter discussed, this 'politics' not only constituted the hybrid and nomadic student-worker-activist in *subjectivation*, but also opened an interstice between various forms of political discourse which would otherwise render such subjectivities impossible. This effectivity of 'politics' on the political revealed a *partage du sensible* within the 60s radical Left that established, distributed, and policed the borders between authoritarian and libertarian communisms, and scientific, psychological, and phenomenological forms of political practice. What extends this beyond a conjunctural analysis is the suggestion that, like *le partage du sensible* or Rancière's concepts of regimes, these borders are transhistorical in character, preceding '68 and continuing to affect the contemporary conjuncture.

Importantly, this 'politics' was also the practice where these new, dissensual subjectivities where made visible and dramatised 'theatocratically'. As this chapter demonstrates, this 'theatocracy' was realised through various forms of political practice. Firstly, strategies of *détournement* borrowed from the Letterist and Situationist internationals. These strategies sought to hijack or disrupt the apparatus of the spectacle and have

equivalence to the contemporary activist strategies of ‘culture jamming’ or ‘meme warfare’ (Lasn 1999; 2012). Most prevalent amongst these techniques were the ‘mediatisation’ of the streets of the Left Bank through graffiti and the posters of *L'Atelier populaire*, and to a lesser extent the virtual occupation of televisual and radio spaces. Both skilfully utilised the ‘propaganda model’ (Herman and Chomsky 1988) language of the media, such as soundbites, ad hominem, straw man, and caricature, perhaps more so than its originators. The concentrated form of this ‘theatocratic’ politics was the occupation, firstly of university building, then of factories. The various occupations of the Sorbonne’s buildings not only represented the seizure of the means of intellectual production by the university underclasses, and a mode of subjectivation for the sans-part of the university, but also an institutional critique of the French university system. As such, one of the central claims of this thesis is that these occupations were not simply political practice but essentially a heuristic or ‘lesson’.

Rancière’s claim that Althusserianism was ultimately a theory of education is pivotal for this thesis. As demonstrated, this claim rests on the following premises. Firstly, that despite the extent to which it represents ‘self-criticism’ of Stalinist dogma, Althusserianism remains committed to a problematic bifurcated between two epistemological modes, science and ideology. Secondly, that this logic reproduces itself within a ‘logocentric’ system of secondary conceptual binaries, with those conceptually on the side of science presumed superior. Accordingly, each of these modes has as its correlative an attendant practice. Enlightened scientists have ‘theoretical practice’, or ‘Theory (with a capital ‘T’)’, to slice through ideology, which otherwise ensnares all other ’blind subjects of social practice’. Thirdly, related to the above, that Althusserian theoretical practice is both a theory of reading and pedagogic mode. Marx’s epistemological break was produced by the reading, as practice, of the *Reading Capital* seminars. This produced the superior science of dialectical materialism by demonstrating the inferior science of subject centred humanism, in part, through the *explication de texte* of a *maître à penser*. This rereading of Marx, which was only possible following the liberal period of de-Stalinisation post-1956, freed Marxism from dogma

and orthodoxy only to reproduce both in new forms. The theoreticist position, which discovers the rationality of political practice outside of that practice precisely equates to the position of all pedagogues. As a theory of education, this brings university professors into alignment with Party intellectuals, but political philosophers in general into alignment with their poor. All produce ignorances in their respective objects to demonstrate the superiority of their sciences as correctives to the otherwise illiterate. As Rancière recognises, this chiasmic logic is not simply a theory of education but an academic ideology, a 'double-denial' with exclusionary political effects, not least of which were the constitutions of new divisions of labour (technical / social) within the university and the counter-revolutionary repression of the political outside. 'Archipolitics', 'parapolitics', and 'metapolitics', are the pedagogical techniques of this academic ideology.

Via a comparison of Althusser's essay 'Student Problems' (1964) and Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1987), this authoritarian Left pedagogy was countered with the suggestion of an 'anarcho-democratic conception of pedagogy'. This theory imagines education as a heuristic not a corrective and, as such, does not depend on the preservation of a fundamental inequality at the heart of the teaching scene. Rather than the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' epitomised by the Althusserian 'symptomatic' reading, this proceeds from the presumption of 'the equality of intelligences'. The insistence of the absolute inequality of the teaching scene is also the defence of the absolute necessity of the pedagogue. Instead, the 'lesson' of this theory of truly democratic education is that the teacher's authority within the pedagogic scene, much like the hierarchical ordering of bodies within *le partage du sensible*, as entirely contingent and other configurations are infinitely possible. The events of May '68, especially the occupations and transformations of the Sorbonne, served as a propaedeutic towards such an education.

6.2: On the Politics of Aesthetic and Ideological Practice.

Following on from the previous chapter's claim that the student occupations of the Sorbonne could be considered pedagogically, as a heuristic which countered the authoritarian left 'theory of education' contained in Althusserian theoreticism, this chapter sought to lay the groundwork for understanding the same occupations as forms of ideological practice, in the Althusserian sense. The same procedure also allowed the chapter to demarcate the differences between Althusser ideological practice, and Rancièrean 'politics' which ostensibly is a theory of ideological struggle. To understand the nuances of each position an initial survey of the historical mediations within the concept of ideology was undertaken, focusing specifically on the internal mediations of the concept in Marx's own work. This reading demonstrated that seemingly contradictory canonic passages from key works can be synthesised into a Marxist theory of ideology, understood as the heterogenous expression of current social organisation. At the same time, this reading also suggested that these key passages are incomplete and aporetic yet have also been turned into a dogmatic and reductive doctrine of ideology at the hands of sectarian Marxist ideologues.

Against this, the Althusserian theory of reading was shown, via its correlative conceptual apparatus of 'social formation', (economic / political / ideological / technical) practices, 'overdetermination', 'reproduction', the ideological 'instance' and most significantly 'history without a subject', to decentre the human subject from 'ideology in general', regarded as having no specific history of its own. The Althusserian theory of ideology represents an important clarification to the Marxist lexicon, advancing discussions beyond reflection or false consciousness theory, and refocused attention on a hitherto ignored area of Marxist thought. Though the Althusserian theory of the ISA, 'interpellation' the subjective became a renewed focus for the class struggle. Significantly for this thesis, the ISA is where through which the Althusserian theory of ideology is brought directly into line with the critique

of the university as ISA. Furthermore, the ISA / RSA doublet is also comparable to the Rancièrean conception of 'police' and 'petty police'. At the same time, anthropocentric or humanist conceptions are undercut by the suggestion that we all live spontaneously in ideology, of which there is no outside to ideology, even for 'theoretical practice', and as such individuals are abstract and unknowable, subjectivities merely representing the compound effect of layers of ideological practice within discourse. The pessimistic anti-humanism of the Althusserian position is mitigated only by the possibility of a 'scientific (i.e. subjectless) discourse on ideology' somehow formed from within ideology.

In contradistinction, the Rancièrean theory of subjectivation attempts to invert the Althusserian position, reemphasising the class struggle in the first instance and the structural second. Rancière's theory suggests that the double-determinist character of the Althusserian theory of ideology, which makes it appear paradoxically as both structure and effect, is a by-product of its 'dual desire' to 'metapolitically' 'police' the 'politics' of the student movement whilst defending the 'correct' Marxism for its various deviations, both of which imply a defence of the Party / University intellectual. Yet, his theory of *le partage du sensible* does have noticeable similarities with the Althusserian theory of the 'social formation', as unknowable human system in motion, driven by endless layers of practice, modified by instances of articulation. Althusser's motivation to decentre the human from anthropocentric or bourgeois-humanist accounts of ideology led him to draw the conclusion that the individual was unknowable, and that the social formation was subject to the effectivity of the trans-historical structure. Rancière's account remains structural, with *le partage du sensible* standing in for 'ideology in general'. His challenge to the Althusserian position, within his redacted *Reading Capital* essay, insisted that ideology is a 'structure-effect' of contradictions in the mode of production and social formation. In this reading, alienation can be understood only through science. Though he distances himself from this early essay, Rancière's mature theory of *le partage du sensible* still figures ideology as a 'structure-effect', though one which results predominantly from the superstructure and only implicitly from the base. Conceptually, *le partage du sensible* operates as the *a priori* field framing and conditioning

all practices, which is what the Althusserian concept of 'ideological practice' also suggests yet cannot admit for its own theoretical practice. Unlike Althusserian 'ideological practice', conceptually this is also a liminal, as well as structural, concept which traces the dividing lines which distinguishes science from ideology, or knowledge from not-knowledge. Its effectivity revealing the perceptual criteria imposed by political philosophy to be entirely contingent, imposed within a regime which constitutes the sensible and not-sensible. As Panagia has it, 'not an epistemological break but a break *of* epistemology, as the qualifying perceptual criterion for political participation' (Deranty 2010: 98). Therefore, it is indissociable from the practices and effects of 'democracy', 'disagreement', and 'dissensus', all of which constitute 'politics'. However, its emphasis on the redistribution capacity of 'politics' recentres political struggle as a matter of *subjectivation*, without retreating to a humanist problematic as subjectivities are understood as being formed through 'disagreement' within *le partage du sensible*. Unlike the Althusserian position it does not suggest that ideology is produced by hostile state apparatuses but of a discursive field which precedes all subjectivities and institutions. As such, it reemphasises the agency of individual ideological struggle when freed from its subsumption to a political programme or ideology, especially those whose primary objective is the seizure of state power.

An effect of liminal Rancièrean 'politics' on *le partage du sensible* is to uncover an 'aesthetics of knowledge' intrinsic to it, which is neither the artistic supplement or illustration to theoretical knowledge nor epistemological mode of art, but 'a dimension of ignorance which divides the idea and the practise of knowledge themselves' (TBD: 1). Put differently, the orders of knowledge which would otherwise be rendered sensible or not-sensible rendered visible in simultaneous dissensual disagreement. Following this, this thesis developed the question of 'aesthetic practices' suggested within *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2004c: 13, 43), as an original conceptual alternative to either 'political' or 'ideological practice'. Drawing upon de Man's reading of the Schillerian misprision of Kant, 'aesthetic practice' reveals the impossible heterology which is at the heart of Rancièrean political *subjectivation*. Its correlative is the irreconcilable dualism which de Man finds at the heart of

Kantian aesthetics or the disagreement between Bourdieu and Kant. The Althusserian concept of ideology figures it as simultaneously *méconnaissance* and *connaissance*, the absolute (mis)recognition of a subject in ideology. Bourdieu's attack on Kantian aesthetics insisted that disinterestedness is *méconnaissance*, therefore ideological; a denial of the social or bourgeois illusion of the philosopher. Instead, Rancière insists that the aesthetic experience 'neutralises the circular relationship between knowledge [*connaissance*] as know-how [*savoir*] and knowledge as the distribution of roles' (TBD: 4). The aesthetic then describes the effects of a practice which reworks the sensible and not-sensible, as well as the proper and not-proper, as a political mode of *subjectivation* within *le partage du sensible*. Aesthetic practice is not merely artistic production but the effectivity of all politics within the hegemonic *dispositif*.

6.3: The Politics of *L'Atelier populaire de l'ex-École des Beaux-Arts*.

The final chapter of this thesis undertook a reading of the photographic documents of the original artworks produced by *L'Atelier populaire* during the Sorbonne occupations of May and June 1968. As suggested above, the ambition of this reading was not only to tell the story of *L'Atelier populaire* dynamically through their artistic production, but to give sustained aesthetic attention to their screenprints, and the work of the various Magnum photographers which documented them in situ, considering them as instances of the aesthetic practice suggested by the previous chapters. This practice operated as a force of democratic 'politics' which revealed and redistributed the political and pedagogical *partage du sensible* within the conjuncture of 1968. As such, the claim of this chapter is that the posters of *L'Atelier populaire* invoke a heterological 'politics', and as 'weapons in the service of the struggle', they exceed any intended propaganda function, or indeed any named political programme.

From Rancière's early LRL essay 'Good Times', this reading borrowed the figure of *barrières* to signify the liminal character of Rancièrean 'politics' and a mode of practice consistent with that of *L'Atelier populaire*. This mode of practice works cognitively and practically on the interstices between modes of political and pedagogic subjectivation. As demonstrated throughout this thesis, the political conjuncture of '68 was characterised by the establishment of political, pedagogical, ideological, and psychological *barrières*, as well as the policing of the borders of all the above. As part of this, internal conceptual or psychological *barrières* found their physical and spatial equivalents in the blockaded streets of the Left Bank and the occupied buildings of the Sorbonne. The 'aesthetic practice' of *L'Atelier populaire* made visible these *barrières*, especially the tendency to reductively binarise political struggle to the successful reversal of the negative aspect of an ideological dyad in favour of the positive. Such *barrières* separated the political from ideological as well as establishing countless subdivisions between a variety of sectarian Marxisms. At the same

time, *barrières* have historical, cultural, and symbolic potency in French revolutionary culture, as political strategy and signifier of ideological commitment. Probably the most powerful image of these *barrières* is Riboud's' image of *L'Atelier populaire: oui / L'Atelier bourgeois: non* (Fig. 20), which not only documents a physical and ideological border between ideological and revolutionary art school, but also the police order segregation of antagonistic discourses through which *L'Atelier populaire* was constituted. As suggested by the rest of the examples of this chapter, the absolute ideological certainty of this binary was both performed and problematised by the practice of *L'Atelier populaire*; the ad-hoc character of this border emphasising not only revolutionary spontaneity but also the precarity and contingency of all *barrières*.

Following Hardt and Negri's suggestion that an occupation is 'a kind of happening', this reading also attempts to capture the 'carnivalesque' character of the Sorbonne occupations. Here, the euphoria of what has now been recuperated into the dubious figure of the 'protestival' by recent political movements was drawn into comparison with the more critical function of the carnival figured by the Bakhtinian reading. The key image of this comparison was Bruno Barbey's photograph of the occupied Sorbonne Rector's office (Fig. 11), which the research from this chapter managed to date to approximately June 1st-3rd, 1968. This image captured the anarchic character of the Sorbonne occupation though its compositional clutter, detailing how the sanctity of the ancient universities head office had been defaced through various *L'Atelier* posters and CDA agitprop. More than most images of '68, this photograph communicates order being overturned by disorder, culture deposed by anarchy, government by chaos, lecturers usurped by students; in general, the principle of normality subsumed by the abnormal. In Rancièrean terminology, it depicts not only a 'redistribution of the sensible' within the university but the space where three different regimes of artistic production (the ethical, representative, and aesthetic) are held in an impossible *differend* by aesthetic practice. Through the scatalogical figure of *la chienlit*, Bakhtin's concept of grotesque realism, which brings all authority back to the gutter through strategic degradation, is brought into alignment with the Rabelais material he used as a

source. However, as this chapter, the Bakhtinian grotesque body is not simply destructive but signifies rebirth, renewal, and above all an egalitarian collectivity based on shared sensuous physicality and bodiliness. As such, the faecal degradation of these images is not simply a satirical act but an image of a world transformed along egalitarian lines. The carnival, for Bakhtin, is where everyday identities are cast off and new subjectivities are formed through a collective performance and release. In this Barbey image, the masks of political ideologues slipped to reveal their true characters. Furthermore, the university's 'dead festival of the spirit', which reproduces social hierarchy through the technical division of labour, is reworked into a carnival, motored by a revolutionary energy of delirium, release, euphoria, and *le rire de mai*, which deterritorialises and retterritorialises the student from object to subject of the pedagogic scene, which is to say also a reterritorialisation form interpellated subject to revolutionary subject, and perhaps from Lenin's children to Diderot's nephews.

Another force behind this *subjectivation* was the mode of democratic co-production adopted by *L'Atelier populaire* from its inception. As Rancière insists throughout both *Disagreement* and *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, equality is not the end or conclusion of democracy but its foundational premise. This co-productive mode democratised the university by collapsing the distinction between its 'inside' and 'outside', which Derrida has subsequently revealed as entirely artificial (2004: 103-9) and allowing voices and discourses outside of its ivory towers inside. The lesson of Italian militants practicing *conricerca* was that it was dismissed by both the academy, to the right, and organised political cadres to the left. As such, it was a practice of the *barrières* deconstructing both. The *conricerca* of *L'Atelier populaire* not only collapsed the institutional distinctions between student and lecturer, or worker and student, but also inserted the apparently impossible subjectivity of student-worker-activist into the conjuncture of May '68. Bruno Barbey's photograph (Fig. 19) of a silver haired Parisian regarding the inaugural *L'Atelier populaire* UUU poster with bemusement is the quintessential image of this impossible mode of *subjectivation*. To paraphrase Rancière, it is not the fact that a utopian union between universities and factories

could not be achieved, but seeing what can be done under that presupposition. As the first chapter evidenced, material distinctions between students and workers were apparent enough to be exploited by a cynical government. Yet, like Marx's post-capitalist subjectivities who amongst other things also paint, or Rancière's floor layers who use the nights of labour for active, creative production, not the passive replenishment of a docile workforce, the premise of this image suggest a radical redistribution of the sensible, which contra the logic of the 'police' is not utopian but tested and revealed and tangible through the structures, internal mechanisms, and practice of *L'Atelier populaire*, as militant co-production and as war-machine.

Finally, *L'Atelier populaire* insisted that their creative production should not be considered aesthetically, or commercially, as an effort to resist their recuperation and to emphasise their agency, as practice. The final and perhaps central claim of this chapter was that these works should not be misunderstood as political propaganda, but as examples of the political effectivity of what Rancière calls 'literarity' on *le partage du sensible*. Like the disruptive and dissensual effect of modern literature on the classificatory logic of classical poetics, these artworks defy categorisation as merely propagandist sloganeering or applied art as agitprop. Though their physical insertion into the socio-pedagogic and ideological space of the Sorbonne also represents an inversion of the hierarchical *Beaux-Arts* ontology of art, their significance extends beyond this. The outpouring of linguistic and graphic energy constituted by the production of 400 original works by *L'Atelier populaire* not only mediatised the streets of the Left Bank, as Baudrillard has it, but also act as both clear historical evidence, and symbolic shorthand, for the 'excess of words' through which political subjects were constituted in 1968. The clearest image of this excess of words are the internal photograph of the occupied Beaux-Arts studio wall by Bruno Barbey (Fig. 15). As a psychological image, this functions as a metaphor for being inside of the collective head of *L'Atelier populaire*, seeing the desires of its id being scrutinised and chastised by its superego. However, such a reading runs close to reducing the output of *L'Atelier populaire* to the mere speech [*phōnē*] of protest, or the libidinal cry of desire in the release of the event

of May. What is clear in these images, especially when viewed collectively in their heterology, is that they are images which record the struggle of *logos*, that struggle for the right to be regarded as a legitimate speaking subject, in the eyes of the Communist Party, the Sorbonne, the Situationist International. Each image of *L'Atelier populaire* is an 'instance' of articulation within one or more of these hegemonic discourses, sometimes more than one at once, due to the nature of their model of co-production. At times, the mode of subjectivation represented by a specific image critiques all hegemonic discourses as their *sans-part*. The fragmented or contradictory character of these images is not a weakness, but an indicator of the effectivity of 'politics' on the impossible solidity of ideological discourse.

To avoid explication, and to complement the political effectivity of the production of *L'Atelier populaire*, this chapter has attempted to incorporate elements of 'literarity' into the very form of the thesis itself, involving a chain of theoretical references at times, and the hauntological figure of Diderot, uncle to the children of May. This is undertaken as a gesture of political solidarity, and as an attempt to convey something of the euphoric but contradictory modes of subjectivation within 'the excess of words' of May '68. The ambition of employing this literary mode, following Rancière, is not to adjudicate between correct and incorrect interpretations, but to reveal an aesthetics of knowledges of'68 and also an aesthetics of thesis writing. This is undertaken in the knowledge of possible vulnerabilities to accusations of 'eclecticism' or superficiality.

Coda: Towards an Anarcho-Democratic Politics of Education.

Whilst focusing on the events of May 1968, in order to interrogate the theories of ideological struggle immediate to, and emergent from, them, this thesis also had a broader ambition to bring the university struggles of '68 into alignment with those of the twenty-first century. To this end, and as a coda to this thesis, conclusions can be drawn from all three chapters concerning theories of education. Firstly, that the distinctions between authoritarian or libertarian left pedagogy have apparent correlatives within Marxist-Leninist or *gauchiste* anarcho-communisms. The figure of both the state and the Party intellectual retained by the former have equivalence to the teacher and university ISA rejected by the latter. Secondly, that both 'politics' and 'police', in the Rancièrean sense, could be understood as pedagogic modes, with the former being social-constructivist and student-centred as a theory of education and the latter being authoritarian-didacticist and teacher-centred. Finally, that the physical occupations of universities, and indeed factories and other non-pedagogic but hierarchised spaces of power, can be considered not merely as political practice but also as pedagogic.

As a heuristic, the university occupied represents not just a happening or anarchic carnival but a demonstration of the capacity of each and everyone to teach themselves. The autodidact hypothesis of Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, firstly and foremostly, concerns the equality of all intelligences as a presumption and working methodology. The opposite pedagogic mode proceeds as police function by presuming the fundamental inequality of intelligences and demonstrating this via a display of intellectual mastery on stultified subjects forced into passivity. The lesson of the occupied factory or university, in the words of the LIP occupation [*"c'est possible!"*] (Fig. 9), is that equality is possible, tangible, achievable, and verified in practice. The alternative lesson is clear from Althusser's 'Student Problems' essay, which insists on the impossibility of an 'anarcho-pedagogic' conception of education and research, where 'research doesn't just presuppose an equality

of knowledge, but an equality in the knowledge that is indispensable for conducting true research, rather than its simulacrum' (2011: 15).

This thesis has proceeded from just such an assumption, towards a theory of education whose chief lesson is the revelation of the 'police order' function of all teaching, traditionally understood. Symptoms of this authoritarian pedagogical problematic can be recognised throughout Althusser's work, but especially in the essay above, which forges an alliance of power between university ISA and trade union ISA, mediated by the pedagogue-intellectual. This is almost admitted in a concluding apologia, hidden in the footnotes, which compels students to distinguish between the pedagogical form and the critical content of university teaching (Ibid.: n1). By implication, anachronistic or reactionary teaching techniques are tolerated on the provision that the content of that teaching is progressive. Yet, this is precisely the opposite of what Benjamin concluded much earlier in 'The Author as Producer' (1998: 93-4). For him, supplying revolutionary content is not sufficient if that content does not transform, through its very form, the dominant hegemonic apparatus which frames and legitimises it.

The field of Critical University Studies, arguably inaugurated by Readings' *The University in Ruins* (1996), is barely twenty years old yet still has to effectively escape the double bind epitomised by the Althusserian problematic. On the one hand, to operate inside of the university apparatus that is to be complicit with its disciplinary 'system of measure' and what Jeffrey Williams has called a 'pedagogy of debt'; a hidden curriculum which is entrenched in the US university system and rapidly becoming so in the UK following the trebling of undergraduate tuition fees in 2010. On the other hand, to operate outside of the university apparatus is to run the risk of marginalising oneself from the struggle, which was the conclusion Lenin famously drew on Leftism a century ago. The case of the Edu-Factory Collective (2009; 2011) illustrates these difficulties. Formed out of message boards devoted to twenty-first century Italian university struggles, in 2009 they proposed the formation of a Global Autonomous University, effectively the pedagogic embodiment of *conricerca* and the

multitude, only for it to disband and cease publication a few years later, lacking the financial and institutional support available within the apparatus they wished abolished. A third way has been proposed by Stefano Harney and Fred Moten (2013), who insist that 'the only possible relationship to the university today is a criminal one' (26). For them, this criminality is quite different to 'the kind of fanciful communities of whimsy invoked by Bill Readings at the end of his book' (Harney and Moten: 30; Readings 2006: 180-93). Instead, the 'undercommons' is 'fugitive', 'always at war' or 'always in hiding' and is formed through the 'non-place' of teaching, 'the not-visible other side of teaching' (27), or perhaps what Rancière would characterise as the *sans-part* of teaching. Though it has only been possible to sketch what this sans-part of teaching might look like, it must involve the radical redistribution, and perhaps rejection, of teaching as the reproduction of knowledges, institutions, and of social roles. At the time of writing, a Critical University Studies network has been established at the unlikely site of Cambridge University (Wood 2019), to many the embodiment of UK educational privilege and exclusivity. Though such initiatives are important, they will have to reckon with the double-bind which Althusser faced fifty years ago, not to mention sociologist critiques of the Bourdeusian ilk, which attempt to expose the freedom of critique within the contemporary neoliberal university as 'bourgeois illusion'.

During the same time frame, a wave of autonomous art schools, and popular networks of self-education, have been established in the UK following the post-'Browne Review' (2010) fees regime. Institutions such as London's The School of the Damned (2015-present) and AltMFA (2010-present); Open School East (London / Margate 2013-prsent); Islington Mill Arts Academy (Manchester 2007-present); TOMA (Southend 2015-present), amongst others, have all responded to the trebling of undergraduate tuition fees by forming spontaneous and self-organised economies of pedagogic exchange, embodying what Hakim Bey calls 'temporary autonomous zones' (1985), if not functioning anarchism. Judith Suissa, in the recent book *Anarchism and Education* has suggested that an anarchist philosophy of arts education supplements standard questions of "what should be taught, to whom, and with what in mind?" with the crucial question "by whom?" (2010: 5). Following the

‘commodification’, ‘financialisation’, and ‘marketisation’ (McGettigan 2013) of the UK university, where all art schools are now incorporated, and their effective privatisation following the recent removal of state funding, the question should be raised, as it was in 1968, whether the neoliberal art school is best situated to teach the next generation of artists? Phrased more directly and polemically, can artists teach each other more effectively than art schools?

Critical pedagogy is still reluctant to draw such conclusions. For example, Biesta’s essay ‘Don’t be Fooled by Ignorant Schoolmasters’ (2017) rightly emphasises the difference between educational ‘explication’ and ‘verification’ but warns against decentring the teacher-expert from the latter process, which is argued to be emancipatory. Previously, Biesta had also challenged the egalitarian presumption of all critical pedagogy, a ‘positive utopianism’ or ideological reversal of the type, evidenced in Althusser’s pedagogic essay, albeit inverted, which uncritically figures the knowledge of the oppressed to be superior to that of the oppressor (2008: 501-2). In the weeks leading up to the completion of this manuscript, an open invitation was issued to inaugurate ‘Abolitionist University Studies’ Boggs et al 2019), indicating the academy is slowly coming round to the impossibility of retaining a critical position to the university from within, if at all. However, as this thesis has demonstrated with its central case study, such questions are certainly not new. Despite the historic pedagogic, and political differences in their respective conjunctures, the question of the police order university unites the occupations of the Sorbonne’s art schools in 1968 with the more recent occupations within art departments at the University of Amsterdam, Central Saint Martins (London) and the National College of Art and Design (Dublin). The ‘lesson’ that all of these insert within the contemporary university is not simply a reversal of repressive pedagogies for emancipatory, or the positivity of organic student knowledge from negative and oppressive lecturer’s knowledge, but a ‘theatocratic’ performance of the *sans-part* of the university, which not only radicalises managerial notions of inclusion, but also the introduces dissensus within the ideological presumptions of neoliberal consensus, which is also to begin to picture democratic and political education.

Fig. 24: Bruno Barbey (1968) *Paris. May 68.* © Magnum Photos.

Fig. 25: Guy Le Querrec (1968) *Ile-de-France. Paris. 6th arrondissement. Place de l'Odeon. Thursday, May 23th 1968. Graffiti on the wall of the Theatre de l'Odeon*. © Magnum Photos.
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