ON INTERPELLATION:
an Introduction to Specular Sociology

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And some of them wonder'd on
the mirrour,
That borne was up into the
master tow'r,
How men might in it such
thinges see.
Another answer'd and said, it
might well be
Naturally by compositions
Of anglis, and of sly reflexions.

Geoffrey Chaucer

Abstract

Louis Althusser's theory of interpellation represents certain social phenomena (including, but not limited to: class, state power, philosophy, and art) as being constituted by mirror structures of mis/recognition (cf. Althusser, 2014, 2003, 1971a, 1970). A specular interpretation of socialisation suggests how the academic discipline of sociology could further its epistemic intent by critically studying the specular indices of social structures: hence the prospect of a *specular* sociology. Therein this thesis applies Althusser's description of structural causality to explain the overdetermined, and therefore contingent, consequences of interpellation upon individual agency in historical (Part I), logical (Part II), and empirical terms (Part III). Each part (I, II & III) is comprised of three chapters with each chapter containing four sections: (§1.1–§9.4). The readability of a given text is frequently abstracted from the material basis of prestructured knowledge for reasons of ostensibly immediate intelligibility, in effect, mediate forms of textuality do not receive sufficient recursive iteration during practices of socialisation (cf. Sollers, 1983; Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe, 1992; Pêcheux, 1982; Angermüller, 2005; Solomon, 2012). To understand the interpellative effects of socially instituted mis/recognition Althusser formulated a general theory of discourse (GT of discourse) that sought to establish a "differential" method for the analysis of discursive "elements" and "constraints" (q.v. Althusser, 2003). Although Althusser's GT of discourse did not find final form his envisaged research program does present a preliminary exposition of interpellative effects in relation to structures of discourse (q.v. Montag, 2015). The linear inception of interpellation is referenced in the historical movement of textuality, due to this, a non-linear reading of social action becomes the interpretive gesture of post-interpellative agency announced by the introduction to specular sociology that is read in the succeeding lines. Interpellative acts are thus conveyed in the linearity of discursive structures which inform the ideal conventions of historically specific enunciative systems (cf. Foucault, 1972; Searle, 1969). The delineation of this discourse defines the incipient field of specular sociology.

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A Prelusion to the Philosophy of Acknowledgements

What is an "acknowledgement"? Moreover — what are "acknowledgements"? Is one acknowledgement always the same as another or do they differ, categorically, by degree and kind?[1] The plural form of acknowledgement/s indicates there can be more than one, however, what does a singular acknowledgement acknowledge? — and how does the intended recipient (of one or perhaps many — as the acknowledged addressee) communicate that it has been received/acknowledged?; and must they (is one compelled to acknowledge acknowledgements)? An acknowledgement may not only differ in degree (the amount of acknowledgment given: which could be deemed excessive or inadequate), it may also differ in kind (e.g.: collegial acknowledgement, the acknowledgement of authority, formal acknowledgement, belated acknowledgement, cordial acknowledgement, or indirect acknowledgement &c.). If absolute acknowledgement is impossible — insofar as one must acknowledge the differences in degree and kind between acknowledgements

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[1]Here I am employing Immanuel Kant's concept of transcendental apperception from his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/1998) for a brief exposition pertaining to empirical acknowledgement/s and performativity. Kant states that the 'I think' of cognition is constituted as a transcendental unity of apperception: "apperception" is the term Kant uses to explain the synthetic unity of *empirical* consciousness. "All empirical consciousness...has a necessary relation to transcendental consciousness (preceding all particular experience), namely the consciousness of myself, as original apperception. It is therefore absolutely necessary that in my cognition all consciousness belong to one consciousness (of myself)" (Kant, 1998: 237). The manifold representations of acknowledgement/s that are empirically differentiated by degree (a quantitative relation) and kind (a qualitative relation) must, Kant suggests, be unified in *one* consciousness (i.e. "consciousness of myself" or what he calls the "transcendental unity of apperception"). Empirical experience — such as the performative action of acknowledgement/s — necessitates a transcendental ground — this ground is the apperception of the "I". "For all grounds of determination of my existence that can be encountered in me are representations, and as such require something persistent that is distinct even from them, in relation to which their change, thus my existence in the time in which they change, can be determined" (ibid.: 327).

— then it could be surmised that acknowledgement is *relative* to that be-ing acknowledged by the address[2]. The one purportedly addressed, in such cases, would acknowledge it knows another by a gesture of "acknowledge-ment" relative to who (and/or what) is to be acknowledged and according to the prescribed conventions for this designatum. Nothwithstanding the hypothesis that acknowledgement is an act of mis/recognition which "I" must acknowledge because acknowledgement cannot be absolutely assured this implies, although not indiscriminately, that it functions to reassure belief in the dogmatic, and therefore, uncritical, behaviour of acknowledgement/s. Examples of such mis/acknowledgement are clearly evinced in speech acts, where "acknowledgement" can be both constative and performative, with their differential features of enunciation exemplifed by contrasting locutionary and illocutionary effects that become apparent in discursive conduct.

Without acquiescing to preconceived, and unacknowledged, norms of knowledge — for the specious benefit of understanding structures of acknowl-edgement that are undefined or indefinite — a communication is here being initiated for the transcendental apperception of empirical acknowledgement/s. Thus conceived the transcendental apperception of acknowledgement/s can be either "happy" or "unhappy" — felicitous — or infelicitous — in accordance with performative principles (cf. Kant, 1998; Austin, 1962). In cases where an object is correctly acknowledged this is an example of happy acknowl-edgement. In cases where an object is incorrectly acknowledged this is an example of unhappy acknowledgement. In the latter case it is not that the acknowledgement was false, it still took place performatively, however, it was not successful, the act was, in some way, incongruous. J.L. Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* provides this striking illustration of unhappy acknowledgement: "For example, at a party, you say, when picking sides, 'I pick George': George grunts 'I'm not playing'. Has George been picked? Undoubtedly, the situation is an unhappy one" (Austin, 1962: 28). The performance of a locutionary act could acknowledge the transcendental unity of apperception, yet, this does not suffice to ensure a happy or unhappy instance of acknowledgement. This is because both the degree and kind of acknowledgement/s instantiated will vary in respect of locutionary experience and such experience is not always a felicitous instance of empirical cognition: it may indeed, be an infelicitous one.

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[2]By Kant's reasoning acknowledgement cannot be a "pure" cognition because it is empirical. "But a cognition is called absolutely pure, in particular, in which no experience or sensation at all is mixed in, and that is thus fully *a priori*... For everything practical, insofar as it contains motives is *related to feelings*, which belong among empirical sources of cognition" (Kant, 1998: 134; emphasis added).

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Analytic Précis

The openly critical theories of Karl Marx and Louis Althusser that are aligned with the perspicacious evidence gathered from Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* — found in the postface of this thesis — iteratively recapitulates the analytic form of inquiry undertaken in the ensuing research. Kuhn's paradigmatic dissemblance of normal science vis-à-vis scientific revolutions exhibits a clear charter for the comprehension of interpellative constructs as a *historical* process. Post-interpellative social thought, viewed in such Kuhnian terms, *conceptually* induces a paradigm shift apropos the customary narratives of "normal" social science. Understood within the scientific scope of Althusser's programme this is an an application of historical materialism to theoretical practice. For purposes of explicative concision — with a view to the reader — I will here outline the findings of each of the nine main sections as an analytic précis to *On Interpellation: An Introduction to Specular Sociology.*

> §1 THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF INTERPELLATION: Interpellation results from the *pre-definition* of social reality insofar as the discursive arrangements of society (scientific and non-scientific) are historically maintained by structures of legitimacy antecedent to an individual's entry into the order of discourse. An image to illustrate this idea is found in the pre-constructed perceptions produced by practices of painting (i.e., visual art) which are "hidden" in the surface of the canvas by technical means (e.g. the techniques of linear perspective). By analogy the structure of interpellated social relations is guaranteed by the existence of state apparatuses that psycho-socially portray the assumed "perspectives" of lived experience.

> §2 ALTHUSSER'S FELLOW WORKERS: The events of May 1968 in France were an instance of state repression that Althusser attempted to theorize in relation to interpellated subjectivity (as it bears upon Kuhn's theory mentioned above May 1968 appeared to be the sign of a major social paradigm shift). Althusser, his colleagues, and students,

during and after this historic period, articulate various responses to the subject of interpellation in academic domains as diverse as philosophy, anthropology, literary theory, and history. In regard to questions of the interpellative effects of discursive formations (such as those found in the aforementioned fields of research) Althusser conceives of a general theory of discourse to specify the epistemological elements and constraints of scientific discourse, aesthetic discourse, unconscious discourse, and ideological discourse, respectively.

§3 THEORETICAL PRACTICE: Althusser's description of theoretical practice serves to differentiate Marxist philosophy (dialectical materialism) from the science of history (historical materialism). This distinction provides a methodological insight integral to the vision of specular sociology given that the theoretical basis for Althusser's concept "epistemological break" is derived, genealogically, from the researches of Gaston Bachelard concerning the history of science. The Bachelardian notion of "epistemological obstacles", as it is applied by Althusser (and as I apply it to specular sociology), marks an attempt to divest social research of pre-scientific thinking by explaining the objective conditions of a "problematic" without reflecting the practical ideologies of a particular conjuncture.

§4 THE ABSENT CAUSE: Althusser's theory of structural causality (alternatively titled the absent cause or metonynic causality) explains the generative mechanisms of ideological, economic, and political elements within the historical constraints of subjective experience. This causal framework structures the disparate forms of interpellation that are presented in historically determined societies. The interpellative elements of social structures, are, in many cases, visibly absent during processes of structuration and this prevents an immediate understanding of specular sociality. Theoretical practice, as outlined above, registers an epistemological method to ascertain the theoretical conditions of Althusser's "absent cause".

§5 HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE: Marx's paradigmatic break, according to Althusser, is located in the separation of idealist from materialist accounts of theoretical practice. Importantly, this break reveals forms of partisanship in theory in favour of one or other of these positions, however, Deleuze presents a third possibility: virtual materialism. Virtual materialism suggests how to *rematerialize* idealist thought in virtual terms, specifically, using the notion of virtual time which is anticipated by Althusser's theory of historical overdetermination.

§6 Plasticity and the Traces of Experience: Unless theorized the effects of interpellation remain unconscious in the same way that Freud's discoveries would remain unknown had he not pushed forward with his prodigious researches. Today interpellative effects can be registered in the domain of neuroscience as material traces of experience in the brain. The plasticity of neuronal networks permits the inscription of experience within historically-specific forms of societal organization. Interpellative constructs are embedded neuronally as a cognitive corollaries of material practices by the MNS (Mirror Neuron System).

§7 Transcendental Empiricism: Within specular forms of intersubjective cognition it is conceivable that empirical reality is, in fact, merely the anticipated vision of certain social strata. For this reason theoretical practice is required to re-evaluate scientifically what is objectively "empirical". Deleuze, speculatively, makes remarks in this direction using the notion of "transcendental empiricism". This notion is central to the a-subjective basis of specular sociology. Transcendental empiricism supersedes dogmatic empiricism theoretically insofar as Deleuze's transcendental field is not limited by a logic of appropriation.

§8 Class: Structures of class are interpellated by the inscription of experience as an effect of structural causality. Structural causality is institutionally established in contexts of mis/recognition by mechanisms of normalized social behaviour which determine the reproduction of income inequality and wider social privations (including digital disparities). Institutional literation, in this section, specifies indices of performative interpellation found in class-based forms of cognition. To evince this the "literary mode of production" is used conceptually in furtherance of detailing qualitative differences in "class codes".

§9 The Horizon of Specular Sociology: The horizon of specular sociology expands the view of society to include what is normally invisible: the effects of interpellation within subjective "interiority". This "letter" (i.e., symbolic form) of interpellation is determined by socio-historical practices of linear graphism — suggesting that such effects are — in Jacques Derrida's terminology — *logocentric*. Methodologically a grammatological explanation is provided here to demonstrate that interpellation can be readily deconstructed using the analytic principles of historical epistemology resulting in new forms of textual understanding (e.g., post-interpellative protocols for apprehending textuality).

Preface

There are two noted academic philosophers about whose thought Louis Althusser had *comparatively* little to say: Ludwig Wittgenstein and Edmund Husserl. Althusser was evidently aware of their work for he references both Wittgenstein and Husserl by name, on occasion, yet, he did not *read* their writings as acutely as he read those of Jean-Jacques Rousseau[1], Karl Marx[2]; G.W.F. Hegel[3] Jacques Lacan[4], Baruch Spinoza[5], Niccolò Machiavelli[6], and Charles-Louis Montesquieu[7]. In one citation from *Reading Capital* Althusser regards Husserl's phenomenological method as fundamentally caught in a "vicious circle" whereby Husserl is unable to extricate himself from the metaphysical assumptions of his own philosophical system. "The whole history of the 'theory of knowledge' in Western philosophy from the famous 'Cartesian circle' to the circle of the Hegelian or Husserlian teleology of Reason *shows* us that this 'problem of knowledge' is a closed space, i.e., a vicious circle (*the vicious circle of the mirror relation of ideological recognition*)" (Althusser, 1970: 57; emphasis added). The circular reasoning of Western metaphysics represents an ideal structure of interpellation that mis/recognizes the elliptical form of ideology, and consequently, mirrors epistemological

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[1]q.v. "Rousseau: The Social Contract" in *Politics and History: Montesquieu, Rousseau, Hegel and Marx* (Althusser, 1972).

[2]q.v. *Reading Capital* (Althusser, 1970); *For Marx* (Althusser, 1969); *On the Reproduction of Capitalism* (Althusser, 2014); *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists* (Althusser, 1990); *The Philosophy of the Encounter* (Althusser, 2006); *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* (Althusser, 1971a); *Philosophy for Non-Philosophers* (Althusser, 2017b); *How to be a Marxist in Philosophy* (Althusser, 2017a).

[3]q.v. *The Spectre of Hegel* (Althusser, 1997a); "Lenin before Hegel" in *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays*; "Marx's relation to Hegel" in *Politics and History: Montesquieu, Rousseau, Hegel and Marx* (Althusser, 1972).

[4]q.v. *Writings on Psychoanalysis: Freud and Lacan* (Althusser, 1996).

[5]q.v. "The Only Materialist Tradition, Part I: Spinoza" in *The New Spinoza* (Althusser, 1997b); "On Spinoza" in *Essays in Self Criticism* (Althusser, 1976).

[6]q.v. *Machiavelli and Us* (Althusser, 1999).

[7]q.v. "Montesquieu: Politics and History" in *Politics and History: Montesquieu, Rousseau, Hegel and Marx* (Althusser, 1972).

guarantees of "truth" without perceiving the expropriation occulted by this vicious circle.

For Althusser the typically unexamined purpose of such metaphysical discourse is to justify, both philosophically and legally, individual ownership as a preordained identity between *subject* and *object*: "the subject-object couple, the 'subject' and 'its' object, is merely a reflection within the philosophical field... of the juridical categories of the 'legal subject', 'owner' *of itself and* of its goods (things). So with consciousness: it is owner of itself (*self*-consciousness) and of its goods (consciousness *of its* object, of *its* objects)" (Althusser, 1990: 128)[8]. This jurisprudence of private ownership is contained in the discursive structure of Husserl's phenomenology as an exigency of "intentionality". "Intentionality is the theory of the '*of*' (consciousness *of* self = consciousness *of* its object)... Always the same need for a *guarantee*!" (ibid.). A subject 'owns itself' in acts of intentionality and is thus metaphysically guaranteed by the ideological superstructure insofar as it mis/recognizes the legal right to private ownership (ibid.: 128-129). The vicious circle of the subject-object couple is essential to state philosophy because state power guarantees a subject's "free" intentionality. "The dominant ideology is the ideology of the dominant class, therefore of the class which holds State power. From Plato to Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel and even Husserl, philosophy is obsessed by the question of the State" (ibid.: 263). There is textual material, however, to support the possibility that Althusser unintentionally misread Husserl's theory of intentionality[9]. Althusser's interpretation of Husserl's work was mediated by Derrida[10], Trân Duc Thao, and Jean-Toussaint Desanti; furthermore, Althusser's direct theoretical engagement with Husserl's oeuvre, was, he admits, substantively quite limited. "I... got to know a little about Husserl... via Desanti (a Husserlian Marxist) and Tran Duc

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[8]The idea of capitalist "free enterprise", Althusser notes, is a corollary of individual freedom. "And it is quite true that bourgeois ideology is fundamentally *economist*...This is because ideas find their foundations in the categories of Bourgeois *Law* and the legal ideology materially indispensable to the functioning of Bourgeois Law: liberty of the Person, that is, in principle, his right freely to dispose of himself, his right to property, his free will and his body (the proletarian: a Person 'free' to sell himself!)" (Althusser, 1976: 86).

[9]Althusser's reading of Husserl was not an "innocent reading": by Althusser's own admission theoretical work must assess its own conditions of readability *historically*. "If there are no innocent readings, that is because every reading merely reflects in its lessons and rules the real culprit: the conception of knowledge underlying the object of knowledge which makes knowledge what it is" (Althusser, 1970: 10).

[10]Jacques Derrida wrote a commentary on Husserl's "Origin of Geometry" which he gave to Althusser to peruse. "I remember having given him the manuscript of my "Introduction to the Origin of Geometry by Husserl" in 1961. The book appeared in 1962. Althusser wrote me some very generous and encouraging things on that subject" (Derrida, 1993: 195).

Thao, whose thesis I found brilliant. Of Husserl himself, I only ever read his
Cartesian Meditations and *Crisis*" (Althusser, 1993: 176). Had Althusser
read Husserl in a more exacting manner, as he did in his studies of Marx's
research, Husserl's vicious circle of ideological intentionality could have been
reconsidered in light of an epistemological break by means of theoretical
practice (q.v. Table 3.1.). Husserl's account of intentional consciousness
may offer, contrary to Althusser's supposition, the theoretical grounds to
methodologically improve his theory of interpellation. Intentional conscious-
ness, in such a phenomenological reading of interpellation, would redefine
the vicious circle of Western metaphysics without repeating the preconceived
questions of an ideological problematic. Husserl's phenomenology cannot be
dismissed as conceptually irrelevant to the study of interpellation, in fact, as
Thao maintains, intentionality is a material practice that is observable in all
forms of social action. Although the metaphysical conditions of interpellation
are mis/recognized because they are dissimulated by the the mirror relation
of ideological recognition, Husserl's theory of intentionality can potentially
indicate how structures of interpellation are ideally formed, i.e., describe
the processes of idealization that are initiated by interpellative practices (cf.
Thao, 1984, 1986). A phenomenology of interpellation will not be presented
here, however, such a study is a foreseeable horizon for specular sociology.
This is the first horizon prefaced: a phenomenology of interpellation for the
study of specular sociology. Althusser assumes little knowledge of analytic
philosophers (although there is a conspicuous mention of J.L. Austin's work
on "performativity" in Althusser's *Philosophy for Non-Philosophers*) which
he believes is due to being generally unenlightened about any developments
outside of French philosophy: "I myself was ignorant about everyone, in-
cluding Carnap, Russell, Frege, and therefore about logical positivism, as
well as about Wittgenstein and English analytic philosophy" (Althusser,
1993: 176). The second horizon for specular sociology to be prefaced here
is a Wittgensteinian reading of interpellation, that is, interpellation as a
"language-game"[11]. The term "language-game" is used by Wittgenstein in
an attempt to encompass the many and varied forms of linguistic practice.
Some of Wittgenstein's examples of "language-games" include:

> "Giving orders, and obeying them—"

> "Describing the appearance of an object, or giving its measurements—"

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[11]The discursive relationship between interpellation and language-games has received a
precursory outline in "Althusser and Wittgenstein: Ideology and the Therapeutic Analysis
of Language" by Pedro Diego Karczmarczyk from *Rethinking Marxism* (Karczmarczyk,
2013). Karczmarczyk does not, however, examine the specular structures of language-games
as examples of mis/recognition.

"Forming and testing a hypothesis—"

"Making up a story; and reading it—"

"Asking, thanking, cursing, and praying—" (Wittgenstein, 1963: 11-12)

Language-games are instances of rule-following behaviour where the variation amongst types is exhibited by different *rules* being applicable to each "game" (e.g. ordering, describing, speculating, hypothesizing, narrating, requesting &c.). "And this multiplicity is not something fixed, given once and for all; but new types of language, new language-games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete or forgotten" (Wittgenstein, 1963: 11). There are, therefore, distinct rules of formation for language-games that represent their differences in kind. "Here the term 'language-*game*' is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or a form of life" (ibid.: emphasis in original). The application of Wittgenstein's theory of "language-games" to social phenomena has seen considerable academic interest, particularly in linguistics, and the sociology of knowledge; it also continues to garner ongoing support in many other fields (cf. Brown, 1974; Bloor, 1983; Pleasants, 2002; Fayard, 2017). Althusser's general theory of discourse is, in distinctive ways, analogous to Wittgenstein's theory of language-games. Althusser seeks to register the conditions of discourse as "elements" and "constraints" of discursive differentiation: thus an analysis of the rule-following behaviour of language-games suggests ways to understand the effects of interpellative practice as socio-historical *forms of life*. Interpellative forms of life, to follow Wittgenstein's thinking, share common features: "family resemblances". "Consider for example the proceedings that we call 'games'. I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on... we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing... I can can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than 'family resemblances' " (Wittgenstein, 1963: 32). The most marked family resemblance of ideological language-games in Althusser's work is the "subject-form of discourse". There are, additionally, other family resemblances within scientific discourse, aesthetic discourse, and unconscious discourse that can also be differentiated by their competing elements and constraints; for example, dictating an order is not forming a hypothesis and aesthetic musing is not a Freudian slip. With reference to the work of Husserl and Wittgenstein this preface serves, primarily, to indicate two potential avenues for future research:

1. A phenomenological description of specular sociology.

2. A specular analysis of interpellative language-games.

Part I:
Historical

In any concept there are usually bits or components that come from other concepts, which corresponded to other problems and presupposed other planes. This is inevitable because each concept carries out a new cutting-out, takes on new contours, and must be reactivated or recut.

GILLES DELEUZE AND FELIX GUATTARI

1

The General Concept of Interpellation
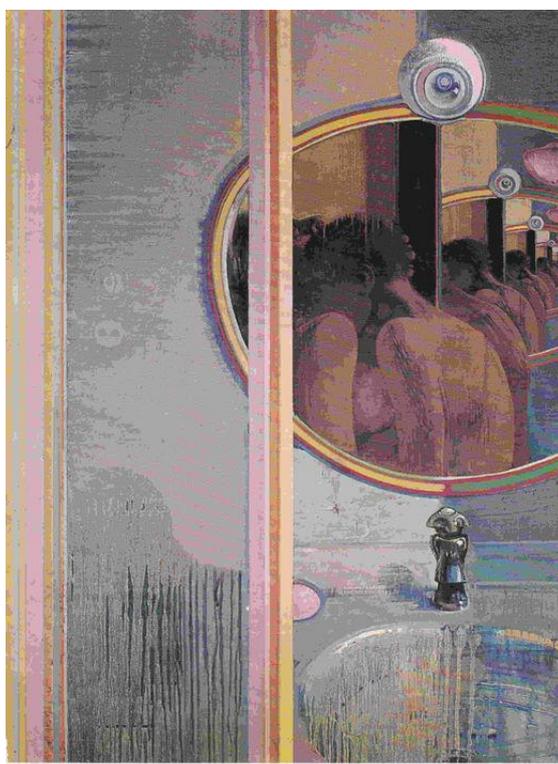
Figure 1.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Alle Spalle del Desiderio* 1966

1.1 Painting the Abstract

The technique of *mise en abyme*[1] appears in several of Leonardo Cremonini's paintings: it delivers an effect that suggests a kind of perceptual limit-form, an ideal limit — a vision within a vision, a perception within a perception, a reflection on reflection — the abstract distance of perspective, or a point of view (Fig. 1.1)[2]. Louis Althusser likes Cremonini's methods of pictorial representation[3]: he says as much in his essay "Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract"[4]. What Althusser appreciates most in Cremonini's works is how he "depicts" the epistemic depth of visual abstraction on the flat surface of a canvas (Althusser, 1971a). Cremonini's great talent as a painter, according to Althusser, is defined by his capacity to represent *abstract* entities and relations — thereby *visualizing abstraction* in the form of the painting — in other words — successfully "painting abstraction". Throughout the painterly brushstrokes found on Cremonini's canvases Althusser discerns a depiction of the invisible relations determining, and determined by, visible social processes, i.e., the imperceptible determinants of capitalist society (e.g. value, price and profit). Not only does Cremonini possess the technical mastery to portray such abstract relations but also, in Althusser's view, he apprehends the conditions of visual art as a tension between optics, i.e., the science of light and vision (Latin: *perspectiva communis*), and aesthetics (Latin: *perspectiva artificialis*), i.e., the ideology of sense experience[5].

Cremonini's outstanding merit as an artist is a result of the dislocation (*décalage*) he introduces between the subject and object of aesthetic experience. In its conception and execution Cremonini's work is anti-humanist,

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[1]This term was coined by French author André Gide to denote the internal reduplication of a literary trope in a text; for example, inserting a narrative inside a narrative to produce a succession of duplications as a figurative device (Baldick, 2015). In visual art the same technique is applied by using the repetition of images: it is alternatively called the Droste effect or the double-mirroring effect.

[2]Cremonini received the following notable awards for his artwork: *Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres* in France, the Marzotto International Prize, and the Prize from the Italian President of the Republic. In later life he became Director of Studies at the *École des beaux-arts* in Paris (Saltoun, 2018).

[3]For an overview of the Althusser-Cremonini nexus see Sarah Wilson's (2010) study *The Visual World of French Theory*, chapter one: 'From Sartre to Althusser: Lapoujade, Cremonini and the Turn to Anti-Humanism'.

[4]First published in *Démocratie Nouvelle* (1966).

[5]Dominique Raynaud has written a historical introduction to the notion of perspective in "Perspectiva Naturalis/Artificialis" from *Studies on Binocular Vision*. "Perspective, as a system of visual representation, draws its name from the Medieval Latin term *perspectiva* which means 'optics'. We owe this linguistic connection to the fact that certain principles of perspective developed from theories of vision" (Raynaud, 2016: 1)

and therefore, does not suffer from the typical problems of "contemporary art criticism", which Althusser considers to be an example of bourgeois humanism[6]. It is the specular correspondence between the subject and the object of artistic production that Althusser denounces as the "aesthetics of creation", and the "aesthetics of consumption", respectively. In the first case works of art are "mysteries of the subjectivity of the painter, who inscribes his 'creative project' in the ideal materiality of his 'creation' " (Althusser, 1971a: 229). In the second case works of art are "consumed" in accordance with the principles of aesthetic "taste" (e.g. such as that found in Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement)* which either communicates in the language of philosophy "the complicity of accomplices in ignorance" or "reveals to one and and all that it is no more than a branch of... gastronomy" (ibid)[7]. These pointed remarks are directed towards what Althusser identifies as the two basic presuppositions of aesthetic ideology: "The aesthetics of consumption and the aesthetics of creation are merely one and the same: they both depend upon the same basic ideological categories" (ibid.: 230). The two fundamental presuppositions of aesthetic ideology are, Althusser states, the "category of the *subject*" and, with it, the "category of the object" (ibid.: 230–231).

Aesthetic "knowledge" is, therefore, no more than the *self-identification* of the aesthetic subject with the work in which it recognizes itself. When considered as the "creator or consumer (producer of a 'work', producer of an aesthetic judgement), endowed with the attributes of... freedom, project, act of creation... aesthetic need, etc", the subject, Althusser explains, is an ideological category. The "category of the object" is an ideological category insofar as "the 'objects' represented" are taken to originate with the subject's aesthetic essence (ibid.: 231). Althusser describes this experience of mis/recognition in the following terms: "Thus the subject of creation is no more than the *mirror reflection* (and this reflection is aesthetic *ideology* itself) of the subjectivity of consumption", in other words, "the 'work' is no more than the phenomenon of the artist's subjectivity" (ibid.: emphasis added). In Cremonini's paintings Althusser finds an insightful representa-

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[6]Defining humanism Althusser states: "[m]an at the centre of his world, in the philosophical sense of the term, the originating essence and the end of his world that is what we can call theoretical humanism in the strong sense". (Althusser, 1976: 198). "Humanism", Althusser explains, is a form of bourgeois ideology: "this bourgeois ideology is actually, in its deepest sense, constituted by the ideological pair *economism/humanism*...In a bourgeois society it always has played and still does play the role of hiding the class-determined economic and economistic practices governed by the relations of production, exploitation and exchange, and by bourgeois law" (ibid.: 85).

[7]Introducing Kant's *Critique of Judgement* Nicholas Walker notes "the distinctively aesthetic character that belongs to *the judgement of taste refers to the way the subject is affected* and enhanced in its own feeling of life" (Walker, 2007: xiv; emphasis added).

tion of "determinate absence" (ibid.: 236). By dislocating the figure-ground perspective, and the subject-object relationship, Cremonini paints his visions on the immanent and unified space of the canvas in such a way that he illustrates the limits of social perception. These abstractions relay, in Althusser's estimation, a successful attempt to visually represent absent causality (q.v. §4.1). With figure and ground dislocated Cremonini's paintings give equal importance to both the "subject" of the work and its abstract conditions of social existence. Cremonini's pictorial gestalts present, in Althusser's account, the structure of absence as the foundation of ideologically lived experience. "Cremonini thus 'paints'... the history of men as a history *marked*, as early as the first childhood games, and even in the anonymity of faces... by the *abstraction* of their sites, spaces, objects, i.e *'in the last instance'* by the real abstraction which determines and sums up these first abstractions: the relations which constitute their living conditions" (ibid.: 236)[8]. Althusser sees in Cremonini's scenes a remarkable rendering of structural causality where the lived experience of ideology is *represented through its absence* or inability to be directly perceived.

Describing these invisible structures of social mis/recognition in relation to Cremonini's illustrations of absent causality in the medium of paint Althusser writes: "The structure which controls the *concrete* existence of men, i.e. which *informs the lived ideology* of the relations between men and objects and between objects and men, this structure... can never be depicted by its presence, *in person*, positively, in relief, but only by traces and effects, negatively, by indices of absence..." (ibid.: 237). The human face (i.e., the face of the "person"), according to Althusser, has special (in)-significance in Cremonini's paintings — Cremonini distances himself from "humanist-religious ideology of the function of the human face in art" — in their anonymity Cremonini's human faces present "the actual cancellation of the categories of humanist ideology" (ibid.: 237-238)[9]. The human face is no longer a source of "aesthetic truth" but a *surface* and *interface* of social relations as

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[8]Evidently Althusser's use of the term "real abstraction" is a reference to Marx's studies of commodity production in *Capital*. Alfred Sohn-Rethel examines this process in *Intellectual and Manual Labour*. "The unproclaimed theme of *Capital* and of the commodity analysis is in fact the *real abstraction* uncovered there. Its scope reaches further than economics — indeed it concerns the heritage of philosophy far more directly than it concerns political economy" (Sohn-Rethel, 1978: 20-21).

[9]Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari discuss the human face and its relation to "abstract machines" in *A Thousand Plateaus*: "Faces are not basically individual... The face constructs the wall that the signifier needs in order to bounce off of; it constitutes the wall of the signifier, the frame or screen...Concrete faces cannot be assumed to come ready-made. They are engendered by an *abstract machine of faciality* (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 168).

material practices. "That is why his painting is profoundly anti-humanist, and materialist" (ibid: 239). Cremonini thus visually negates, through the "effectivity of the *abstract relations*" the "humanist-religious ideological function of the human face" (ibid.: 237-238)[10]. The faces Cremonini paints: "have not been individualized in the ideological form of identifiable subjects, it is because they are not the expression of their 'souls', but the expression... of an absence, visible in them, the absence of the structural relations which govern their world, their gestures and even their expression of freedom" (ibid.: 239). Althusser's essay 'Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract' contains both an examination of the theoretical relationship between ideology and the production of visual art, and, a number of important remarks regarding factors that inform the process of interpellation. Althusser finds the human face of "humanist-religious" ideology depicted as the "seat of the 'soul', of subjectivity, and therefore the visible proof the existence of the human *subject* with all the ideological force of the concept of the *subject*" (ibid.: 238). This problem is one to which Althusser constantly returns and reconsiders through varying determinants, namely, the ideology of the subject-form. For Althusser the subject, as it typically defined, is "the centre from which the 'world' is organized... a perceiving subject... an active, 'creative', subject... a free subject and hence as responsible for its objects and their meaning" (ibid.: 238). This received definition of the subject is characteristic of "bourgeois ideology"[11]. Rather than being the centre of the world or the perceiving, active, free subject, at all times culpable, as the supreme seat of consciousness, Althusser presents an account whereby the subject is radically decentred and does not, and cannot, coincide with the world or itself. The process of interpellation is, in part, the means by which the unity of subject, in the sense of the bourgeois subject, is maintained.

As well as seeing in Cremonini's work references to ideology, the 'face' of subjectivity, real abstraction, and structural causality, Althusser also identifies Cremonini's preoccupation with specular effects. Mirrors feature conspicuously in several of Cremonini's abstract scenes and Althusser does not neglect to draw attention to this fact. It is the particular use Cremonini makes of them that Althusser finds so compelling. The specular reflection

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[10]The "religion of art", is for Althusser, "the secular religion of modern times" (Althusser, 2003: 6).

[11]Georges Canguilhem (1981: 21) provides a comprehensive definition of bourgeois ideology in 'What is Scientific Ideology?': "[b]ourgeois ideologies are reactions symptomatic of the existence of conflicting social situations, that is, of class struggles, and at the same time they deny in theory the concrete problem whose existence brings these struggles about" — translated into English by Mike Shortland from *Idéologie et rationalité dans l'historie des sciences de la vie* (1977).

of ideology is mirrored in Cremonini's paintings through the incapacity of subjects to recognise themselves — they cannot see themselves *directly* — his subjects persist in reflecting an oblique, incomplete, or sometimes — deformed — image. "Cremonini's human faces are such that they cannot be *seen*, i.e. identified as bearers of the ideological function of the expression of *subjects*. That is why they are so 'badly' represented, hardly outlined, as if instead of being the authors of their gestures, they were merely their *trace*" (ibid.: 239).

In 1964 two years prior to the publication of 'Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract' there appeared in the journal *La Nouvelle Critique* an essay of Althusser's entitled "Freud and Lacan". This essay indicates the extent to which Althusser was familiar with psychoanalysis and how this field became a theoretical resource for his work on interpellation[12]. "Freud and Lacan" is simultaneously an agreement with Jacque Lacan's call for a "return to Freud", an explanation of Sigmund Freud's scientificity (i.e. psychoanalysis as a scientific practice), and an introduction to the role of psychoanalysis in ideology critique. The imaginary, the symbolic order, and the de-centred subject all feature as concepts in Althusser's exposition and in the conclusion there is a decisive remark indicating the future direction of Althusser's research program. Discussing Freud's discoveries Althusser likens the de-centring of the subject described by Freud psychoanalytically to the de-centrings achieved by Karl Marx and Nicolaus Copernicus in their respective fields. "Since Copernicus, we have known that the earth is not the 'centre' of the universe. Since Marx we have known that the human subject, the economic, political or philosophical ego is not the 'centre' of history" (Althusser, 1971a: 218). In Freud's research Althusser finds another de-centred phenomenon: the structure of subjectivity itself. "In turn, Freud has discovered for us... that the human subject is de-centred, constituted by a structure which has no 'centre' either, except in the *imaginary recognition* of the 'ego', i.e. in the ideological formations in which it 'recognizes' itself" (ibid.: emphasis added).

Table 1.1: Ex-centric Representation

Copernicus	De-centred Earth
Marx	De-centred History
Freud	De-centred Subject

This leads Althusser to conclude that the "return to Freud" is a key

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[12]The function of "familial ideology" (i.e. the ideology of the *family* structure) is developed by Althusser in "Freud and Lacan" which later takes expanded form as a decisive factor within processes of interpellation (Althusser, 1996: 32).

precursor to the research he envisages undertaking on processes of ideological subjection. "It must be clear that this has opened up one of the ways which may perhaps lead us some day to a better understanding of this *structure of misrecognition*, which is of particular concern for all investigations into ideology" (ibid.: 219). A more detailed formulation of the "structure of misrecognition" appears in *La Pensée* (1970) in an article entitled 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)' and it is here that Althusser explicitly articulates the concept of interpellation as a *social structure* of mis/recognition (q.v. §1.2).

The aesthetic efforts of Cremonini with paint, brush and canvas portray, for Althusser, an attempt to construct a figurative visual language to register the effects of interpellation as an imperceptible, i.e., "absent", structure. Althusser concedes, however, that art is not science — and nor can it be — given its general *modus operandi*. "Art. . . does not give us a knowledge in the strict sense. . . I believe that the peculiarity of art is to 'make us see' (nous donner à voir), 'make us perceive', 'make us feel' something that *alludes* to reality" (Althusser, 1971a: 222). Thus, although Cremonini's work may have the effect of inducing allusions to the real, this cannot dispense with the rigours of scientific research: hence Althusser's emphasis on the process of theoretical practice for the production of knowledge (q.v. Table 3.1.). Cremonini's paintings of real abstraction on canvas cannot be confused with the processes which determine real abstraction within social life, however, as Althusser points out, they can "make us see" something which is in fact supersensible, i.e., absent causality (q.v. §4.1).

The mirror-function of mis/recognition, as an effect of interpellation, cannot be directly observed in a mirror and yet pictures of a malfunctioning mirrors, with misrepresented subjects, suggest the kinds of theoretical problems the concept of interpellation seeks to explain. The misrepresentations that determine a subject as apparently free and autonomous do not originate with the subject "itself" but rather are the result of social conditions which pre-exist it, i.e., the relations of production, state apparatuses, and discursive modalities that determine the interpellative efficacy the subject successfully 'mirrors' psycho-socially. Cremonini's paintings, for Althusser, deconstruct the effects of the mirror-function of interpellation — to lay bare the operation of its images — as specular images of social life.

In the year of 1966 there appeared in print both Althusser's "Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract" and, as a separate publication, thirty-five of Lacan's essays published in the book *Écrits*. *Écrits* includes "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function" which had been previously been published in 1949 through *Revue Française de psychanalyse*. Lacan's essay, as the

title indicates, discusses the formation of an 'I' psychoanalytically[13]. The I-function: the capacity to *self-identify*, Lacan presents as an act of self-recognition in a mirror, that is, for Lacan, at a particular stage of cognitive development a child apprehends its 'self' in the mirror. Through discursive structures an 'I' (symbolically the 9th letter of the alphabet) is then attributed to the reflection the child cognizes in the mirror. Lacan explains that "[i]t suffices to understand the mirror stage in this context as an identification in the full sense analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes [*assume*] an image" (Lacan, 2006: 76). Indeed Lacan uses the phrase "function of misrecognition" to denote the failure of an individual to cognize the discursive order to which it is imputed. In the article "Althusser's Theory of Ideology", from *Althusser: A Critical Reader*, Paul Ricœur states "Althusser's claim about the illusory nature of what constitutes us as subjects is based on the Lacanian notion of the mirror-structure of the imagination" (Ricœur, 1994: 64). Michéle Barrett in "Althusser's Marx, Althusser's Lacan" shares Ricœur's view: "Althusser uses the interpellation thesis to move towards a way thinking about the construction of subjects that is indebted to some key ideas of the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan...the structure of all ideology is a 'speculary' one, since there are processes of mirroring involved" (Barrett, 1993: 174). While Lacan's work is undoubtedly a key resource for Althusser due attention must also be given to interpellation as constitutive of social relations in terms of *historical materialism* (q.v. Table 2.3).

To "depict" the abstract social relations of capitalism Althusser operationalizes the concept of interpellation in making the attempt to render concrete the *performativity* of specular mis/recognition (cf. Austin, 1962)[14]. The performativity of interpellation is a condition for its indices of effectivity wherein the subject is individualized. Such performative instances are interpellative, with their effects determining the truth guarantee of the reproduction of the relations of production, this is the social guarantee of the "I-function". The "I-function" then serves, grammatically, psychoanalytically, and socially, to institutionalize, by means of normative conventions,

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[13]Carsten Strathausen states in the "Special Issue on the the Legacy of Althusser" from *Studies in 20th Century Literature*: "It is obvious that Althusser's concept of interpellation rests on the idea of the 'mirror-stage' as the founding moment of the 'imaginary', a theory which Lacan developed in his essay "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I" (Strathausen, 1994: 62).

[14]Althusser had some familiarity with J.L Austin's linguistic researches on the conditions of performativity: "The English linguist Austin calls such propositions 'performative', in other words, directly operative, producing their effect simply by virtue of being uttered" (Althusser, 2017b: 158). The I-function is a performative act of self-identification using the grammatical convention of the first-person.

Table 1.2: I-Function

Grammatical 'I'	Centre of Initiatives, 'Free', Centre of the World (q.v. §1.2.)
Social 'I'	Subjected Being (q.v. §1.2.)

the perpetuity of capitalist social relations as performative modalities of "self-identification". Should the performativity regulating the capitalist mode of production not be maintained and the self-identification guaranteed by the "I-function" dissolve so to would the social relations of this historically specific society-effect, i.e., civil society would dissolve insofar as it would not be "recognized": "who" (which "I") would recognize it?[15] By minimizing a subject's infelicities, in respect of the truth guarantee of 'civil' society, and maximizing the effects of interpellation through the modalities of performative social discourse the hegemony of capitalism is enduring. The conventions of the I-function thus mirror the social order to the end of performative reproduction and class relations are a visible form of this successive seriality effected by the oft-times invisible matrices of interpellation.

A fundamental feature of Cremonini's illustrations, according to Althusser, is to make visible the limitations of social perception by painting absence/s, emptiness, anonymity, and, occasionally *blindness* (Fig. 2.1). In *Al Spale Del Desiderio* [*Behind the Desire* – English trans.] Cremonini's, anonymized, dislocated subjects do not see that they are being viewed through the frame: the viewer of the painting sees that they do not recognize their desire is being recognized (Fig. 1.1). Furthermore, the reflection of the viewer is absent in the painting — the viewer who would identify the subject from that line of sight cannot be seen — this viewer is absent and anonymous to both itself and the subjects of the painting. But this is not all, there is yet another level of abstract depth here, Cremonini's subjects cannot see their recurring specularity, only the viewer can, the viewer who, is not included in these reflections. Althusser explains, in his theory of interpellation, that subjects mis/recognize their conditions of social existence in terms of a mirror-connexion between subjects and the Subject. The Subject is the cause of subjectivity that is always absent *in person* but present ideologically within the mirror structure of mis/recognition (q.v. §1.2).

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[15]Individuals are subjected to class relations insofar as they exist as the interpellated embodiment of valorized capital (q.v. Althusser, 1971a) . According to Marx from *Capital*: "The value-form of the product of labour is the most abstract, but also the most universal form of the bourgeois mode of production; by that fact it stamps the bourgeois mode of production as a particular kind of social production of a historical and transitory character" (Marx, 1976: 174)

Johannes Angermüller notes in " 'Qualitative' Methods of Social Research in France: Reconstructing the Actor, Deconstructing the Subject" from *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* how Althusser's conceptual work on interpellation was theoretically informed by Lacan's "non-subjective" subject. "Strongly influenced by LACAN's non-subjectivist theory of subjectivity, ALTHUSSER stresses the performative constitution of the subject whose ideological nature is brought to light precisely when the subject thinks to know in 'spontaneous and interior self-evidence' who he or she is" (Angermüller, 2005: 3.1.3). This non-subjectivist theory of subjectivity is intended by Angermüller to typify the decentred characteristics Lacan attributes to psycho-social experience. "For LACAN, subjectivity is an illusory, but necessary effect of the subject entering the symbolic order... Resembling in some way a Foucauldian discursive formation, a signifying chain is an ensemble of signs characterized by an in-built tension, a desire (désir) which aims at suturing a constitutive lack" (ibid.: 3.1.2.). The intersubjective mis/recognition Cremonini paints, by applying the technique of *mise en abyme* to canvas, visually broaches a non-subjectivist method of pictorial representation — and the ideology of subjectivity — insofar as it is illusory, is thus described by Althusser in way similar to the way Cremonini depicts it: as an anonymized function of reduplication, i.e., a process without a subject.

1.2   Interpellation and Social Relations

Althusser describes the system of interpellation as a "quadruple structure" — specifically including:

1. "the interpellation of 'individuals' as subjects";

2. "their subjection to the Subject";

3. "the mutual recognition of subjects and Subject, the subjects' recognition of each other, and finally the subject's recognition of himself";

4. "the *absolute guarantee* that everything really is so, and that on condition that the subjects recognize what they are and behave accordingly, everything will be all right: Amen 'So be it' " (1971: 181; emphasis added).

This four-part system is a recursive process of social mis/recognition wherein the factors of individualization, self-other recognition, subjection to the Subject and the absolute guarantee constitute the formal basis for the

system of interpellation. Althusser's formalisation of interpellation appears after a lengthy exegesis on the reproduction of the conditions of production under capitalist social relations (Althusser, 1971a). Althusser maintains, citing Marx's work in *Capital*, that "in order to exist, every social formation must reproduce the conditions of its production at the same time as it produces, and in order to be able to produce. It must therefore reproduce: 1. the productive forces, 2. the existing relations of production" (ibid.: 128). The effects of interpellation are the psycho-social mechanisms by which such reproduction is achieved[16]. Furthering Lacan's work Althusser is articulating how the social order is *recognized*, or rather misrecognized, as legitimate. Althusser details the role of the State in reproducing the relations of production and finds that it provides essential machinery for "surplus value extortion" within the capitalist mode of production (ibid.: 137). The functioning of the State within "capitalist social formations" is realised through the existence of "State apparatuses". State apparatuses have two "arms" one repressive, the other ideological. According to Althusser the *Repressive State Apparatus* (RSA) is comprised of: "the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc." (ibid.: 143). The ideological arm of the state, the *Ideological State Apparatus* (ISA) includes: "the educational apparatus, the religious apparatus, the family apparatus, the political apparatus, the trade-union apparatus, the communications apparatus, the 'cultural' apparatus" (ibid.: 150).

These two arms of the State apparatus (i.e. repressive and ideological) support the process of interpellation coefficiently. In the case that the ISAs (Ideological State Apparatuses) fail in some way or other to suitably inter-pellate a subject the RSAs (Repressive State Apparatuses) are the stop-gap measure to ensure that the subject is successfully subjected. This is how Althusser distinguishes between "good" and "bad" subjects[17]. Good subjects,

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[16]In their article for the *Sociological Review* entitled "The Question of Ideology: Althusser, Pêcheux and Foucault" Mark Cousins and Athar Hussain explain this process in the following way: "Ideology performs this task by recruiting individuals through interpellations; it conveys to subjects whatever is functional to capital, and incarnates these functions for the subject. Consequently, Althusser's proposals bring together two registers. Firstly, the question of the representations which are supposed to secure such reproduction, and secondly, the question of that part of the individual which is to be interpellated. Let us call this second, the question of the subject, an issue of *psychical relations*" (Cousins and Hussain, 1984: 169)

[17]For a discussion of interpellation in moral terms (e.g.: guilt and conscience) refer to Judith Butler's "Conscience Doth Make Subjects of Us All" (Butler, 1995), Pierre Macherey's "Judith Butler and the Althusserian Theory of Subjection" (Macherey, 2014) and "Subjected Subjects? On Judith Butler's Paradox of Interpellation" by Noela Davis (Davis, 2012).

which Althusser identifies as the "vast majority", "work all right 'all by themselves'...They are inserted in practices governed by the rituals of the ISAs. They 'recognize' the existing state of affairs..., that 'it really is true that it is so and not otherwise' " (ibid.: 181). Bad subjects do not always "work by themselves" and so "provoke the intervention of one of the detachments of the (repressive) State apparatus" (ibid.). This dual "guarantee" of the state apparatuses facilitates the ongoing maintenance of the subjected subject-form. Mark Cousins and Athar Hussain declare that: "Interpellation is the mechanism not simply of constituting subjects but of installing in them a profound sense of the obviousness of their position" (Cousins and Hussain, 1984: 164). The formative conditions of socially instituted subjectivity are of great interest to Althusser as these conditions should, he suggests, reveal the specific structural features (indices of effectivity) of a subject's interpellated "experience" under capitalist social relations.

The category of the subject, according to Althusser, "appears under this name (the subject) with the rise of bourgeois ideology, above all with the rise of legal ideology" (Althusser, 1970: 170). The category of the subject is adapted from "the legal category of 'subject in law' to make an ideological notion: man is by nature a subject" (ibid.). In addition, however, it "may function under other names: e.g., as the soul in Plato, as God, etc"(ibid.) The ideality of the subject-form functions as a state of belief where social "truth" is guaranteed by practices of interpellation. Althusser explains how this occurs "by means of the absolutely ideological 'conceptual' device (*dispositif*)...set up (a subject endowed with a consciousness in which he freely forms or freely recognizes ideas in which he believes), the (material) attitude of the subject concerned naturally follows" (ibid.: 167). In the first instance "individuals" are interpellated as subjects through the "internalisation" and enactment of a seemingly incongruous conditions of existence. To be a "good" subject one must be both a "free subject" and a "subjected being". "In the ordinary use of the term, subject in fact means: (1) a free subjectivity, a centre of initiatives, author of and responsible for its actions; (2) a subjected being, who submits to a higher authority... stripped of all freedom except freely accepting his submission" (ibid.: 182). While Althusser's quadruple structure of interpellation can be treated as being comprised of discrete processes for descriptive purposes, this system is, in operation, an interdependent whole. Thus it is only through the subject's subjection to the Subject that it is an ostensibly "free subjectivity" (ibid.). "[T]he individual *is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i.e., in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection*" (ibid.). It is, "convenient", writes Althusser "to designate this new and remarkable Subject by writing Subject with a capital S to distinguish it from ordinary

subjects, with a small s (ibid.: 178)[18].

To demonstrate how the subject (s) is interpellated by following the commands of the Subject (S) Althusser uses the example of "Christian religious ideology" (in Saussure's structural linguistics the signified (S) is separated from the signifier (s) by the formula $\frac{S}{s}$. This separation is maintained, Saussure explains, as a semiological condition of social organisation[19]). Althusser further concludes that this example (i.e. interpellated subjection) is also applicable to "ethical, legal, political, aesthetic ideology, etc." (ibid.: 177). This process of subjection to the Subject for the end of "free" subjectivity is dependent upon a mirror-structure of recognition where the subject is "hailed" by the Subject. In the case of Christian theology Moses is hailed by God, i.e., *recognizes* God, and becomes a "*a subject through the Subject and subjected to the Subject.* In practice this means that Moses (a "free" (s)ubject) obeys God (the (S)ubject) "and makes his people obey God's commandments" (ibid.: 179). Because the subject has hailed the Subject this provides it with a "guarantee", namely the "truth", allowing the subject to *self-identify* with the Subject and giving such subjects an identity insofar as each can "contemplate its own image (present and future)" through the Subject insofar as "this really concerns... Him" (ibid.: 180). According to Angermüller: "ALTHUSSER grasps subjectivity as a performatively induced effect of symbolic practices by means of which the individual stabilizes an illusion of subjective self-evidence and, thus, finds her position in the social structure" (Angermüller, 2005: 3.3.2). Furthermore, by recognizing the Subject socially, between subjects, there is "intersubjective" subjection and thus the "mutual recognition of subjects and Subject" (Althusser, 1971a: 181). In return for its subjection to the (S)ubject the (s)ubject receives the guarantee that its social place (e.g.: class position) in the world as it is should be: "Amen 'So be it' "(Althusser,

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[18]There is textual evidence to support the possibility that Althusser derived the (s)ubject/(S)ubject distinction from Lacan's reading of Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic theory: $\frac{S}{s}$. Lacan comments on Saussure's formal representation of structural linguistics in "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious". "The sign written in this way should be attributed to Ferdinand de Saussure... it is legitimate for us to credit him the formalization $\frac{S}{s}$, which characterizes the modern stage of linguistics...The major theme of this science is thus based, in effect, on the primordial position of the signifier and the signified as distinct orders initially separated by a barrier resisting signification" (Lacan, 2006) This article of Lacan's was published in *Écrits* along with "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function" in the year 1966. Althusser had clearly studied Lacan's essay on the mirror stage and it is not implausible to posit that he had read "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious".

[19]q.v. *Course in General Linguistics* (Saussure, 1960).

1971a)[20].

In *Louis Althusser* (2003) Warren Montag notes — commenting on Althusser's concept of interpellation — that in the social structure of mis/recognition: "[w]e are interpellated, addressed, judged and punished as the authors of our actions, our bodies caught in a very real apparatus of subjection" (Montag, 2003: 78). In *The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology* Göran Therborn maintains interpellative discourses "tend to cluster at those nodal points in the societal process which we may call ideological apparatuses... The social organization of discourse entails that a set of ideological apparatuses be structured in a particular way into a system of linkages and interdependence" (Therborn, 1980: 85). The interdependence between the effects of interpellation and ideological apparatuses are discursive conditions of structural causality (q.v. §4.1). According to Cousins and Hussain: "A discursive formation is a particular distribution of interpellations; and within discourse those interpellations are effected through preconstruction and articulation" (Cousins and Hussain, 1984: 167). These structural relations of interpellation symbolically "centre" the subject (s) ideologically by acting in accordance with the ideology of the Subject (S). The "I-function" of mis/recognition identifies the subject as the imaginary origin of absolute freedom and volition. This identification "represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (Althusser, 1971a: 162)[21]. The "determinate absence" of real abstraction that Cremonini paints is, for Althusser, the structure of mis/recognition effectuated by this "imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence". The absent causality that determines any individual's class position is explained ideologically with recourse to the reasons of a "good" subject and should these reasons not be freely adopted Althusser's "state apparatuses" stand ready to correct

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[20]The interpellated subject performatively recognises the Subject insofar as access to the preconstructed discourse of the symbolic order is mediated by social institutions (cf. Althusser, 1971a; Lacan, 2006). Althusser discusses the "unconscious" effects of the symbolic order in "Letters to D." from *Writings on Psychoanalysis.* He writes: "If one gives that sentence the broad meaning I indicated, in which language [*le langage*] = symbolic order, it may be said that indeed the child is cast and falls *into* that order on being born... The question is not one of knowing whether the child perceives in order to decide that the order exists: he is subject to it"(Althusser, 1996: 71). The issue of competing discourses within a given subject's "consciousness" is elaborated in other of Althusser's researches (q.v. §1.3).

[21]It is imperative to note here the direct Lacanian import of this statement. In his "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter' " from *Écrits* Lacan writes: "Thus, if man comes to think about the symbolic order, it is because he is first caught in it in his being. The illusion that he has formed this order through his consciousness stems from the fact that it is *through the pathway of a specific gap in his imaginary relationship* with this semblable that he has been able to enter into this order as a subject" (Lacan, 2006: 40)

such "bad" subjects. An individual human being, as a somatic singularity, is not, by nature, a subject, one is made a subject by historically specific social processes which are institutionalized by means of state apparatuses: "ideology always exists in material apparatuses, and their practices, and thus *its* existence is material" (Barrett, 1993: 173). Interpellation functions discursively through the very materiality of discourse by the polyvalence of discursive formations to which the subject is subjected. In *State, Stage, Language: The Production of the Subject* Juan Carlos Rodríguez observes that legitimation is a form of control insofar as the power to legitimate a language, a subject, or a value is the also the capacity to illegitimate and exclude. "In a word, at the ideological level, to *legitimate* is the same as to dominate" (Rodríguez, 2008b: 12). The category of the subject is marked by this rationale: "Capitalism, or the bourgeoisie, cannot function in the absence of the *free subject*, that is without a relation between subjects (one of whom possesses "only" their labour power)" (ibid.: 13). Thus one is interpellated as a subject, and a "free" subject, under capitalist social relations so that a subject's choices do not appear at all coerced by state apparatuses. One is therefore made *legitimately* free[22].

In volume one of *Capital* Marx describes such "freedom" as "in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man" (Marx, 1976: 280). The sale and purchase of a subject's labour power (wage-labour) within capitalist relations of production "is the exclusive realm of Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham" (ibid.). The appropriately interpellated subject (Althusser's "good" subject) will act in accordance the the ideological principles of Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham as "reasons-of-a-subject"[23]. "Freedom, because both buyer and seller, of a commodity, let us say of labour-power, are *determined only their own free will. They contract as free persons, who are equal before the law. Their contract is the final result in which their joint will finds a common legal expression*" (ibid.: emphasis added). Equality insofar as each "enters into relation with the other... and they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each only looks to his own advantage" (ibid.)[24]. The legitimation of this "freedom" is instantiated by the subject-form of legal ideology where one must be interpellated to legitimately recognize the existing

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[22]The word "legitimate" is derived, etymologically, from Medieval Latin *legitimatus*: "make lawful".

[23]The term 'reasons-of-a-subject' is used by Althusser to register the effects of interpellative discourse.

[24]Jeremy Bentham in *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789/1970) formulates a "principle of utility" that advances the notion that self-interest is a guide to moral action (q.v. Bentham, 1970).

state affairs as a good subject should (q.v. §1.3). The syntactic "I-function" secures the absent causality that determines a subject's class position within the relations of production and thus enables it to act as an imaginary "free subject" within the mirror-structure of mis/recognition (q.v. §1.1)

Lacan represents the effect of mis/recognition using the notation of "barred S" (Lacan, 2006: 684)[25]. The barred Subject $\cancel{S}$ is an effect of "retroversion" whereby subjective experience is interpellatively induced by discursive structures. "Here arises the ambiguity of a misrecognizing that is essential to knowing myself [un méconnaître essentîel au me connaitre]. For, in this 'rear view', all the subject can be sure of is the anticipated image — which he had caught of himself in his mirror — coming to meet him" (ibid.: 684). Lacan's "rear-view" here is the specular effect of discursive determination. Douglas Aoki explains in *Letters from Lacan: Reading and the Matheme* — expounding upon the formula S + / = $\cancel{S}$ (the S barred) — that: "This figuration immediately means two things: affinity and difference between the barred signifier and the subject... This rendering of the subject by the line draws attention to the crucial and ineluctable materiality of the signifier" (Aoki, 1998: 66). The symbol $\cancel{S}$ indicates how Althusser's (s)ubject is interpellated by the (S)ubject insofar as $\cancel{S}$ is mis/recognized as a material practice of unconscious signification by the anticipated image (i.e. symbolic form) of subjection. In a presentation entitled "Psychoanalysis and Its Teaching" (1957) Lacan announced three basic "dimensions" of psychoanalytic theory for analysts[26]:

1. "of history of a life lived as history";

2. "of subjection to the laws of language, which alone are capable of overdetermination";

3. "of the intersubjective game by which truth enters reality [réel]". (Lacan, 2006: 366).

The history of a life is historical (bio-graphic) because it is symbolically represented as such. "Indeed what Freud's discovery brings us back to is

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[25]In the seminar entitled *The Logic of Phantasy* (Wednesday 16 November 1966) Lacan states: "I recall what the S barred signifies: the S barred represents, takes the place in this formula of what it returns from concerning the division of the subject, which is found at the source of the whole Freudian discovery and which consists in the fact that the subject is, in part, barred from what properly constitutes it *qua* function of the unconscious" (Lacan, 1966: 1-2).

[26] "Psychoanalysis and its Teaching" was delivered by Lacan as a 'talk' at the French Philosophical Society February 23, 1957 (Lacan, 2006: 364).

the enormity of the order into which we have entered...namely, the symbolic
order constituted by language" (ibid.: 371). Upon being located within the
symbolic order by means of self-identification the subject is subsequently,
Lacan suggests, overdetermined by it. "One can can grasp in its very emer-
gence the overdetermination that is the only kind of overdetermination at
stake in Freud's apperception of the symbolic function" (ibid.: 35). This
symbolic emergence is the apperception of the I-function. The "truth" of
self-experience is structurally dependent on the overdetermination of inter-
subjective mis/recognition as it is historically constituted by "subjection to
the laws of language". Truth enters reality, according to both Lacan and
Althusser, discursively and the "game" of this truth, for Althusser specifically,
is the "truth guarantee" of philosophy. The overdetermination of truth — as
an interpellated effect of mis/recognition — is mediated by the social order
of ideological legitimacy.

Writing to Lacan in the year 1966 Althusser outlines his theory of "symp-
tomatic" reading that is presented in *Reading Capital* (1965). The psychoan-
alytic import of Althusser's theory of reading is addressed to Lacan as "the
question that concerns you, and that concerns us" (Althusser, 1996: 170)[27].
This question is that of "symptomal reading". "The theory of symptomal
reading indicates its conditions of possibility in the *nature* of the discourse
underpinning its acts of *reading*... The *nature* of this discourse seems to
me able to be fixed by the theoretical problematic sustaining it" (Althusser,
1996: 170). To render the effects of interpellation visible in discursive form
requires an application of "symptomatic reading" to the domain of histori-
cal materialism. Samuel Solomon explains in "L'espacement de la lecture:
Althusser, Derrida, and the Theory of Reading" from *Dècalages* how: "A
great deal hinges on the mechanisms of symptomatic reading as a mode of
theoretical practice: the location of the break between ideology and science,
the specificity of Marxist philosophy, and an account of the method of the
Althusserian project are all at stake in the possibility of *la lecture symtpomale*
[sic]" (Solomon, 2012: 14). The preeminent symptom of ideological subjection
— for Althusser — is the relationship between the (s)ubject and the (S)ubject

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[27]Lacan received Althusser's article "Freud and Lacan" (first published in *La Nouvelle
Critique* Dec. 1964–Jan. 1965) and the book *For Marx* (*Pour Marx*, Maspero: 1965) and
praised both encouragingly. Of "Freud and Lacan" he writes: "Dear Althusser... I decided
not to satisfy myself with the telephone to tell you how grateful I am for your article.
Profound and relevant: adding the dimension of your own meditation on the subject. I am
quite honored by such an effort and comforted by its utter success. *Believe me your very
faithful. J. Lacan* (Lacan, 1996b: 169) ". In respect of *For Marx* Lacan writes: "My dear
Althusser... I am in the process of reading the volume you were good enough to send me,
with delectation. *Your Lacan*" (Lacan, 1996a: 170).

— which is adumbrated by Lacan as $\cancel{S}$.

Symptomatically a given subject is overdetermined by the discursive structures that preexist its arrival within the symbolic order. The social effects of overdetermination are discussed by Althusser at length in the essays "Contradiction and Overdetermination" (1962)[28] , "On the Materialist Dialectic" (1963)[29] and "Marxism and Humanism" (1964)[30], as class conditions of ideological subjection. "It is in this overdetermination of the real by the imaginary and of the imaginary by the real that ideology is *active* in principle, that it reinforces or modifies the relation between men and their conditions of existence in the imaginary relation itself" (Althusser, 1969: 233-234). To identify the imaginary relations of interpellation is to read the symptomatic history of discursive mis/recognition in the overdetermined structures of social experience. In Lacan's "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter' " he states: "As we know, it is in the experience inaugurated by psychoanalysis that we can grasp by what oblique imaginary means the *symbolic* takes hold in even the deepest recesses of the human organism"(Lacan, 2006: 6)[31]. An oblique or slash / is precisely the sign Lacan uses for the symptom $\cancel{S}$ (barred subject) of imaginary mis/recognition which appears in Althusser's Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses essay as the interpellated effect of (s)ubjection to the (S)ubject[32]. Lacan explains in "On the Subject Who is Finally in Question" how it is the subject's relation to symbolic structures that determines its symptoms: "a symptom can only be interpreted in the signifying order. A signifier has meaning only through its relation to another signifier. The truth of symptoms resides in this articulation" (Lacan, 2006: 195). This symbolic overdetermination of the $\cancel{S}$ is symptomatic of mis/recognized structural causality (q.v. Table 4.1).

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[28] "Contradiction and Overdetermination" was first published in *La Pensée*, December 1962)

[29] *La Pensée* subsequently published "On the Materialist Dialectic" in August 1963.

[30] The article "Marxism and Humanism" was first published in the *Cahiers de l'I.S.E. A.* June 1964.

[31] John P. Muller and William J. Richardson provide a very useful 'map' of this text in *The Purloined Poe: Lacan, Derrida & Psychoanalytic Reading*. They note that Lacan's subject exhibits an "excentric structure": "which, in turn, reveals a correlation between the imaginary and symbolic registers. Imaginary features are subordinate to the symbolic register, especially in those structures that determine the subject, such as foreclosure, repression, and denial"(Muller and Richardson, 1988: 77).

[32] Aoki interprets Althusser's Subject in the following terms: "Of course, S, according to Althusser, is the State, so S can be read as the Subject of State. Alternatively, S is subjectivization as Subjection or Submission" (Aoki, 1998: 94).

1.3 Discursive Guarantees

In 1966, the same year that "Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract" was published, Althusser was working on "Three Notes on the Theory of Discourses", while this text did not find publication during his lifetime, it is of particular importance for any examination of interpellation conceptually. 'Three Notes on the Theory of Discourses' presents a preliminary investigation of discourse and the theoretical status of "subjectivity" in relation to the principles of historical materialism. Once more, as he does in 'Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract', and 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards and Investigation)', Althusser evinces that the subject is an ideological category (q.v. §§1.1–1.2). "The more I work on it, the more I think that the category of the subject is absolutely fundamental to *ideological* discourse...it is bound up with the *truth guarantee* in the centred, double mirror structure" (Althusser, 2003: 37). Althusser further explains that it is *not* possible "to talk about a 'subject' of the unconscious, although Lacan does, or of a 'subject of science', or of a 'subject of aesthetic discourse'. . . inasmuch as all are articulated with ideological discourse, each in a specific way" (ibid: 38). Although Althusser does not think it possible to represent scientific, aesthetic, or unconscious subjects, with theoretical rigour, he does posit that the objects of science, aesthetics, and the unconscious can be analysed in terms of the discourse that pertains to each: the discourse of science, the discourse of aesthetics, and the discourse of the unconscious.

The speculative breadth of Althusser's inquiries in "Three Notes on the Theory of Discourses" is, indeed, theoretically far-reaching[33]. It is evident, however, that the extent of his researches consistently refers back to the effects of interpellation and the examination of new modes of analysis thereof. Interpellation, Althusser contends, determines the "supports" it requires to reproduce the relations of production and with it the social formation and its concomitant mode of production. These "supports" are determined as subjects: Althusser's uses the term "träger-function"[34] (support-[träger] function) to denote this concept (ibid.: 51). Within the social and technical

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[33]Althusser states: "I (we) have come to the conclusion that it is absolutely essential to construct a theory in order to provide a differential definition of the specific discourses known as: scientific discourse, aesthetic discourse, ideological discourse, unconscious discourse" (Althusser, 2003: 75). This theory is announced as the General Theory of Discourse (GT of Discourse). Jacques Lacan also has a theory of discourse that is comparable Althusser's. Lacan's 'Four Discourses' are: the master's discourse, the university discourse, the hysteric's discourse, and the analyst's discourse. Bruce Fink has written a chapter entitled 'The Four Discourses' in *The Lacanian Subject* on the definition of each discourse (Fink, 1995) .

[34]In German the word *kulturträger* specifies someone or something that determines the historical transmission of cultural ideals.

division of labour, positions must be taken in accordance with the requirements of the social formation, to ensure its reproduction. In the case of a capitalist mode of production this requires the embodiment of class relations in terms of the valorization of surplus value. The designation of the subjects to realise this valorisation process — as it is determined by the capitalist mode of production — necessitates, in Althusser's analysis, mechanisms of interpellation, of which the *träger-function* is an effect. According to Althusser "[i]t is ideology which performs the function of *designating* the subject. . . that is to occupy this function: to that end it must *interpellate* it. . . Ideology interpellates individuals by constituting them as subjects" (ibid.). Ideology, in its various forms, provides individuals "with the reasons-of-a-subject (interpellated as a subject) for assuming the functions defined by the structure as functions-of-a-Träger" (ibid: 52). In another articulation Althusser describes the process of interpellation as a kind of "recruitment" where individuals are the "recruits" of ideology[35]. "The structure *requires Träger*: ideological discourse *recruits* them for it by interpellating individuals *as subjects* to assume the functions of Träger...Ideological discourse provides the who" (ibid: 55).

Interpellation, Althusser maintains, is an anonymous process in that there is no individual person that can be attributed its cause and nor do individuals socially preexist the effects of interpellation. "The conscription carried out by the structure is blank, abstract, anonymous: the structure does not care who will assume the functions of Träger" (ibid.: 55). In effect, however, it is still "personal, 'concrete', as the ideology of 'mass' industry explicitly says 'personalized' "(ibid.: 55). With recourse to bourgeois legal ideology one ultimately only ever achieves personhood as a *legal* person before the eyes of the law. The personalization of mass industry is grounded in the relations of production as are the consumption habits of its class fractions. Such 'personalization' has for its basis, in Althusser's view, a legal relation. "It [bourgeois law] is clearly meant to regulate and sanction precise economic practices above all: practices of exchange, that is, the purchase and sale of commodities, which presuppose — and depend upon — property law and the corresponding legal categories (legal personhood, legal freedom, legal equality, legal obligation)" (Althusser, 2014: 164). The self-certainty of the interpellated subject is founded upon the legal providence of interpellation ensuring they 'work all by themselves'. The future is thus preordained by the conditions of the mirror-structure of mis/recognition. According to Althusser

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[35]Discussing the process of exchange in capitalist society Marx states: "[a]s we proceed to develop our investigation, we shall find, in general, that the characters who appear on the economic stage are merely personifications of economic relations; it is *as the bearers of these economic relations* that they come into contact with each other"(Marx, 1976: 179; emphasis added).

the legal structure of capitalist society serves to effectively reproduce the relations of production without at all indicating that such relations (i.e. class relations), in fact, exist[36]. Interpellation is then a mechanism of reproduction for the social relations of production that serves to uphold the capitalist trinity of wages, rent, and profit (q.v. §1.4) . "In order for the individual to be constituted as an interpellated subject, it must recognize itself as a subject in ideological discourse, must figure in it: whence a first speculary relation, thanks to which the interpellated subject can see itself in the discourse of interpellation" (Althusser, 2003: 52).

The relations of production, as class relations, are thus an absent cause that bourgeois law assumes non-existent prior to individualizing subjects to be 'equal' before the law — independently of their class determinations[37] . Althusser thus contends: "1) Law only exists as a function of the existing relations of production 2) Law has the form of law, that is, formal systematicity, only on condition that the relations of production as a function of which it exists are completely absent from law itself" (Althusser, 2014: 59). Evegeny B. Pashukanis in "The General Theory of Law and Marxism" (1924) studies the legal status of the relations of production and the legal subject within capitalist society, and citing Marx and Engels, considers it secularised theology. Paraphrasing Marx, Pashukanis declares, "[i]n as much as the wealth of capitalist society appears as 'an immense collection of commodities' so this society itself appears as an *endless chain of legal relations*. . . Commodity exchange presupposes an atomised society. The legal relation between subjects is simply the reverse side of the relation between products of labour which have become commodities" (Pashukanis, 2002: 85; emphasis added). The "reverse side" of commodity production is the legal separation between the workers and the means of production, or in other terms, the direct producers and their products.

Althusser outlines in 'Three Notes on the Theory of Discourse' the need to formulate a "general theory of discourse" to determine "the general laws governing any discourse" (Althusser, 2003). Legal discourse, would necessarily have to be included in such a general theory, beginning with the concatenation of words (as arrangements of letters with graphic, phonetic, morphemic, semantic and syntatic properties) through to the determination of 'legality'

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[36]Althusser sees repeated examples of socially imposed blindness and mis/recognition in the works of Leonardo Cremonini (q.v. §1.1): "Painting the Abstract".

[37]In the 1888 edition of the *Communist Manifesto* Engels states: "By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern Capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage-labour. By proletariat, the class of modern wage-labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour-power in order to live"(Marx and Engels, 1848: 482).

and the imposition of socio-historically specific legal structures. Legal ideology, for Althusser, exists as interpellative mechanism within the capitalist mode of production that provides a "truth guarantee" for the legal subject, i.e., the 'truth' of capitalist law, which the subject then reflects as a mirror-structure of social mis/recognition. The seemingly endless chain of legal relations that accompanies the immense production of commodities sustains an equally great number of interpellative processes: some of which are determined for the purposes of commodity production, e.g., private law. Althusser contends that law cannot function independently of the structure in dominance, i.e., the capitalist mode of production, for it relies upon: "two realities…in whose absence the existence and functioning of law are literally unimaginable. These 'realities' are the state on the one hand and ideology on the other" (Althusser, 2014: 69).

The capitalist state, Althusser contends, is repressive in that it is organised to maintain the divisions between classes that are articulated by legal discourse. When the state is operating as it should its subjects function in accordance with the liberty it provides: the 'freedom' to perpetuate class relations through the exploitation of surplus value and the 'freedom' to choose whether or not to trigger the state's repressive machinery by opposition to such 'freedom'. The dominating force of the state apparatus has a "double functioning" (ibid.: 85). The repression exerted by the state exists as both direct physical repression and 'idealized' repression, that is, repression in ideological form. "I think I can claim that *all* state apparatuses…function *simultaneously* on repression and on ideology" (ibid.). Althusser retains the terminological distinction between RSAs (Repressive State Apparatuses) and ISAs (Ideological State Apparatuses) while noting that both act together towards the same end: the reproduction of the relations of production and, concomitantly, the legal order, of the capitalist state. Even though RSAs and ISAs are both directed towards the objective of the reproduction of the relations of production their terminological distinction serves to define the particular forms of domination that exist as modalities of state power within the capitalist mode of production.

As state power takes differing forms so it uses differing means: RSAs act, at their limit, using "direct physical repression" while the means ISAs make use of is "more or less symbolic" (ibid.: 86). The means of direct physical repression available to the police and army is supplemented by discursive forms: "they act by violent repression, but also by 'discussion' and 'persuasion' " (ibid.). Symbolic violence finds its efficacy in the shadow of direct physical repression. ISAs functioning to uphold the state symbolically interpellate subjects using ideological means in order to teach them 'right' from 'wrong' (i.e. the difference between being a good subject or a bad

subject) (Althusser, 1971a). "The school and the Church...'train' not just their officiants (teachers and priests), but also their wards (school children, the faithful, and so on) with the appropriate methods of punishment" (ibid.). Althusser further remarks how studying the "very subtle combinations of ideologization and repression, explicit or tacit" within capitalist society would reveal "the manifest pacts and unambiguous... *objective forms of complicity* that are forged among the various state apparatuses, not only on Major Occasions, when the bourgeois state is threatened by open working-class struggle, but every single day of our humdrum lives" (Althusser, 2014: 86-87).

State apparatuses find articulation in legal discourse, however, Althusser suggests, this discourse requires "a little supplement" (ibid.: 68). This little supplement is "moral ideology" (ibid.). The legal ideology of capitalist social relations requires a moral injunction so that the subjects "work all by themselves". "This means that legal ideology can stand upright only if it leans on the moral ideology of 'Conscience' and 'Duty' for support" (ibid.). Doing the 'right' thing by the State and acting in accordance with one's 'conscience' within the capitalist structure-in-dominance, Althusser explains, is acting in accordance with "*legal ideology plus the little supplement of moral ideology*" (ibid.). Taking the form of a subject's intra-discourse "[i]t is quite as if legal and ideology played the role of the *absent gendarme* and were his 'representative' in the space of the legal practice of contracts" (ibid.: emphasis added). This "gendarme" is, in English translation, a police officer and as such is the state sanctioned instantiation of direct physical repression. "Legal-moral ideology thus stands in for the gendarme; but insofar as it stands in for the gendarme, *it is not the gendarme*" (ibid.: 69). Legal-moral ideology is not the gendarme, in person, but ideally, and activities undertaken in "good conscience" are indubitably undertaken so as to avoid any dealings with gendarme in body or 'spirit'[38].

J.M. Balkin in 'Legal Understanding: The Legal Subject and the Problem of Legal Coherence' (1993) from *The Yale Law Journal* suggests "we must shift the focus of jurisprudence from the study of the properties the legal system is thought to have... to the nature of the legal subject who apprehends the legal system and judges it to have these properties. In other words, to understand the nature of the law, we must understand the nature of legal understanding" (Balkin, 1993: 106). In this way "we must transform the subject of jurisprudence into a jurisprudence of the subject — a jurisprudence that recognizes questions about the nature of law must equally be concerned with

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[38]Poulantzas discusses this theory in terms of interiorized power relations producing an "inner cop", however, he stresses direct physical repression should not be underestimated or explained away by "ideological-symbolic *manipulation*" (Poulantzas, 1980: 78).

the ideological, sociological, and psychological features of our understanding of the legal system" (ibid.: 107).

The bourgeois subject — as the complement of bourgeois law — is articulated by Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884) whereby "bourgeois law only exists for the propertied classes and their dealings with the proletarians" (Engels, 1975b: 179). According to Marx when a commodity enters exchange relations under the conditions of capitalist production a process of transubstantiation occurs whereby the use-value of the commodity becomes exchange-value as "price". Price abstracts from the use-value of a given commodity and allows fundamentally different things, .e.g., wood and sugar to treated the same, using a 'universal equivalent', i.e., money[39]. The universal equivalent within legal discourse is the subject of law whereby all subjects are equal before the law, however, such equality abstracts from the social conditions of the relations of production. The 'legal equality' apparently enjoyed by all subjects of law does not register the structural inequality which is sanctioned 'legally' (cf. Althusser, 2014, 1971a). The social divisions of the class structure are enforced legally between subjects before the law. Conveniently, however, bourgeois law neglects to consider such apparently *a priori* divisions while recognizing conditions of 'equality' *post festum*, that is, after inequality has already been established. There is thus two instances of real abstraction at work here. The first being the real abstraction from the material properties of commodities in order to make them all ostensibly 'equivalent' by price. The second being the real abstraction from capitalist relations of production to solicit the equivalence of subjects before the law. Capitalism requires both forms of abstraction, as conditions of valorization, for production. Non-owners must be abstracted from the means of production to ensure the realization of surplus value in commodity production. Simultaneously non-owners must be abstracted the relations of production to enter 'free' contracts on the labour market and thus reproduce the conditions of production through the repeated consumption of needed commodities.

Marx notes in "Chapter Two: The Process of Exchange" from *Capital* (vol.1) that private property requires legal mis/recognition between subjects before the law so that contracts can be defined. "This juridical relation, whose form is the contract... is a relation between two wills which mirrors the economic relation. The content of this juridical relation (or relation of

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[39]Marx states in *Capital* (vol. 1): "But only the action of society can turn a particular commodity into the universal equivalent...The natural form of this commodity thereby becomes the socially recognized equivalent form. Through the agency of the social process it becomes the specific social function of the commodity which has been set apart to be the universal equivalent. It thus becomes — money" (Marx, 1976: 180-181).

two wills) is itself determined by the economic relation" (Marx, 1976: 178). Juridical relations "mirror" economic relations, i.e., capitalist legal ideology represents the capitalist process of production in juridical terms. Roberto Buonamano observes in "The Legal Subject in Althusser's Political Theory" from *Law Critique* that "what is truly at stake in the process of the mirror recognition of the Subject and the interpellation of individuals as subjects is the reproduction of the relations of production and those relations deriving from them" (Buonamano, 2014: 239). Juridical relations are derived from the relations of production, which are in Marx's analysis, class determined. The 'two wills' Marx describes are personifications of the relations of production, i.e., capital and labour. "The capitalist functions only as *personified* capital, capital as person, just as the worker is no more than *labour* personified" (Marx, 1976: 989). The subject of law 'embodies', ideologically, the juridical relation between capital and labour. Althusser exhibits a broad understanding of legal philosophy that is evinced by his early writings on Montesquieu and Rousseau (Althusser, 1977). He wrote a commentary of Montequieu's *The Spirit of Laws* (*De l'esprit des Lois* — 1748) and Rousseau's *The Social Contract* (*Du Contrat Social* — 1762). Both *The Spirit of Laws* and *The Social Contract* consider the social basis of law and Althusser uses this understanding to further his theories of legal discourse.

1.4 The Trinity Formula

As the doctrine of the Trinity holds the secret to the mystery of the Christian faith where there is one God in three divine forms — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — so both Marx and Althusser have revelations in trinitarian terms — although their respective revelations seek to divest capitalism of its theology — not uphold it. Marx states "[c]apital–profit (profit of enterprise plus interest), land–ground-rent, labour–wages, this trinity form holds in itself all the *mysteries of the social production process*"(Marx, 1981: 953; emphasis added). Marx's presentation of the "mysteries of the social production process" is not the first time he has detailed the mysterious workings of the capitalist economy. The "trinity formula" appears in volume three of *Capital*, however, in volume one Marx discusses the "metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties" of the commodity-form under capitalist relations of production (Marx, 1976: 163). There is a conceptual correspondence between the metaphysics of the commodity-form and the theological mysteries revealed by the trinity formula (i.e. profit, rent, and wages). In the production process of capitalism Marx contends that only does labour produce commodities, at the same time, it produces class relations through the mysterious spirit of

surplus value and its manifestations in the trinity of profit, rent, and wages.

Althusser provides a preliminary outline in 'Three Notes on the Theory of Discourses' of how interpellation 'recruits' subjects by means of the "träger-function" (q.v. §1.3). The "träger-function", in terms of 'recruitment', is the determination of the social structure through the provision of subjects, as "supports" of class relations, for the maintenance and reproduction of the relations of production. Marx also holds the same — in volume three of *Capital* he explains how the "social production process. . . proceeding in specific economic and historical relations of production. . . produces and reproduces these relations of production themselves, and with them the *bearers of this process*, their material conditions of existence, and their mutual relationships, i.e., the specific economic form of society" (Marx, 1981: 957; emphasis added). These "bearers" of the social structure, Marx writes, are "are one one hand presuppositions of the capitalist production process, on the other its results and creations; they are both produced and reproduced by it (ibid.). Defining the social conditions of the capital-relation in terms of the träger-function Marx writes: "the capitalist is simply personified capital, functioning in the production process simply as the bearer of capital — pumps out a certain quantum of surplus labour from direct producers or workers. . . This surplus labour is expressed in a surplus-value, and this surplus-value exists in a surplus product" (ibid.: 958). These "supports" or "bearers" have respective sources of income within the capitalist mode of production. The capitalist receives its income in terms of profit, the landowner in terms of ground-rent, and the worker in terms of wages. "They appear as fruits of a perennial tree for annual consumption, or rather the fruits of three trees; they constitute the annual incomes of three classes, the capitalist, the landowning, and the working class" (ibid.: 960).

The class relations which are inherent to the capitalist mode of production are defined by Marx as a trinity: "capital for the capitalist is a perpetual pumping machine for surplus labour, land for the landowner a permanent magnet for attracting a part of the surplus-value pumped out by capital and finally labour the. . . means for the worker to obtain a part of the value he has produced. . . his necessary means of subsistence, under the heading of wages" (ibid.: 961). Thus Marx finds — through the trinity formula — the specification of class relations on the basis of income. These class relations, furthermore, are internal to to the very production process itself and are subsequently misrecognized by the fetishism of commodities[40].

Althusser maintains that the Christian Trinity represents the *modus*

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[40]q.v. 'The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret' in chapter 1. 'The Commodity' from *Capital* (vol.1) (Marx, 1976: 163).

Table 1.3: Trinity Formula

Capitalists	Profit
Landowners	Rent
Workers	Wages

operandi of interpellation as a social structure of mis/recognition. "The dogma of the Trinity is precisely the theory of the duplication of the Subject (the Father) into a subject (the Son) and of their mirror-connexion"(Althusser, 1971a: 180). As Althusser notes "[w]e observe that the structure of all ideology, interpellating individuals as subjects in the name of the...Subject is *speculary*, i.e. a mirror-structure...this mirror duplication is constitutive of ideology and ensures its functioning" (ibid.). When Marx uses the "trinity formula" to describe the relations between classes on the basis of income he suggests that the attitudes of the bearers of those class relations exhibit a religious character: "the religion of everyday life". "It is...quite natural...that the actual agents of production themselves feel completely at home in these estranged and irrational forms of capital-interest, land-rent, labour-wages, for these are precisely the configurations in which they move, and with which they are daily involved"(Marx, 1981: 969). Althusser, then, on the basis of what Marx takes to be the "bewitched, distorted and upside down world" of class relations under capitalism, sets himself the task of understanding how interpellation provides the necessary indices of ideological effectivity to ensure that the existing relations of production remain in place and the regime of surplus value exploitation continues.

It is the overdetermination of surplus value within the labour process that reveals the material basis of interpellation (cf. Althusser, 1969, 2014). Interpellation to the conditions of the capitalist mode of production only occurs in and through a basic contradiction between capital and labour. "Overdetermination designates the following essential quality of contradiction: the reflection in contradiction itself of its conditions of existence, that is, of its situation in the structure in dominance of the complex whole" (Althusser, 1969). The basic contradiction between capital and labour — as the overdetermination of surplus value — is the basis of class relations that must be reproduced for capitalism to continue. This is how Althusser can begin to formulate an account of interpellation with regard to the *reproduction* of capitalist social relations (q.v. Althusser, 2014). It is due to this variant factor, i.e., the overdetermination of surplus value, that "variation" can occur within an apparently "invariant" structure, i.e., the structure of class. Interpellation thus ensures that overdetermined instances of social reality, such as class relations,

are kept to a their "invariant" minimum. "Only overdetermination enables us to understand the concrete variations and mutations of structured complexity such as a social formation. . . as so many concrete restructurations. . . of the complex structure in dominance" (ibid.: 210).

The class conditions of income that Marx draws attention to using the trinity formula are none other than forms of distribution for surplus value appropriated from the surplus product produced by labour-power[41]. The functioning of the state apparatus exists, in Althusser's analysis, to extend the reproduction of the Marx's trinity into perpetuity "legally". The ideology of capitalism, is then the "mirror-connexion" or Holy Spirit (legal-moral order) of the capitalist State in which the subject mis/recognises its conditions of existence in relation to the overdetermination of surplus value. The State is the absolute Subject (the Father) to which the Son (the subject) willingly submits in order that he might recognize himself (q.v. §1.2). The followers of the secularised religion of everyday life, i.e., capitalism, are thus its interpellated subjects. The mystery of the Trinity of one God in three forms parallels the mystery of revenue within the capitalist mode production — where three forms of income are generated by one form of value — labour power transubstantiated as money[42]. Accordingly the (holy) spirit of capitalism is then articulated by its scriptures (another mystery of the Christian faith), namely, the discursive formations determined by the capitalist *dispositif* (English trans. "social apparatus")[43]. This concurs with Althusser's intention to initiate a research programme to discover the 'general laws of discourse' insofar as discourse is not scripture descended from the heavens above but the product of, human, social activity. Althusser apprehended that meaning is sustained between discourse and the object it is intended represent not by the providence of God but by the material conditions of discursive production (q.v. Althusser, 2003).

Cremonini's talent for painting real abstractions on canvas finds its equivalent in Althusser's theoretical writings when Althusser analyses the real abstractions that determine the interpellative effects of state apparatuses. The real abstractions producing the legal-moral ideology of state power have for their precondition the overdetermination of surplus-value which must be regulated by the state to ensure its reproduction. The absent causality of the state (e.g. the gendarme and legal system) behind the modalities of class-based revenue distribution creates the conditions for the apparent auton-

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[41]q.v. "The Degree of Exploitation of Labour-Power" in Chapter 9. "The Rate of Surplus Value" from *Capital* (vol.1)

[42]q.v. Chapter 6. "The Sale and Purchase of Labour-Power" from *Capital* vol.1 (Marx, 1976)

[43]q.v. Table 4.3.

omization of value (cf. Movebo, 2014). The apparent autonomization of value, which under capitalist social relations, is always the apparent autonomization of *surplus* value can only take place "when nothing is happening", when, "the Ideological State Apparatuses have worked to perfection" (Althusser, 2014: 206). For Althusser ideological state apparatuses are constantly having to reproduce the class conditions of "surplus value extortion" and in overdetermined instances of interpellative failure there is political unrest. "When they no longer manage to function, to reproduce the relations of production in the 'consciousness' of all subjects, 'events' happen... more or less serious events, as in May, the commencement of a first dress rehearsal" (ibid.) (q.v. §2.1).

Eventalization within the invariant structure of "surplus value extortion" arises with the failure of the state to impute and enforce the correct "consciousness" of its subjects, therefore, potentially introducing opposition to the class structure of capitalism. In Althusser's terms the subject (s) no longer willingly submits to the Subject (S) and resistance emerges to the distribution of surplus value insofar as the dominance of the capital-relation is called into question. The result of such events will necessitate — on behalf of the state — a reconfiguration and redeployment of repressive means. The term 'eventalization' is used by Foucault in 'Questions of Method' found in the volume *Power* (2010). "I am trying to work in the direction of 'eventalization'...What do I mean by this term? First of all, a breach of self-evidence" (Foucault, 2010: 226). 'Eventalization' serves a "theoretico-political function" (ibid.). This function is to alter the conditions of 'visibility' with respect to a given historical reality (Foucault calls this a historical *a priori*). When the self-evidence of a historical constant, such as an ideology, is breached, its historical specificity is revealed. "It means making visible a singularity at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant... or an obviousness that imposes itself uniformly on all... To show that things 'weren't as necessary as all that'... A breach of self-evidence on which our knowledges, acquiescences and practices rest" (ibid.).

The process of eventalization is the antithesis of essentialist explanations of historical phenomena. Instead of reducing an event to an *essential* cause eventalization "is indeed effect of a sort of multiplication or pluralization of causes" (ibid.: 227). This multiplication of causes is an instance of causal overdetermination where discontinuity is introduced into a domain thought to exhibit the most self-evident continuity: "eventalization means rediscovering the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies, and so on, that at given moment establish what subsequently counts as being self-evident, universal, and necessary" (ibid.: 227). Methodologically, Foucault notes, "[t]his procedure of causal multiplication means analyzing an event according to the multiple processes that constitute it" (ibid.: 227).

Such analysis is multifarious and includes: "A polymorphism of the elements brought into relation...A polymorphism of the relations described...A polymorphism of domains of reference" (ibid: 228). This polymorphic explanation of historical phenomena Foucault outlines, is, in principle, an attempt to overcome the self-evidence of historical norms and reintroduce an articulation of the conditions of abstraction on which such historical constants are based. In Althusser's work it is the concept of interpellation that deconstructs the polymorphic determinants of the subject-form as a play of socio-historical dependencies (e.g. the relation between legal ideology and economic production). These elements of the capitalist mode of production are performatively constituted as discursive relations between "self-evident" referential objects (e.g. use value, exchange value and price).

The category of the subject is ideological for Althusser insofar as it dissimulates the polymorphic multiplicity of social structuration that is a function of state apparatuses. "That is how the ideas making up an ideology forcibly impose themselves on people's free 'consciousnesses': by interpellating people in forms such that are compelled freely to recognize that these ideas are true – in forms such that they are are compelled to constitute themselves as free *subjects*" (Althusser, 2017b: 112). Eventalization, as a theoretico-political practice, questions the self-evidence of 'free' subjectivity within the relations of production in terms of the plurality of causes by which the individual is made subject. Somatic singularity and subjectivity are thus juxtaposed to detail how interpellative practices produce an experience of discursive "self-certainty" under the conditions of polymorphic, overdetermined, structural causality.

2

Althusser's Fellow Workers

Figure 2.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Colin maillard* 1965-1967

2.1   The École Normale Supérieure and May '68

Having already lived through World War Two, Althusser found himself, in May '68, age fifty, in the middle of another major world historical event — a massive social movement was taking place in France with 10 million workers holding a general strike — the largest in French history (Schwarz, 2008)[1]. On May 20 1968 "the whole country is at a standstill — hit by a general strike... Factories, offices, universities and schools are occupied, production and the transport system is paralyzed. Artists, journalists and even soccer players join in the movement" (ibid.: 5). Schwarz explains that the movement leading up to the mass strike had its beginnings with student unrest at the University of Nanterre in January with workers, trade-unions, and other schools and universities becoming actively involved until the culmination of social discontent reached its peak in May[2]. Julian Bourg (2007: 20) in *From Revolution to Ethics: May 1968 and Contemporary Thought* notes that "[o]n 22 April a collectively written manifesto called for the rejection of the capitalist-technocratic university and solidarity with the working class". Thus Althusser's researches regarding the theory of interpellation, within the broader framework of historical materialism, can be viewed as a theoretical response to some of the questions raised by the events of '68.

During this time of great social discord Althusser was employed by the *École Normale Supérieure*[3] (ENS) as an academic working in the discipline of philosophy[4]. The ENS did not escape the conflict of May '68 and as

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[1]In "Reply to John Lewis (Self-Criticism)" from *Essays in Self-Criticism* Althusser refers to this event as "the greatest workers' strike in world history (ten million workers on strike for a month) in May 1968 — a strike which was 'preceded' and 'accompanied' by a deep ideological revolt among French students and petty bourgeois intellectuals" (Althusser, 1976: 35).

[2]Althusser contends that schools, universities, and other 'education' providers are, in the last instance, Ideological State Apparatuses. It is, therefore, worth noting that the events of May '68, to follow Althusser's thinking, are at least partially the result of interpellative failure within the state educational apparatus (q.v. §1.4).

[3]Patrick Ffrench notes in *The Time of Theory*: "In 1949, having been taught at the ENS by Georges Canguilhem... Louis Althusser took up a lecturing position at the ENS. He would teach at different times in his career... Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Etienne Balibar... and many others... His legacy at the ENS affects an entire generation of French intellectuals" (Ffrench, 1995: 12).

[4]Being employed by the ENS, by Althusser's own logic, necessitates he was in the employ of an Ideological State Apparatus. "Allow me, for a moment, to praise Althusser... to remember that it was this voice and this person who taught an entire generation of French philosophers how to think, at the heart of the most centralized Ideological State Apparatus in what we used to call the western world, the Ecole Normale Supérieure, rue D'Ulm, of which Althusser was the director" (Pepper, 1995: 34).

Oliver Feltham notes, a young high-school philosophy teacher named Alain Badiou, was scheduled to give a two give a two-part lecture there at the invitation of Althusser and the second, much anticipated lecture, on "the distinction between science and ideology" and "the question of emergence of new knowledge" could not be delivered: "the students hit the streets, the paving stones began to fly, and Badiou, already an experienced militant through protests against the Algerian War, joined the occupation of part of the École Normale Supérieure" (Feltham, 2008: 1). Among the other attendees at this fateful seminar organized by Althusser were Étienne Balibar, François Regnault, Pierre Macherey, and Jacques Ranciére. These notable representatives of French Theory — all of whom had considerable contact with Althusser — would be sufficient to indicate the close connection they had to what can be provisionally called 'Althusserianism'; however, there were also others, some perhaps better known, who were Althusser's students, colleagues, and interlocutors during this time: Michel Foucault[5], Jacques Derrida[6] , Jacques Lacan[7] , Michel Pêcheux, Jacques-Alain Miller, Philippe Sollers, Nicos Poulantzas and Jean-Claude Milner — this group is by no means exhaustive of all of those within Althusser's theoretical ambit during his years the the ENS — it simply lists some of the more well-known of Althusser's, formal and informal, research associates. Nor is it possible to reduce all the aforementioned to being Althusser's 'disciples': each had a singular relationship with Althusser's research.

There is, however, an identifiable engagement with the problem of interpellation from all Althusser's fellow workers in theory, albeit in quite different and sometimes opposing ways. Due to this Althusser's research associates exhibited somewhat conventional disciplinary divisions with each having paradigmatic research differences. In Balibar's early work (such as that in Part III of *Reading Capital*: The Basic Concepts of Historical Materialism) one finds a sustained contribution to Althusser's problematic in terms of "the science of history". Regnault follows a research interest in Lacanian psychoanalysis and philosophy while cutting his teeth on the editorial board of *Cahiers pour l'Analyse*: a journal with strong theoretical import from the work of Althusser, Lacan, and Georges Canguilhem. Pierre Macherey's *Theory of Literary Production* took Althusser's early work on ideology in the

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[5]Foucault was an ENS graduate and an ex-student of Althusser's (Ffrench, 1995).

[6]Derrida was also an ENS graduate and had studied under the supervision of both Foucault and Althusser (Ffrench, 1995).

[7]Lewis A. Kirshner declares in "The Man Who Didn't Exist: The Case of Louis Althusser" from *American Imago*: "Most notably, he [Althusser] developed an alliance with Jacques Lacan, of whose theories he was an enthusiastic supporter, and whom he brought into the *École Normale Supérieure*" (Kirshner, 2003: 219).

direction of literary theory. Jacques Ranciére made a contribution to *Reading Capital* that discusses Marx's theory of value which was subsequently excluded from the first English translation. Foucault began his historical studies of changing conceptions of Madness which Althusser thought highly of. Derrida undertook early work drawing conceptually from Tran Duc Thao's studies of Husserl and Marx[8]. Lacan lectured at the ENS at invitation of Althusser (q.v. Althusser, 1993). Michel Pêcheux applied the principles of historical materialism to discourse theory. Miller developed a "logic of the signifer" with correlates to the problematic of structural causality. Milner examined the interrelations between Lacanian psychoanalysis and structural linguistics (q.v. Milner, 1990). In many respects it is possible to identify between these theorists a loose research association conceiving of answers to the consequences of interpellative effects in various forms, that is, a multidisciplinary focus on the theory of interpellation.

In *The Subject and Power* Foucault provides a comprehensive review of his researches that has parallels with much of Althusser's work. "I would like to say, first of all, what has been the goal of my work during the last twenty years. It has not been to analyze the phenomena of power... *My objective... has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects*" (Foucault, 1982: 208; emphasis added). Foucault's inquiry into the historical emergence of the subject-form directly concerns questions of interpellation. Rending his work into three parts Foucault outlines the methods he used to analyse how "human beings are made subjects". First he studied "the objectivizing of the speaking subject in grammar générale, philology, and linguistics. Or again, in this first mode, the objectivizing of the productive subject, the subject who labors, in the analysis of wealth and economics... Or... the objectivizing of the sheer fact of being alive in natural history or biology" (ibid.). The second part of Foucault's research studies "dividing practices". "The subject is either divided in himself or divided from others... Examples are the mad and the sane, the sick and the healthy, the criminals and the 'good boys' ". (ibid.). The third part, Foucault explains, concerns "the way a human being turns him- or herself into a subject. For example, I have chosen the domain of sexuality — how men have learned to *recognize* themselves as subjects of "sexuality" (ibid.: emphasis added).

These three modes of inquiry are also present in Althusser's researches,

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[8]Derrida remarks in an interview how 'traces' of Thao's research can be found in his study of Husserl: "I remember Tran-Duc Thao's book, *Phenomenology and Dialectical Materialism*... (which Foucault, I believe, had praised in a class or in private conversation)... This book probably had a great influence on me: traces of it may be found in my thesis on Husserl" (Derrida, 1993: 184).

however, they are formulated somewhat differently. In the first case, i.e., the objectivizing of speech, production, and biology, a discourse is specified to 'objectify' (represent) processes of grammar, labour, and life so that they can become objects of investigation. This theoretical practice Althusser calls the *discourse-object relation* (q.v Althusser, 1970). "Dividing practices" are discussed by Althusser in terms of their discursive conditions, such as those outlined in his prospective General Theory of Discourse, and also in light of their connection to political considerations (e.g. a given conjuncture) (q.v. Althusser, 2003). The question of self-subjectivation, as a process of mis/recognition, Althusser addresses in terms of social practice, i.e., subjection to the Subject (q.v. §1.2). Foucault arrived at the question of power as consequence of studying how human beings become "subjects", that is, Foucault found it necessary to develop conceptual tools for the study of power in order to further analyse the subject — power became one concept among others to study how the subject is interpellated. "It soon appeared to me that, while the human subject is placed in relations of production and of signification, he is equally placed in power relations" (Foucault, 1982: 208). Foucault further states: "it seemed to me that economic history and theory provided a good instrument for relations of production; that linguistics and semiotics offered instruments for studying relations of signification; but for power relations we had no tools of study" (ibid.).

The question of the subject, for Foucault and Althusser, then entails the question of the power to subject. Struggles against power, Foucault notes, raise the fundamental question: "Who are we?" as subjects (ibid.: 212). This is question of a *identity.* "There are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to" (ibid.). May '68, the largest strike in French history, exemplifies a struggle that asks "Who are we?" as subjects of state apparatuses. Althusser suggests that, when state apparatuses (ISAs and RSAs) "no longer manage to function. . . 'events' happen" (Althusser, 2014: 206). According to Foucault "[g]enerally it can be said there are three types of struggle": "either against forms of domination. . . against forms of exploitation which separate individuals from what they produce; or against that which ties the individual to himself and submits him to others in this way (struggles against subjection, against forms of subjectivity and submission) (Foucault, 1982: 212). These three types of struggle are struggles against historically specific forms of interpellation.

The concept of interpellation, for Althusser, attempts to provide an index of the social processes which lead to domination, exploitation and subjection in a way that parallels much of Foucault's research on the subject

and power. The method Althusser uses to read Marx's *Capital* in *Reading Capital*, namely the analysis of the apparent "knowledge-effects" of a given discourse in order to: "question the specific object of a specific discourse, and the specific relationship between this discourse and its object... to put to the discourse-object unity the question of the epistemological status which distinguishes this particular unity from other forms of discourse-object unity", is treated to extensive theoretical expansion in Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (cf. Althusser, 1970; Foucault, 1972). The power of subjection is often blinding in its effects where a subject's vision of "self-understanding" is strictly delimited by the conditions defined by the power of interpellative practices. "Here again, the invisible is no more a function of a subject's sighting than is the visible: the invisible is a theoretical problematic's non-vision of its non-objects, the blinded eye of the theoretical problematic's *self-reflection*" (Althusser, 1970: 26; emphasis added). Commenting upon Foucault's *Histoire de la Folie*, from which Althusser derives "the conditions of possibility of the invisible and the invisible, of the inside and the outside of the theoretical field that defines the visible" Althusser remarks upon a "*certain relation of necessity...between the visible and the invisible thus defined*". He states "[i]n the development of a theory, the invisible of a visible field is not generally anything whatever outside and foreign to the visible defined by that field. The invisible is defined by the visible as *its* invisible, *its* forbidden vision" (Althusser, 1970: 26). Within capitalist social relations the "forbidden vision" is the production and distribution of surplus value as a function of class relations (q.v. §1.4.).

To be interpellated, for Althusser, is to be blinded by the very categories and concepts through which one has "knowledge" of an object. Cremonini's painting *Colin maillard* illustrates this idea well (Fig. 2.1). The viewer of the painting can see that the subject is blind, however, this viewer cannot see what caused this blindness. Furthermore, *Colin maillard*, in English translation refers to the game "Blind Man's Bluff"[9]. In this game one player is blindfolded: they are "It". With this designation the player known as "It" must attempt to identify the other players of the game without being able to see them. *Colin maillard* is a game of mis/recognition. If "It" successfully touches another player, by identifying their whereabouts, this person the becomes "It", and so the game continues. Because "It" is blindfolded, and cannot see the other players, they can hide in plain sight and lead "It" astray by misdirecting "It" to another location where they are not. The designation

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[9]Claude Lévi-Strauss provides an anthropological analysis of games in *The Savage Mind*. In chapter one "The Science of the Concrete" Lévi-Strauss studies games as examples of ritual practice that produce forms of social "equilibrium" (q.v. Lévi-Strauss, 1962).

of being "It" in "Blind Man's Bluff" bears an analogical relationship to the determination of personal identity in social life. The subject is designated "It" without being able to see the invisible structures of class, ethnicity and gender that pre-exist the formation of this subject's identity. Moreover, the identity of "It" changes depending on how "It" is being socially reflected or perceived. For Althusser the experience of interpellation can be addressed in objective terms only on the condition that the self-evidence of subjectivity radically revised. This *re-vision*, for Althusser, must take the form of an epistemological break where the game of subjectivity — the structure of mis/recognition — is identified as a theoretical blind spot in the humanities and social sciences (q.v. Althusser, 2003). For "It" in the game of "Blind Man's Bluff" the positions of other the players are strictly invisible, and must be, if the game is to be played[10].

Lacan's symbol of the barred subject indicates how interpellation can be defined by self-knowledge that is, in effect, structurally mis/recognized. $\cancel{S}$ represents the condition of self-separation where humans become subjects by means of an imaginary logic of identity. Lacan notes: "The only homogeneous function of consciousness is found in the ego's imaginary capture by its specular recognition, and in the function of misrecognition that remains tied to it" (Lacan, 2006: 705). The "imaginary capture" of the subject is a product of misrecognition that is discursively generated in social practices. The concept of interpellation denotes the mis/recognition of this imaginary logic as an effect of structural causality. The subject — subjected to the logic of the $\cancel{S}$ — is interpellated as a result of signifying practices which appear self-evident and natural. The imaginary relation to a subject's real conditions of existence is interpellated in relation to historical norms of behaviour, including, "self-reflection". In a letter discussing the relationship between ideology and structures of the unconscious Althusser declares: "It is enough for our present purpose to know that the ideological cannot be reduced to the conceptual systems of ideology but is an *imaginary* structure that exists not only in the form of concepts but also in the form of attitudes, gestures, patterns of behaviour, intentions, refusals, permissions, bans, etc" (Althusser, 1996: 75). This invisible logic of interiorized interpellation is a process to which Althusser suggests, without theoretical practice, the subject is blind $\cancel{S}$. Althusser's fellow workers in theory recognized the invisibility of this blindness and made attempts to study the imperceptible appearance of unseen epistemic

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[10]Legal ideology serves the same effect in the relations of production. According to Althusser legal ideology is the blindfold which all subjects must wear to dissimulate the class basis of valorization. Ideologically legal equality is the blindfold to mask class inequality — a blindfold which must be worn to play the game of freedom, equality, property, and Bentham.

conditions using methods that were sometimes distant and sometimes close to Althusser's vision of theoretical practice (q.v. §2.1).

2.2   Interdisciplinary Althusserianism

Althusser was critical of so-called "interdisciplinary" research in the humanities and social sciences. He was dubious of the scientific standing of research undertaken using the "interdisciplinary" banner and also of conventional disciplinary demarcation. "*Today most of the decisive theoretical problems, at least in philosophy and the 'Human Sciences', are obfuscated by 'disciplinary' divisions and their effects*" (Althusser, 2003: 33). Because of these issues Althusser sought to found a work group to overcome such research impediments; it should be "*organized around*", he thought, "not a discipline or 'interdisciplinary theme', *but a* theoretical object, *a fundamental* theoretical problem" (ibid.). These remarks were addressed to Alain Badiou, Etienne Balibar, Yves Doroux and Pierre Macherey with the aim of collectively writing a text entitled *Elements of Dialectical Materialism* (Goshgarian, 2003)[11]. Dialectical materialism would thus be, nominally, the theoretical object Althusser sought to analyse with his colleagues; notwithstanding the fact that, for Althusser, dialectical materialism is the theoretical counterpart of historical materialism (q.v. §2.3).

What Althusser describes in 'Three Notes on the Theory of Discourses' (1966) (from where the above remarks on interdisciplinarity are taken), is an at times inconsistent, and very preliminary, account of a *general theory of discourse*. Althusser vacillates between the term GT (general theory) of the signifier and GT of discourse for the research project he outlines. The "*General Theory of Discourse* (or of the signifier? but I am beginning to be suspicious of this term, which is too deeply involved in the idealism of the connotations of Saussure's signifier-signified)", Althusser writes, "would make it possible to assign, with respect to the specific laws defining each particular discourse... a status to the *general laws governing any discourse*" (ibid.: 80–81) (cf. Saussure, 1960). It is incontrovertible that Althusser is proposing a research programme of immense proportions here. As Althusser

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[11]Bruno Bostells writes in "Alain Badiou's Theory of the Subject from *Pli*:"One of the most intriguing chapters in the ulterior development of the general theory of structural causality and the different between science and ideology refers to the unpublished notes for a new, collective project, initiated under the guidance of Althusser less than a year after the publication of *Reading Capital*...The fundamental thesis of Althusser's draft, 'Three Notes on the Theory of Discourses', is that the philosophy of dialectical materialism must come to terms with the theoretical impact of psychoanalysis, especially through the work of Lacan" (Bosteels, 2001: 213).

declares — the theoretical problem he seeks to find an answer to is none other than that of determining — the *"general laws governing* any *discourse"*. For this reason the various discourses that are objects of research for his colleagues must in some way conform to the laws of discourse Althusser envisages explaining. What's more not only must their respective researches conform to the 'general laws of discourse' their individual discursive objects must be *ipso facto*, ultimately, subsumed by these laws. Therefore Althusser readily apprehends, paradigmatically, the research of his associates as instances of dialectical materialism and also seeks to understand the general laws which allow for such discursive individuation to occur in each case. Althusser makes a number of preparatory remarks suggesting some of the epistemic procedures to be advanced in order to develop a GT of discourse. To this end he states: "I...have come to the conclusion that it is absolutely essential to construct a theory of discourses in order to be able to provide a *differential* definition of the specific discourses known as: *scientific discourse, aesthetic discourse, ideological discourse, unconscious discourse"* (Althusser, 2003: 75; emphasis added). Althusser notes:"for the moment, I leave aside philosophical discourse, which should doubtless be distinguished from scientific discourse as such" (ibid.). The general research programme Althusser is defining (GT of discourse) has for its purpose the explanation of the effects, articulation, and concomitant features of discursivity. A grid of specifications could then elaborated, Althusser believes, to categorically *differentiate*, the discursive formations he identifies, i.e., scientific, aesthetic, ideological, and unconscious, one from the other. Regarding the "effects" of discourse Althusser maintains that "[t]he identification of specific *effects* has revealed the existence of specific discourses as their condition" (ibid.). Here Althusser gives examples of the "knowledge-effect" of scientific discourse, the "effect of recognition-misrecognition" within ideological discourse, and referring to the work of Badiou, "the fictional [*romanesque*] subjectivity-effect" (ibid.). The "problem of articulation" is raised with reference to "the different levels: between the scientific and ideological, the aesthetic and the ideological, and, finally...the articulation between the unconscious and the ideological" (ibid.). The "problem of articulation" between these four discourses can be determined by comparing their individual features. Althusser finds that "each of the discourses thus identified was endowed with a specific structure, different from that of the others" (ibid.: 76).

Making some provisional suggestions concerning how to delineate the structure of each discourse Althusser notes: "[i]t would seem that we can conceive of this difference in structure as a twofold difference: as a difference in the *elements* constituting the various discourses, and as a difference in the *constraints* governing the relationships in which these elements stand to

Table 2.1: General Theory of Discourse

Scientific Discourse	Elements/Constraints
Ideological Discourse	Elements/Constraints
Aesthetic Discourse	Elements/Constraints
Unconscious Discourse	Elements/Constraints

one another" (ibid.: 76). This bipartite division that Althusser describes, as being constituted by *elements* and *constraints*, is thus an incipient structural analysis of discursive modalities. By beginning to objectify such structural differences within each discourse Althusser is able formalize the interplay between individual discursive units as elements, and the determinate constraints placed on these units, that prevent one discourse sliding into another and consequently preventing the specific apprehension of individual variant forms (e.g. scientific, aesthetic, ideological, and unconscious). The "element-constraint" relation is, necessarily, key to any understanding of the "problem of articulation" Althusser outlines *between* discourses.

Althusser insists upon the need for the differential definition of discursive objects: "one can define an object A only through its *difference* from an object B" (ibid.: 73; emphasis added). Considering the imbrication of different discourses (i.e. the problem of articulation) Althusser contends that the best way to conceptually untangle them is to apply a differential methodology to their conditions of "constraint". "Rightly identifying the object B of an object A is a theoretical question of great importance, if by B we mean the object with which A must be articulated in order to exist as A; in other words, if we mean the object whose difference from A enables us to arrive at the definition of A" (ibid.). Correctly demarcating the particular attributes of each discourse, then, provides the means adduce discursive objects which are sufficiently well defined to be of use epistemologically. For example, Althusser believes it is possible to define primary and secondary articulations of discourse; he stipulates there is a primary articulation between ideological and unconscious discourse, with secondary articulations existing in relation to such primary articulations: "secondary articulations... pass by way of the articulation of unconscious discourse with this or that sequence of ideological discourse" (ibid.: 74).

Pêcheux examines such conditions of discursive articulation in the work *Language, Semantics, and Ideology* (1982). Extrapolating upon Althusser's researches regarding the "subject-form", that is, the notion that "[n]o human... can be an agent of practice if he does not take the form of a subject" Pêcheux then details the *discursive preconditions of the subject-form* (Al-

thusser, 1976: 95 cited in Pêcheux, 1982: 114). What Pêchuex refers to as the "subject-form of discourse" is the range of discursive modalities necessary for the subject-form to speak, act, and embody the "historical form of existence of every *individual*, of every agent of social practices" (ibid.). The primary articulation between unconscious discourse and ideological functions, according to Pêcheux, by mechanisms of "forgetting". "The term 'forgetting' here does not mean the loss of something once known, as when one speaks of 'a loss of memory', but the occlusion of the cause of the subject inside its very effect" (Pêcheux, 1982: 114). This subjective occlusion, Pêcheux suggests, is the necessary effect of a subject's apparently contingent relations of social experience, relations of social experience which are, in fact, contingently ideological.

There are two types of occlusion within the subject-form of discourse which Pêcheux denotes as "forgetting no. 1" and "forgetting no. 2". In the case of forgetting no. 1: "the subject cannot, by definition, locate himself outside the discursive formation which dominates him" (Pêcheux, 1982: 123). In case the of forgetting no. 2 this is: "the 'forgetting' by which every speaking subject 'selects', from the interior of the discursive formation which dominates him" (ibid.). These two processes (i.e., forgetting no. 1 and forgetting no. 2) function together. "The effect of the subject-form of discourse is thus above all to mask what I am calling *forgetting no. 1* via the operation of *forgetting no. 2*" (ibid: 126). The subject is occluded from its conditions of discursivity because these structures are the, forgotten, presupposition of being "understood".

<div align="center">Table 2.2: Subject of Occlusion</div>

Forgetting no.1	Subject is the effect of discourse not its cause
Forgetting no.2	Mis/recognition of discursive selection

The subject is thus a bearer of discursive relations within the structure-in-dominance and not their author: when the subject ostensibly 'selects' its discourse it does so from the "discursive formation which dominates him", the explicit selection of which, according to Pêcheux — is imaginary — as the subject must make use of discourse where the meaning is pre-given in order to be intelligible to others. "I can now specify that the interpellation of the individual as subject of his discourse is achieved by the identification of the subject within the discursive formation that dominates him (i.e. in which he is constituted as subject)" (ibid.: 114) (q.v. §1.2).

For an interpellated subject to maintain an identity it must assume use of the "preconstructed" meanings of discourse disseminated within the structure-in-dominance (i.e. the social formation). "I shall say that the 'preconstructed' corresponds to the 'always-already-there' of ideological interpellation that supplies-imposes 'reality' and its 'meaning' "(ibid.: 115). The reality and meaning of 'self-evident' interpellation that is disseminated in the subject form of discourse — namely discursively preconstructed "meaning" — is deconstructed — through the activity of critical, scientific, investigation. "This is straightaway to say that the historical moment of the break inaugurating a given science is necessarily accompanied by a challenge to the subject-form and the evident character of meaning which is a part of it. . . In other words. . . a relationship between 'thought' and the real *in which what is thought is not as such supported by a subject*" (ibid.: 137). Pêcheux is here in agreement with Althusser — there is no subject of science — the activity of science is always a *process without a subject* (cf. Althusser, 1976; Pêcheux, 1982).

Pêcheux further explains that properly scientific thought is "*thought from which any subject is absent as such*, so that the concepts of a science as such do not strictly speaking have a meaning but rather a function in a process" (ibid.: 137). Providing a three point summary of his theory on the relationship between the subject of discourse and scientific knowledge Pêcheux states:

1. "the process of the production of knowledges is a process without a subject, i.e., a process from which every subject is absent as such";

2. "the process of the production of knowledges operates through the taking of positions ('demarcations' etc.) for scientific objectivity";

3. "the process of the production of knowledges is a 'continuing break'; it as such co-extensive with the theoretical ideologies within which it never ceases to separate itself" (Pêcheux, 1982: 142).

Scientific research as a "process without a subject" is a defining postulate of Althusser's theoretical work that serves as an axiomatic starting-point for his epistemological studies: "The fact that the development of scientific practice has the character of a 'process without a subject' marks each of its moments and elements, its raw material no less than its agents (researchers), instruments of production, and results" (Althusser, 2017b: 102). Althusser further explains that: "[f]rom the standpoint of scientific practice, there is little to be said about the researcher. . . He can invent theory only on the basis of existing theories, discover problems only on the basis of the theoretical and technical means available to him and so on. . . *He is an agent of a process that goes beyond him, not its subject, that is, its origin or creator*" (ibid.; emphasis added).

The subject-form is thus a *constraint* theoretically, for Althusser, in the production of scientific discourse, whereas in ideological discourse, and aesthetic discourse it is an integral *element* (q.v. Table 2.1). Interpellation, therefore, relies upon forms of discourse in which the subject is an element because the preconstructed meanings of the "always-already-there" require it. The self-evidence of the always-already-there is the mirror function of mis/recognition that discursively naturalizes and reproduces the social order. As Pêcheux notes, however, theoretical practice institutes a continuing break with the everyday obviousness of preconstructed meanings and separates ideological discourse from the 'process without a subject' of scientific practice.

2.3   The Derrida-Effect

"There is therefore also a Derrida-effect" (Althusser, 2003: 17): this syntagm appears in the first draft of a lecture entitled "The Philosophical Conjuncture and Marxist Theoretical Research"; it was subsequently revised, the reference to the Derrida-effect omitted, and delivered at the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) on the 26th of June 1966. The second, amended, version of the lecture omits several comments regarding the theoretical conditions of existence for not only the Derrida-effect, but also the *individual*, discursive, "effects" of a number of Althusser's colleagues, and even, none other than — the "Althusser-effect"[12]. In the first draft Althusser writes: "The *theoretical conjuncture* that dominates us has produced an *Althusser-effect*, as it has produced a Ranciére-effect, a Balibar-effect, a Macherey-effect, an Establet-effect... an so on (ibid.; emphasis added). What Althusser is introducing here is an attempt to theorise the forms of ideological interpellation within "French philosophy"[13] in 1966.

"French philosophy" (i.e., the ideology of the 'human sciences') is placed in juxtaposition to "Marxist theoretical research" with the latter being the means to adequately discern the discursive elements of the former (q.v. Table 2.1).

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[12]The content of philosophy is an index of, Althusser believes, class struggle where a given "thesis" is attributable to historical forms of social practice. "For all these philosophical Theses, these philosophical positions (Thesis=position) produce effects in the social practices. Among them, effects in political practice and scientific practice. If philosophy is *class struggle* in theory...it has theoretical effects...not only in political practice and scientific practice, but also in *every* social practice, from the 'struggle for production' (Mao) to art, etc" (Althusser, 1976: 58).

[13]"French philosophy" is treated by Althusser very broadly "to include both philosophy in the strict sense and also the disciplines still associated with it... such as the sciences known as the 'human' sciences – sociology, psychology, and so on" (Althusser, 2003: 3).

"At the very deepest level", Althusser claims, "of the theoretical conjuncture of present-day French philosophy, we still find a persistent, sedimented layer whose origins can be traced back to the philosophy of the Middle Ages" (ibid.: 3). Althusser thus identifies the ideological elements within "French philosophy" as contemporary forms of "spiritualism". "Look at the Middle Ages: the Church and its ideologists offered all its flock — that is to say, primarily the exploited masses, but also the feudal class and itself — a very simple and clear explanation of history. History is made by God, and obeys the laws, that is, the ends, of Providence" (Althusser, 1976: 55).

Althusser calls attention to the "religious ideology" he finds in "French philosophy" insofar he believes such misconceptions belong to the *pre-history* of the human sciences. The human sciences will remain pre-historical, in Althusser's view, until Marx's scientific work is sufficiently well applied to this domain and its objects (Althusser, 1973). It is not only in French philosophy that Althusser locates ideology — tendentially — ideology is present in all philosophy to the extent that it is a theoretical expression of a given "structure-in-dominance". "If the theoretical conditions with which Marx broke (to simplify, let me say: the philosophies of history) deserve the description ideological, it is because they were the theoretical detachments of practical ideologies fulfulling necessary functions in the reproduction of the relations of production in a given class society" (ibid.: 7)[14] .

Althusser's lecture "The Philosophical Conjuncture and Marxist Theoretical Research" is, then, intimating how philosophers and researchers in the "human sciences" become instantiations of social relations in theory as "bearers" or "supports" of the social structure. In the revised version of the lecture Althusser denotes this mode of inquiry as an analysis of "the structure of the theoretical conjuncture" (ibid.: 2). Althusser conceives of those invited to his discussion as structural effects of the philosophical conjuncture. In the first draft he uses the literary image of a "play without an author" to stage such structural effects. "For we are to some extent in the position of people who have been invited to a play that nobody has seen or talked about yet... This play is a play without an author... The person who is addressing you is, like all the rest of us, merely a particular structural effect of this conjuncture" (ibid.: 17). The actors in this play take the stage by virtue of their effects within the theoretical conjuncture. Within the present scene, the

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[14]In another phrasing Althusser from *Essays in Self-Criticism* Althusser declares: "If history is difficult to explain scientifically, it is because *between* real history and men there is always a screen, separation: *a class ideology of history* in which the human masses "spontaneously" believe: because this ideology is pumped into them by the ruling or ascending class, and serves in its exploitation" (Althusser, 1976: 55-56; emphasis in original).

Table 2.3: Objects of Definition

Historical Materialism	Dialectical Materialism
theory of social classes and political parties	theoretical status of Marxist philosophy, viz-à-viz, Marxist science
theory of legal-political superstructure (law, state power, state apparatus)	theory of structural causality
theory of transitional forms	theory of theoretical practice
theory of historical individuality	theory of discourse, subjectivity effect, and ideology

mis en scène, at the date of June 1966, Ranciére, Balibar, Derrida, Macherey, Establet, and Althusser, all take their places as effects of the conjunctural 'play'. "My friend Jacques Derrida will not take it amiss, I hope, when I say that if he is here... it is not only out of friendship and philosophical indulgence, but also as a structural effect of the philosophical conjuncture" (ibid.: 17).

The objectivity of the pedagogical event in which Althusser has a "leading" part has for its basis not the Truth of "French philosophy" but the effects of theoretical conjuncture *in* philosophy. As Althusser notes: "I am not joking when I say that the play performed here is a play without an author, and that we are all particular structural effects of the conjuncture. It is the philosophical conjuncture which brings us together here, and provides our meeting with its object" (ibid.: 17). An essential aim of Althusser's lecture is to question the status of Marxist research in terms of its difference from other, "ideological", research methods in the "human sciences"."With a few exceptions, the conclusion holds that, without subjecting their theories, methods, techniques and, finally, their 'objects' to radical criticism [those of "French philosophy", for example], is in fact to succumb to one of the most dangerous (because least perceptible) forms of bourgeois ideology" (Althusser, 2003: 204).

Althusser presents the distinction between dialectical materialism and historical materialism as a possible methodological exit from the ideology of "French philosophy". Detailing the theoretical difference between historical materialism and dialectical materialism Althusser specifies their distinction as one between science and philosophy — with an important definitional caveat — historical materialism is the "science of history" and dialectical materialism is "Marxist philosophy". Marxist philosophy, however, is not a "science in the strict sense": it is "*a philosophy of scientific character*"

(ibid.: 11; emphasis added). Althusser then proceeds to describe the research objects each domain. For dialectical materialism these are: "the difference in theoretical status between Marxist science and Marxist philosophy", "the theory of structural causality", the "theory of theoretical practice", "a general theory of discourse", "the theory of ideology", and the "the subjectivity-effect"ibid.: 14–15). For historical materialism these are: "a systematic definition of the. . . tried-and-tested concepts of the *general theory* of historical materialism", "the theory of social classes and political parties", "the theory of the legal-political superstructure (theory of law, theory of state power, theory of the state apparatus)", "the theory of transitional forms", "the theory of the forms of historical individuality (including the social formation)" (ibid.: 15). According to Althusser these definitions for each respective domain, i.e., historical and dialectical materialism, are in no way exhaustive and "countless questions need to be addressed, but we have to limit ourselves" (ibid.: 15).

Pêcheux, continuing this line of inquiry with respect to Marxist philosophy, finds that the *epistemological break* of historical materialism determines the *scientific character* of dialectical materialism. This is because historical materialism is an "experimental science of history" (Pêcheux, 1982: 148). When Althusser refers to the "tried and tested concepts" of historical materialism he is referring to their experimental use in social practice. Historical materialism, according to Pêcheux, "therefore contains, like every other science, both concepts and devices. . . through which their effects are realised, in new epistemological and practical conditions" (ibid.)[15]. Like every other science, Althusser and Pêcheux maintain, historical materialism breaks with the subject-form (q.v. §2.2). Dialectical materialism, then, examines the persistence of the subject (e.g. the subject-form of discourse) recursively in relation to the experimental practices of historical materialism. The process of interpellation which, for Pêcheux, is the occluded (forgotten) "realisation" of the subject-form of discourse, can be studied, Althusser suggests, in terms of the general theory of discourse: as an instance of the *subjectivity-effect* (q.v. Table 2.1 & Table 2.2.). The conditions of structural causality determining the subject-form of discourse and its subjectivity effects are then capable of being ascertained empirically through the experimental practice of historical materialism.

La Nouvelle Critique published, in 1964 (some three years prior to the colloquium "The Philosophical Conjuncture and Marxist Theoretical Research"

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[15]Tony Hak and Niels Helsott note in the chapter 'Pêcheux's contribution to discourse analysis' from *Automatic Discourse Analysis*: "Pêcheux...studied philosophy from 1959 to 1963 at the *École Normale Supérieure*, where Louis Althusser and Georges Canguilhem were among his teachers. Like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida before him, he received training in Bachelardian epistemology" (Hak and Helsloot, 1995: 4).

— held at the ENS) an article of Althusser's simply named "Problèmes étudiants" (translated as "Student problems"). "Student problems" addresses a range of pedagogical issues that students, in particular university students, face in capitalist society (Althusser, 2011). Differentiating between the *social* division of labour and the *technical* division of labour Althusser explains that the university "is basically part of the technical division of labour in a given modern society" (ibid.: 11). "The *technical division of work* corresponds to all jobs whose existence is justified by the technical necessities that define the modes of production at a given moment in its development in a given society" (ibid.). The social division division of labour, in contradistinction to the technical division of labour, "expresses a completely different aspect of the division of labour. Its function is to ensure the work process of the society in the forms of class structure and domination" (ibid.). The university, engages primarily, in training to facilitate the roles required for the technical division of labour, that is 'pedagogic training [formation]' " (ibid.). "Pedagogical training... the transmission of the knowledge [savoir] that exists in society, knowledge which conditions the existence and development of the labour process of the society, is a vital necessity for every society; pedagogical training is therefore based above all on the technical division of labour" (ibid.). The social division of labour, as a result of class domination, Althusser contends, appears in institutions (ISAs) — including the university — in the form of ideological "knowledge". "Now, what is remarkable is that in the case of the university the social division of labour, and therefore class domination, comes massively into play... in a 'blinding' way (which doubtless is why one does not always 'see' it), in the very object of intellectual work, in the knowledge the university is commisioned to distribute to the students" (ibid: 12-13). "The number one strategic point" writes Althusser, "where class domination over the minds of researchers, teachers and students is at stake is the nature of the knowledge taught, knowledge which is a class division cuts in two: science on the one hand and ideology on the other" (ibid.: 14).

Returning then to the "Derrida-effect" (as well as the Rancère-effect, Balibar-effect, Macherey-effect, Establet-effect and Althusser-effect) as structural effects of the theoretical conjuncture, the play of the "knowledge" structure — is the play between pedagogic function of the university and the social division of labour — of which Derrida, Rancèiere, Macherey, Establet, and Althusser are bearers or supports. "I do not want to be misunderstood. What I am saying is that philosophy is, in the last instance, class struggle in the field of theory. I am not saying that philosophy is *simply* class struggle in the field of theory" (Althusser, 1976: 37). In an appendix to the essay "Lenin and Philosophy *(February 1968)*" Althusser observes that "[p]hilosophy teachers are teachers, i.e. intellectuals employed in a given

education system and subject to that system, performing, as a mass, the social function of inculcating the 'values of the ruling ideology' " (Althusser, 1971a: 68). Furthermore, Althusser notes, "that there may be a certain amount of 'play' in schools. . . which enables individuals teachers to turn their teaching and reflection against these established 'values' does not change the mass effect of the philosophical teaching function. Philosophers are intellectuals and therefore petty bourgeois, subject as a mass to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology" (ibid.). Philosophers, Althusser finds, are almost incorrigibly the sycophants of the ruling ideology due to their structural position in the relations of production.

There may be some exceptions from this structural effect, and they will "adhere to a materialist philosophy and a revolutionary theory" (ibid.: 69). Althusser brings to the fore, in terms of dialectical materialism, the function of philosophy within the relations of production (i.e. the social division of labour) (q.v. Table 2.3). Strictly speaking philosophy does not have an object in the way sciences have an object (e.g. chemistry, physics, astronomy, mathematics)[16]. So what, then, does philosophy work upon? What is objectified in philosophical practice? According to Althusser, "objectively" philosophy works to produce an ideal result: *Truth*. Specifically, what Althusser calls a "truth guarantee", a guarantee which ultimately ensures the harmonious identity of subject and object, *thus positing a question, that had already been answered in advance.* "We have pronounced the crucial word: *Truth is a function of guarantee*" (Althusser, 2017a: 49). The philosopher asks an "imaginary question"; it is imaginary because the philosopher already "knows" what the answer is. "Philosophy poses face-to-face, *the object* to be known and *the subject* who is to know it. . . If we call the knowing subject S and the object to be known O, we have the fundamental equation of every theory of knowledge: S=O" (ibid: 46). Althusser stresses that this truth guarantee assumes the identity of subject and object at all times: "the knowledge produced in the subject by the act of knowing the object is identical to the object known. It is plainly the knowledge of *this* object (and no other). *Thus there is no mistake about who is who, no mistaken identity. . . the subject and object remain the same*, do not lose their identity in the course of cognition" (ibid.:47; emphasis added). The truth guarantee, as a philosophical problematic, mirrors the effects of interpellation wherein the interpellated subject is caught within a structure of mis/recognition (q.v. §1.2). The effect of interpellative practice is such that the subject (as an

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[16]Althusser explains: "Because of its abstraction, its rationality and its system, philosophy certainly figures 'in' the field of theory, in the neighbourhood of the sciences, with which it stands in a specific set of relations. But philosophy is not (a) science" (Althusser, 1976: 37).

ideological construct) never loses its identity – there is never a question of who is who within the relations of production – this question was settled well in advance by the very structure of the question itself.

2.4   New Beginnings

One year after Althusser's lecture at the ENS in 1967: "The Philosophical Conjuncture and Marxist Theoretical Research" the journal *Critique* published "The Re-Commencement of Dialectical Materialism" by Badiou. This article is a commentary on Althusser's theoretical problematic at the time of *For Marx* and *Reading Capital* published in 1965 and 1966 respectively[17]. Badiou suggests that Althusser's work provides "provides a grid of intelligibility" for "our political conjuncture" and it is the elucidation and expansion of this "grid of intelligibility" that is the purpose of Badiou's publication in *Critique* (Badiou, 2012: 133). The re-commencement of Marxist research, as exemplified by the theoretical rigour of Althusser's studies marks a new beginning for the theoretical practice formerly made inchoate by "vulgar Marxism" (Badiou, 2012). Badiou, following Althusser's research closely, draws attention to the dynamic process that is represented by the theoretical relationship between dialectical materialism and historical materialism. According to Badiou "the *difference* of historical materialism and dialectical materialism...signals the breadth of the Marxist theoretical revolution" (Badiou, 2012: 142; emphasis added). It is the recursive differentiation that occurs between the two disciplines (i.e., historical materialism and dialectical materialism) that is the measure of their objectivity within the experimental science of history (q.v. §2.3).

The "scientific character" of Marxist philosophy, i.e. dialectical materialism, is dependent on the conditions of scientificity derived from the science of history, i.e., historical materialism: this is the basis of their constitutive relationship. "[T]he foundation of the science of history by Marx 'induced' the birth of a new, theoretically and practically revolutionary philosophy, Marxist philosophy or dialectical materialism" (Althusser, 1969: 14). Althusser refers to this as a "double foundation in a single break" (ibid.: 33). This "break" is the "epistemological break" that Althusser posits occurs in Marx's work: sep-

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[17]*Pour Marx* (Paris: Maspero, 1965); *Lire le Capital* (Paris: Maspero, 1966).

arating the science of historical materialism from its ideological prehistory[18].
"This 'epistemological break' divides Marx's thought into two long essential
periods: the 'ideological' period before, and the scientific period after, the
break in 1845" (ibid.: 34). The epistemological break, however, does more
than conceptually differentiate (i.e., scientific vs. ideological) and periodize
Marx's work — simultaneously — it introduces a new problematic into the
field of philosophy: "Theory" (ibid.: 168). Theory, with a capital T, is an
articulation of the transformation from ideology into science: it determines
the capacity to objectify social practices in terms of the scientific principles
of historical materialism (q.v. Table 2.3).

In "The Re-Commencement of Dialectical Materialism" Badiou details
how the epistemological break "produces, in retrospect, the specific *other* of
science — that from which epistemology can teach us how science separates
itself" (Badiou, 2012: 139). Moreover, he indicates that dialectical materi-
alism is dependent upon historical materialism retrospectively in terms the
history of science. Dialectical materialism does not produce the concepts that
constitute the history of science — dialectical materialism is the "Theory" of
historical materialism — where such "Theory" (i.e. dialectical materialism)
articulates the modes by which ideology is separated from science (q.v. Table
2.1). Dialectical materialism, as Badiou suggests, is the "other" of historical
materialism, manifesting the operations of scientific discovery *post festum* but
not, necessarily, generating new scientific principles.

Nicos Poulantzas in "Towards a Marxist Theory" in 1966 reviewed *For
Marx* to find that "Althusser's project is to establish the basic coordinates of
a Marxist theory, to propose positive categories, which make it possible to
account for *the forms and modes of production of knowledge*" (Poulantzas,
2008: 139; emphasis added). Marxist epistemology, then, is what Poulantzas
identified as the object of Althusser's research. The conditions of existence
for these "forms and modes of production of knowledge" are discursive,
institutional, technical and social, *structures*. Each structured instance within
the social totality (e.g, discursive, institutional, or technical) called 'society',
combines to form a 'complex whole'. This social whole establishes "the
ever-pre-given complex structure of an ensemble of objective, specific levels,
within their own autonomy and effective, of historically determinate social
formation" (ibid.: 141). These interrelations between the effectivity and

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[18]In *Automatic Discourse Analysis* Hak and Helsloot state: "Epistemology formed the
background for, among others, the work of Althusser and Foucault in the 1960s, and provided
these authors with their concepts, such as 'episteme' (Foucault) and 'epistemological break'
(Althusser)...According to Althusser, in order to establish itself as the science of history
and society, Marxism must liberate itself from 'idealism' in a continuous struggle" (Hak
and Helsloot, 1995: 5).

autonomy of each structural instance can be discerned by analyzing a *mode of production as a matrix of interactions between structures.* "This matrix, disclosed by theoretical practice, defines the particular *mode of structuration* of the social formation under consideration and determines the 'index of dominance' of the various specific levels within this formation" (ibid.: 146; emphasis added).

Althusser, according to Poulantzas and Badiou, begins the project of Marxist research anew by re-examining the theoretical practice of dialectical materialism. Althusser's inexorable questioning of the subject-form raises numerous questions regarding the ways in which a subject is determined by its conditions of discursivity. The functioning of a subject, which does not happen, 'all by itself', is the outcome of particular interpellative mechanisms which includes, as Poulantzas states, "forms and modes of production of knowledge". When Althusser declares his intent to formulate a GT (general theory) of discourse, as "the general laws governing any discourse", it is apparent he was anticipating the full scope of what Marxist epistemology would amount to in practice. The differential research programme he outlines in terms of the elements and constraints between discursive forms suggests an incipient *falsification* of the subject in terms of scientific discourse as a constraint placed upon ideological interpellation (q.v. Table 2.1). Marx's trinity formula of wages, rent, and profit does not make use of a subject-form for its operation: the distribution of value is a process without a subject that produces particular historically specific relations of production which must be reproduced if capitalism is to continue. The realisation of surplus value overdetermines the social relations which are instantiated in part, as Althusser observes, by the legal status of a subject. The production of surplus value, a process without a subject, is maintained by the legal standing of an ideological subject: *the subject of law.*

Althusser's GT (general theory) of discourse, in conception, is similar to what Foucault calls 'archaeology' as the study of discursive events: "the law of existence of the statements, that which has rendered them possible — them and none other in their place: the conditions of their singular emergence; their correlation with other or simultaneous events, discursive or not" (Foucault, 1978: 14). The specificity of discourse with all its syntactic, semantic, graphic, epistemic and enunciative modalities determines the conditions of variation between statements, as limits and forms, for discursive division. A mode of production of knowledge, as Poulantzas notes, has for its material basis a variety of distinct functional requirements and for a subject to be interpellated it must be situated within a matrix of *occluded* discursive conditions (q.v. Table 2.2). Philippe Sollers, a founding contributor of the avant-garde literary journal *Tel Quel*, became interested in the archaeology of discursive forms at

around the same time Althusser and his colleagues were developing their new *readings* of Marx.

In the interview titled "Writing and Revolution" (1968) found in *Writing and the Experience of Limits* Sollers discusses his books *Théorie d'ensemble, Logiques, and Nombres* in relation to the need for a "real history" of textuality. "Real – which is to say materialistic – history cannot do without a semantic materialism... which, if founded, would open up a vast field of research. What is challenged here is the linear history which always subjugated the text... to privilege the canonical structures of meaning, subject, and truth" (Sollers, 1983: 2). These "canonical structures" (i.e., meaning, subject, truth) are precisely what Althusser describes as interpellative constructs. Meaning, subject, and truth are, for Sollers, ideologies that dissimulate the objectivity of "text as text" (ibid.: 1). Because of this — Sollers explains: "A comprehensive theory [*Théorie d'ensemble*] derived from the practice of writing demands to be elaborated" (ibid.). Furthermore, "this textual rupture, taken as a theoretical point of departure, is contemporary... *with that manifested in Western thought and history by Marx and Engels, viz. by the elaboration of dialectical materialism. It is the crisis itself... of readability*" (ibid.: 6; emphasis added). The phenomenon of textuality and its theory, for Sollers, should be elaborated in "Marxist" terms of "readability"[19] . Such a theory "is not to be identified with the historically determined concept of 'literature'. It implies the overturning and complete rearrangement of both the role and effects of this concept" (ibid.:5). Text, and with it, the conditions of textuality, replaces "literature" to open up readability as a discursive problematic. The question of readability practically examines the "meaning, subject, and truth" of discourse in terms of the material activity of writing.

Sollers registers the problematic of "readability" as an (epistemological) "break" in the history of literature: "It entails the setting up of an historical field that breaks with the pseudo-continuity of all 'literary history' which is based on speculative thinking that disregards the role of written economy as an *a priori* determinant of all thought" (ibid.: 6). Together with the written economy of textual experience is the discontinuity of the literary *a priori* as a "figurative" event. The break of readability in the history of writing is demarcated by Sollers as the difference between "monumental" and "cursive" histories. Monumental history is the "ground", the material base, of textual practice whereas "cursive" history is the figurative relation (superstructure) of this literal ground (ibid.: 7). Studying the conditions of textuality, Sollers

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[19]Derrida discussses Marx's "readability" in *Specters of Marx* chapter 1. "Injunctions of Marx" (q.v. Derrida, 1994a).

explains, has the features of a scientific endeavour. "The role of the theory is to indicate that textual writing sees science alone as qualified to give it its reality. . . its formulation summons that of science, its literality opens up to the formulation of science, it constitutes an object for science as well as an object for its own extension" (ibid. 8). The theory of readability "elaborates textual writing's real (economic) conditions" while simultaneously objectifying "its *a priori* systematic structures and the conditions of its effacement" (ibid.: 9).

A textual rupture in readability occurs as a result of the economy of writing effacing its earlier forms. "This reading is made possible only by a writing that recognizes the rupture" (ibid.:7). Althusser's new beginnings for the theory of historical materialism in *Reading Capital* start with an epistemological reading to exemplify the textual effects of theoretical practice. Sollers maintains that writing, and with it textuality, when studied materially reveals not only the economy of writing but, also, its *linear* form. Ideology represents semiotic ideality as "self-evident" and does not demonstrate the linear composition of discursive structures, i.e., the fact that discourse is composed of graphic lines which are antecedent to meaning, subject and truth (cf. Pêcheux, 1982; Sollers, 1983). The ideological history of textual linearity is a history — Sollers suggests — that is unwritten. "The history of this specific production remains to be articulated and integrated into the historical process in general" (Sollers, 1983: 2). The history of writing exists as an index for the history of thought in linear form and, therefore, the practice of writing must be critically assessed in its textuality insofar as "text" defines the representation of *writing*. "In other words, the specific problematic of writing breaks decisively with myth and representation to think itself in its literality and its space" (ibid.: 5). Discursive systems are normalized, Sollers posits, for ideological reasons which assume the continuity of the linear history that is a function of hegemonic writing. "Normality of discourse is conceived as need for a defence (ideology)... These past and/or present exclusions are those affecting texts which challenge the concept of "history' postulated by expressive and instrumental idealism" (ibid.: 6). According to Althusser this occurs in Hegel's historiography where the Idea is a philosophical defence for the spiritual development of human history (q.v. §5.1).

The possibility of a science of writing is considered by Derrida in *Of Grammatology* where he maintains that the history of writing is indissociable from the history of metaphysics with the two being mediated via conditions of technicity. Metaphysics has a historical connection to writing insofar as writing provides the technical means for metaphysical thought. "I believe... that a certain sort of question about the meaning and origin of writing precedes, or at least merges with, a certain type of question about the meaning and origin of technics" (Derrida, 1974: 8). The mediation of metaphysics by techniques

of writing serves to structure the linearity of normalized, hegemonic, history using the mythological devices of meaning, subject and truth (cf. Sollers, 1983; Derrida, 1974; Pêcheux, 1982; Barthes, 1972).

3

Theoretical Practice

Figure 3.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Dalla Finestra* 1979-1983

3.1 Rigorous Methods

As Lacan initiated a return to Freud[1] so Althusser initiated a return to Marx[2]. "[I]t is essential to read *Capital* to the letter. To read the text itself, complete. . . line by line, to return ten times to the first chapters" (Althusser, 1970: 13–14). The practical possibilities of this research project led Althusser to arrange of team of contributors to produce *Reading Capital*: a book in which Althusser and his colleagues detail the importance of reading Marx's *Capital* with, exacting, "philosophical" rigour[3]. *Reading Capital* included contributions from — Étienne Balibar, Roger Establet, Jacques Rancière, and Pierre Macherey — as well as Althusser. A division of theoretical labour was allocated with each researcher making their singular contribution in terms of the general architectonic of the study. The purpose of this project, as defined by Althusser in the first part of the text, was to read *Capital* as "philosophers" (Althusser, 1970: 14). Althusser attributes great value to his approach to this kind of reading (i.e. 'philosophical' reading) insofar as it constitutes critical, materialist, epistemic analysis. The political economy of *Capital*, was to be delimited and defined in terms of the discourse used to specify its analyses, i.e., to evaluate the epistemological capacity of Marx's work to represent capitalist society scientifically. "We read *Capital* as philosophers. . . [t]o go straight to the point. . . we posed it the question of its *relation to its object*. . . i.e., the question of the nature of the type of discourse set to handle this object, the question of scientific discourse" (ibid.). Maria Turchetto, notes, in 'History of Science and the Science of History' from *The Althusserian Legacy*: "[t]o read *Capital* as a philosopher, means to *ask the epistemological question*. That is to say, the question about the relation with its object the question of the discourse constructed to treat this object" (Turcheto, 1993: 74; emphasis added).

Such a rigorous reading requires a conceptual analysis of the "discourse-object unity" where the theoretical relationship between the discourse of *Capital* and the processes it is intended to articulate (i.e. in terms of political economy) are deconstructed to assess their conditions of scientificity: "it is therefore to put to the *discourse-object* unity the question of the epistemological status which distinguishes this particular unity from other forms of discourse-object unity. . . [o]nly this reading can determine. . . the place *Capital*

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[1]cf. Julien (1995); Weber (1991).

[2]cf. Rodríguez (2008a).

[3]Althusser remarks in 'Is it Simple to be a Marxist in Philosophy?' how "[i]n order to understand what Marx had thought, the very least we had to do was *return to Marx and 'think for ourselves'* about what he had thought" (Althusser, 1976: 174; emphasis added).

occupies in the history of knowledge"[4] (Althusser, 1970: 15). Althusser is thus seeking to establish the theoretical conditions which enable Marx's work in *Capital* to be received as a science and what differentiates this science from ideology. Juan Carlos Rodríguez in 'Althusser: Blowup (Lineaments of a Different Thought)' describes this theoretical event in terms of two "key schemata that sustain and construct Althusser's thought...the notion of the *coupure* ["break"] and the distinction between the *concret-réel* "real object" and the *concret-de-pensée* ["thought object"] (Rodríguez, 2008a: 765). Although these two schemata are conceptually distinct they function interdependently: their schematic specification is relationally articulated by the discourse-object unity of *Capital*. According to Rodríguez: "[o]n these foundations will be based the structure and development of Marxist thought according to Althusser: thought *from the standpoint of* exploitation (ibid.)[5]. The (epistemological) "break" is the moment of correspondence between the "real object" and the "thought object" that is realised in Marx's analysis of capitalist social relations.[6] As Anthony Cutler states in 'The Concept of the Epistemological Break': '[t]he concept of the epistemological break is a crucial concept in Althusser's work...it is a crucial concept in the formation of a theoretical history of the sciences" (Cutler, 1971: 61).

A "problematic" articulates how a theoretico-empirical question is presented for investigation and a problematic can be formulated, according to Althusser, in either ideological or scientific terms. When a problematic functions as a "guarantee" for existing pre-scientific discourse it is being "represented" in ideological terms; when the problematic functions to produce knowledge that corresponds to the "real object" or "concrete-real" the question is being formulated in scientific terms (q.v. §1.2). An epistemological break, for Althusser, is a mode of discursive differentiation between ideological and scientific problematics: "it delineates the specificity of a particular discontinuity, that between science and ideology" (ibid.). The discontinuity that is brought about by an epistemological break determines a critical movement between problematics where the conditions of theoretical

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[4]Badiou notes in *Pocket Pantheon: Figures in Postwar Philosophy* that the categories used by Althusser in this section of *Reading Capital* "are basically very similar to those of Foucault, to whom Althusser pays tribute in the same text as it happens" (Badiou, 2009: 58)

[5]Althusser explains in "The Conditions of Marx's Scientific Discovery": "By demonstrating that human history is the history of class societies, and hence of class exploitation and class rule, i.e., ultimately of the class struggle, by demonstrating the mechanisms of capitalist exploitation and capitalist rule, Marx directly countered the interests of the ruling classes" (Althusser, 1973).

[6]In *For Marx* the "real object" and the "thought object" appear as the "concrete-real" and the "concrete-in-thought" (Althusser, 1970).

production no longer validate objects determined by discursive guarantees for the functioning of ideology, and instead, exhibit a paradigmatic shift regarding what can objectively be called scientific knowledge. "The truth of a scientific statement is not founded on any general philosophical principle of truth, on any philosophical guarantee" (Brewster, 1971: 27).

Patrice Maniglier notes in 'What is a Problematic?', from the journal *Radical Philosophy* that the concept (i.e. "problematic") "was invented quite recently by Bachelard[7] in *Le Rationalisme appliqué*"[8] (Maniglier, 2012: 21). Moreover, according to Maniglier, "the concept has undergone very sophisticated elaborations... it inspired Althusser's reading of Marx and... his attempt at constructing a materialist concept of scientific knowledge; it is implicitly behind Foucault's concept of *épistème*... and it is at the heart of Deleuze's meditations on the 'Problem-Idea' (ibid.). Gaston Bachelard (2012: 27)[9] explains in 'Correlationism and the Problematic' how "[s]cientific research demands... the constitution of a *problematic*". The conditions of scientific research often necessitate that the means by which the object is to be known (theories, methods, hypotheses, instruments, experimental procedures etc.) have to be radically revised to determine new conditions of objectivity, and indeed, new objects of scientific investigation (Bachelard, 2012). "One must... know the *method of knowing* in order to seize *the object to be known*; that is to say, in the realm of methodologically valorized knowledge, the object is likely to transform the method of knowing" (ibid.: 30). This transformation that Bachelard envisages is constitutive of a "break" between the object of scientific investigation and its historical (and sometimes ideological) presuppositions (q.v. §9.3). A case in point being the décalage (dislocation) Marx introduced between his own theoretical work and that of David Ricardo and Adam Smith in the field of political economy. "Indeed", writes Bachelard, "an object can can determine several types of objectification, several perspectives of precision; it can belong to different problematics" (Bachelard, 2012: 29).

The process of theoretical formation for a problematic (e.g. the science of history) can be understood by mapping its conditions of objectivity insofar as this field — when critically examined — will reveal the ways its structure is produced and thus indicate whether its methodology is imbued with ideology, or has recourse to scientific principles: "In order to understand the statement

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[7]At the University of Paris Gaston Bachelard held the inaugural chair of the History and Philosophy of Science until his death in 1960.

[8]*Le Rationalisme appliqué* (1949) can be translated as *Reason Applied* (Maniglier, 2012: 21) or *Applied Rationalism*.

[9]This article in English translation features in *Radical Philosophy* and is taken from Bachelard's *Le Rationalisme appliqué*, fifth edition, (1975).

of a problem, it is necessary to normalize the neighbouring questions; in other words it is necessary to develop a kind of topology of the problematic...one must make aberrant questions disappear and attain a corpus of problems" (ibid.: 30). For Bachelard there is a need to formulate correct problems in scientific terms; otherwise one is dealing with a question without an objective basis. Ben Brewster in 'Althusser and Bachelard' from *Theoretical Practice* maintains "each break or recasting of knowledge redefines the past history of scientific and ideological knowledge by rejudging it, which Bachelard calls 'recurrence', thus creating a double history, a history of error...and a history of the progressive developments of the science since the first epistemological break" (Brewster, 1971: 29). Such breaks and recastings of scientific knowledge are, Bachelard finds, at odds with foundational philosophical theories of the subject (such as that of Rene Descartes: "cogito ergo sum"). For Bachelard subject and object cannot coincide *experimentally*, in fact, the subject is being perpetually displaced by the activity of science practice. Tom Eyers notes in "French Philosophy of Science, Structuralist Epistemology, and the Problem of the Subject" from *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*: "If the object might change upon its inscription in a scientific process, so must the subject" (Eyers, 2014: 269). The world of scientific research is not an activity of self-evident "self-reflection" but process of objectification using scientific methods: research practices, experimental procedures, laboratory settings and so on. "If, then, the Cartesian reliability of the subject of enquiry is guaranteed by the self-transparency of thought, for Bachelard thought is inherently mediated, rendered impure, both by sense experience in its potential for mystification and by technical and epistemological lenses through which the scientist defines her object" (ibid.: 270). Althusser's account of the subject as an ideological category continues the general direction of this Bachelardian analysis. To this effect Althusser's general theory of discourse avoids the kinds of issues raised by an apparently "self-transparent" subject when specifying socially produced objects (e.g. discourse, relations of production and ideology) (q.v. Table 2.1). Due to the fact that the subject is not the absolute origin of its discourse — but rather its support or bearer — the possibility of self-transparent discourse cannot be defined *individually* but only through the discursive means socially available. As John B. Thompson states in "Ideology and the analysis of discourse: a critical introduction to the work of Michel Pêcheux": "[t]he theory of discourse and discursive processes provides a framework for approaching the *question* of the human subject" (Thompson, 1983: 215; emphasis added) . Fundamentally this is because a general theory of discourse must attempt to account for the 'meaning' of discourse objectively. "Expressions 'have meaning' in virtue of the discursive formations wherein they occur, for meaning is constituted by the relations

between the linguistic elements of a given discursive formation" (ibid.: 214).

3.2   Three Generalities

In the essay 'On the Materialist Dialectic' that appears in *For Marx* (1969)[10]
Althusser applies the principles of dialectical materialism to questions re-
garding the historical determinants of "theoretical practice" (q.v. 2.3). The
epistemological debt Althusser owes to the research of Bachelard is unmistak-
able and clearly evinced by the methodological framework Althusser defines in
the aforementioned article. Althusser cites Bachelard directly in the following
statement: "[t]he *theoretical practice* of a science is always completely distinct
from the ideological theoretical practice of its prehistory: this distinction takes
the form of a 'qualitative' theoretical and historical discontinuity which I shall
follow Bachelard in calling an 'epistemological break' " (Althusser, 1969: 167–
168; emphasis added). Furthermore, Althusser makes use of Bachelard's work
on the discursive conditions of a "problematic", i.e, the "definition of the field
of (theoretical) knowledges in which the problem is posed (situated)...the
exact location of its posing, and the concepts required to pose it" (ibid.: 164).
These epistemological conditions are ascertained using Althusser's notion of
"theoretical practice".

"Practice", according to Althusser, is a "process of transformation" from
raw material into a product: a transformation is effected between human
labour and means of production (ibid.: 166). The "determinate moment" in
this process is the "*labour of transformation* itself" (ibid.). "Social practice"
produces a "society-effect" as the "complex unity" of the many and varied
practices that institute the lived conditions of social life within a given mode
of production. In relation to this complex unity Althusser draws attention
to three particular practices that are subsumed by the general category
of "social practice" these are: *political practice, ideological practice* and
theoretical practice. Each of these social practices is structurally articulated
within the social whole of society. The "raw material" of *political practice* is
"social relations" which are then transformed into a "determinate product
(new social relations)"; *ideological practice* transforms "men's consciousness"
by means of different forms of interpellated experience including art, law,
religion, and politics; *theoretical practice* is a process of transformation that
brings about epistemic change in the production of "knowledge" (e.g. the
transition from ideology to science or from one ideology to another) (ibid.).
The resulting transformations of theoretical practice, Althusser maintains, are
derived from heterogeneous sources, including, but not limited to, ideologies:

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[10]'On the Materialist Dialectic' was originally published in the journal La Pensée (1963).

Table 3.1: Theoretical Production

theory	any theoretical practice of a scientific character
'theory'	determinate theoretical system of a real science
Theory	Theory of existing theoretical practices (dialectical materialism)[11]

"[i]t works on a raw material (representations, concepts, facts) which it is given by other practices, whether 'empirical', 'technical' or 'ideological' " (ibid.). The designatum "theoretical practice" includes not only "scientific theoretical practice" but also "pre-scientific theoretical practice, that is, 'ideological' theoretical practice (the forms of 'knowledge' that make up the prehistory of a science, and their 'philosophies' "(ibid.). The objectivity of scientific theoretical practice, however, is represented by the break it makes with the "ideological theoretical practice of its prehistory" (ibid.). The epistemological break that occurs between pre-scientific theoretical practice and positive, scientific, theoretical practice is a point of no return: it constitutes scientific *progress* in the strictest sense.

Althusser specifies three divisions of theoretical practice that function as interdependent modalities of knowledge production. The first is *theory*: "any theoretical practice of a scientific character" (ibid.: 168). The second is 'theory': "the determinate theoretical system of a real science. . . In its 'theory' any determinate science reflects within the complex unity of its concepts. . . the results. . . of its own theoretical practice (ibid.). The third is "Theory (with a capital T)": "the Theory of practice in general. . . elaborated on the basis of the Theory of existing theoretical practices (of the sciences). . . This Theory is the materialist dialectic which is none other than dialectical materialism" (ibid.). The activity of scientific theoretical practice is a labour of epistemic transformation towards forms of objective knowledge which, in turn, generate new forms of social practice (q.v. Table 3.1 & Table 2.3).

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[11]In anticipation of certain "theoreticist" issues for the science of history (historical materialism) Althusser defines "Theory" as a non-philosophical practice and proposes that: "1) Philosophy is not (a) science. 2) Philosophy has no object, in the sense in which a science has an object. 3) Philosophy, has no history in the sense in which a science has a history. 4) Philosophy is politics in the field of theory" q.v. *Essays in Self-Criticism* (Althusser, 1976: 69). For further reading on the topic of theoreticist ramifications for historical materialism see the chapter 'The "Althusser Problem": Theoreticism and its Consequences' in *Althusser and the Renewal of Social Theory* by Robert Paul Resch (Resch, 1992).

Table 3.2: Three Generalities

Generality I	theoretical 'raw material'
Generality II	'theory' produced from 'raw material'
Generality III	knowledge

Althusser outlines the structure of "scientific theoretical practice" on the basis of three generalities: each generality represents a stage in the process of knowledge production. Generality I refers to "the raw material that the science's theoretical practice will transform into specified 'concepts' " (ibid.: 183). This theoretical "raw material" is the object of scientific labour which works towards the institution of new scientific knowledge: "its particular labour consists of *elaborating its own scientific facts* through a critique of the *ideological* 'facts' elaborated by an earlier theoretical practice" (ibid.: 184). The next stage in this process is the transition to Generality II where the the scientific labour on Generality I is actively consolidated into 'theory'. This process finds its (temporary) end in Generality III where new knowledge is realised. "So it is by transforming this Generality I into a Generality III (knowledge) that the science works and produces" (ibid.). The process from Generality I to Generality III is theoretically recursive by nature. Althusser notes that an "ex-Generality III" may return to the stage of Generality I and become the raw material for further scientific studies insofar as the "ex-Generality III" is constituted by "already scientifically elaborated concepts which belong nonetheless to an earlier phase of the science" (ibid..: 184).

In the essay 'What is Scientific Ideology?' Georges Canguilhem presents an account which parallels Althusser's work on the three generalities of theoretical practice and their relation to ideology. "Scientific ideology" is not, Canguilhem explains, "false science" (Canguilhem, 1981: 22). In principle the concept of scientific ideology should "delineate those pseudo-knowledges whose unreality derives solely from the fact that a science is essentially established through a critique of them" (ibid.: 21). This leads Canguilhem to conclude the following:

(a) "Scientific ideologies are explanatory systems whose object is exaggerated in comparison to the borrowed scientific norm that is applied to it" (ibid.: 24).

(b) "A scientific ideology always preexists a science, and does so in the area that the science will come to occupy. There is always a science prior to

an ideology, but in an area to one side which the ideology cross-cuts at an angle" (ibid.).

(c) "Scientific ideology must not be confused with false sciences, with magic, or religion. Like them scientific ideology is indeed driven by an unconscious need for access to totality, but it differs in being a belief which languishes alongside (*louche*) an already instituted science whose prestige it recognises and whose style it attempts to emulate" (ibid.).

The "privileged status", Canguilhem observes, borne by the the title of *science*, is worthy of critical attention insofar as a scientific ideology seeks to make illegitimate use of scientific "knowledge". Canguilhem distinguishes between scientific ideology and the ideology of scientists. The former are those "discourses aiming to be scientific which are upheld by those that are still, in the given field, only presumptive, or presumptuous scientists" (ibid.). The latter are the "the discourses they use to situate science within culture and in relation to other cultural forms" (ibid.). The topic of "the ideology of scientists" is also developed by Althusser in *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Sciences* (Althusser, 1990)[12].

Althusser's work undergoes an epistemic transformation in *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists* which he regards as a "turning point in our research on philosophy in general and Marxist philosophy in particular. Previously...I had defined philosophy as 'the theory of theoretical practice'" (Althusser, 1990: 71). But in this "philosophy course for scientists" a new problematic appears: "philosophy which has no object (in the sense that a science has an object), has stakes; philosophy does not produce knowledges but states *Theses*...Its *Theses* open the way to a correct position on the problems of scientific and political practice" (ibid.). This 'turning point' is, however, still within purview of dialectical materialism, yet, the content of theoretical practice must now take into consideration the consequences of philosophy being a discipline without an object.

As a discipline without an object philosophy still has a function — according to Althusser. In *Reading Capital* "philosophy" is defined as the discipline best equipped to examine the conditions of epistemological specification between a given discourse and the object is intended to represent. Philosophy, in these terms, serves to distinguish between ideology and science and potentially reveal the effects of scientific ideology (cf. Canguilhem, 1981; Althusser, 1990). Marxist philosophy thus has the critical function

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[12]First given as a lecture by Althusser to introduce the 'Philosophy Course for Scientists' held at the ENS in 1967, and subsequently published, after some revisions as: *Philosophie et philosophie spontanée des savants*, Maspero, Paris, (1974).

of revealing ideological instances of non-science. "This function consists of 'drawing a dividing line' inside the theoretical domain between ideas declared to be true and ideas declared to be false, between the scientific and the ideological" (Althusser, 1971a: 61). This relationship between philosophy and the sciences is, Althusser contends, inextricably linked to another: that of philosophy and politics. "Everything revolves around this double relation" (ibid.: 65). For Althusser "philosophy is a certain continuation of politics, in a certain domain, vis-à-vis a certain reality. Philosophy represents politics in the domain of theory... and vice versa, philosophy represents scientificity in politics, with the classes engaged in the class struggle" (ibid.: 65). Philosophy is the "third instance" between "two major instances": "the class struggle and the sciences" (ibid.: 66).

This problematic, that of the theoretical relations between philosophy, science and class struggle Althusser derives, in part, from the writings of Vladimir Lenin, and, constitutes "only the hesitant beginnning of a *theory of philosophy*" (ibid.: 66). Althusser's "theory of philosophy" is the attempt to understand the discourse of philosophy scientifically insofar as philosophy becomes an object of historical materialism (q.v. 2.3) . According to Althusser it is no surprise that "the scientific knowledge of the mechanisms of class rule and all their effects, which Marx produced and Lenin applied, induced the extraordinary displacement in philosophy that shatters the phantasms of the denegation in which philosophy tells itself, so that men will believe... that it is above politics, just as it is above classes" (ibid.: 67).

The principles of composition for visual art are the rules of method that generate aesthetic effects in the same way that the principles of ideology produce ideological effects. Cremonini's *Dalla Finestra* [English trans. *From the Window*] depicts a *point of view* from interior to exterior (q.v. Figure 3.1). Cremonini can produce, visually, a window on the world of artistic practice because he can apply principles of composition to the blank space of the canvas to represent the technique of *perspective*. The field of vision Cremonini produces in *Dalla Finestra* depicts the practice of art by demonstrating that a point of view is composed in accordance with certain aesthetic principles. Similarly, Althusser, "sees" that philosophy is not a view from nowhere, but a distinct kind of practice, complete with its own principles of composition.

Philosophy, for Althusser, at once exists on the basis of social relations, and, simultaneously "reflects" those social relations as a "world-view", i.e., the conditions of philosophical partisanship determine the mirror-structure of mis/recognition within the relations of production. In Cremonini's *Dalla Finestra* interiority and exteriority are depicted by the interface of the window: the window represents what is "inside" the image in contrast to what is "outside" it. Without, however, knowing of the rules of composition this

perspective is still identifiable, but it is not directly apparent how it was produced, i.e, the ideational — and technical — means of production are invisible and contained, silently, in the image itself. The same holds for philosophy, according to Althusser, one becomes to subject to a world-view without knowing, in many cases, the mechanisms that produce such effects. Unless one knows how to look, the vision of a given object appears preconstructed, hence the self-evident "perspective" of *Dalla Finestra.* It is by studying the representational methods of Cremonini's composition that its visual effects are revealed as technical practices (i.e. painting techniques). Philosophy, for Althusser, must be similarly deconstructed to detail its conditions of existence in terms of social relations. Hence when Althusser notes that philosophy is the "third instance" between class struggle and science he is seeking to indicate the structural effects of philosophical practice within the relations of production as class perspectives.

3.3   Binding the Borrower

Discussing the theoretical development of historical materialism — in terms of the epistemological conditions of dialectical materialism — Althusser notes that when drawing on the research of others it is possible to adopt certain pre-determined methodological devices (e.g. discursive preconceptions) and thus be, sometimes unwittingly, drawn into an earlier, sometimes ideological, problematic. In Althusser's view this is not necessarily a theoretical failing if one is sufficiently aware of such possibilities: there may be situations in which it may even be crucial for research progress. "Borrowing a concept in isolation...does not bind the borrower vis-á-vis the context from which he extracted it (for example, the borrowings from Smith, Ricardo and Hegel in *Capital*). But borrowing a systematically interrelated set of concepts, borrowing a real *problematic...*it binds the borrower" (Althusser, 1969: 46). Althusser himself, evidently, incorporated the work of others into his own research (e.g. Bachelard, Lacan and Marx) that took form in his voluminous writings; however, Althusser's work was critical enough to make some significant contributions to the scientificity of social theory, which if not constitutive of a definitive epistemological "break" with his predecessors, would be at least a correct application of "theoretical practice" (q.v. Table 3.1).

In his attempt to rigorously define the conceptual differences between philosophy and science Althusser formulated the idea that philosophy is a *process without an object* that fulfilled the function of explaining the relation between an object and its discourse — philosophy, the discourse without its own object — was the discipline used to discern the conceptual adequation

between a discourse and what it is intended to represent substantively (q.v. Table 2.1). It is in this way that, for Althusser, philosophy is a revolutionary weapon[13]. "The realities of the class struggle are 'represented' by 'ideas' which are 'represented' by words. In scientific and philosophical reasoning, the words (concepts, categories) are 'instruments' of knowledge" (Althusser, 1971b: 21). When a problematic "binds the borrower", through a lack of ideological awareness, the borrower is being bound, knowingly or not, to a class position in theory. "World outlooks are *represented* in the domain of theory (science + the 'theoretical' ideologies which surround science and scientists) by philosophy. Philosophy represents the class struggle in theory" (ibid.: 18).

Balibar in "The Infinite Contradiction" published in *Yale French Studies* articulates such epistemological conditions (i.e., class positions in theory) in terms of the relation between "writing" and politics: "philosophy constantly endeavors to untie and retie from the inside the knot between conjuncture and writing...but it also works under the constraint of conjuncture to retie the conditions of writing" (Balibar, 1995: 144). Balibar further states: "I hold, then, that philosophy is never independent of specific conjunctures" (ibid.)[14]. "Philosophy" for Balibar (as it is for Althusser) is a method of theoretical intervention in politics. It is a mode of intervention, according to Balibar, determined by three key factors: "aporia", "dispersion or dissemination", and the "intersecting of the signifying chain itself" (ibid.: 146–147). "Aporia" denotes the need for the "constant rewriting of the philosophical text" subject to the current political conjuncture (ibid.: 146). Balibar understands "dispersion or dissemination" to reference the process of discursive differentiation that occurs through the attempt to rewrite a conjuncture: "whether by reversing its point of view or by introducing a difference...in its project" (ibid.: 147). The "intersecting of the signifying chain itself" is the return of aporetic textuality that resurfaces and constitutes a point of theoretical "uneasiness or uncertainty" (ibid.: 147).

The term conjuncture refers to the current effects of class struggle within social practice (q.v. Table 2.3). Philosophy, Balibar explains, intervenes in this political process by way of "writing". The aporetic disseminations of

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[13]Althusser wrote the article entitled 'Philosophy as a Revolutionary Weapon' published by L'Unità in the year 1968 (this is the same year that the France experienced immense civil unrest with the mass demonstrations, general strikes, and the occupation of factories and universities that constituted 'May '68': q.v. § 2.1). Althusser's article is available in *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays.*

[14]Ben Brewster defines "conjuncture" as "[t]he central concept of the Marxist science of politics"; denoting both the "balance of forces" and "state of overdetermination" within the political field (Brewster, 1969: 250).

Table 3.3: Conjunctural Writing

Aporia	Perpetual rewriting of philosophy
Dissemination	Dispersion of Aporetic Effect
Intersecting Significations	Textual Uncertainty

the signifying chain constitute sites of political encounter in theory. The
"uneasiness or uncertainty" of a text indicates that particular parts of its
discursive structure may have a class bias. A given conjuncture, insofar as it
is textually comprehended, is articulated in the words, concepts, categories,
and discourse of a problematic. Thus to be cognizant of class struggle is to
be able to define how such words, concepts and categories are determining
the play of dependencies within the politics of writing. Considered without
recourse to the theoretical principles of historical materialism, a philosophy,
as a "world outlook" can act as a mirror reflection of the social order (q.v.
§1.2). A philosophy can then potentially exist as an interpellative device
that 'mirrors' society: when unconsciously adopted the borrower is bound
by an existing form of political hegemony insofar as this 'subject' is being
interpellated by class positions in theory.

Philosophy, Althusser contends, is then a particular research object for
the general theory of discourse where the status of its scientificity would
be assessed by means of the "general laws governing any discourse" (q.v.
§1.3). Historical materialism treats philosophy as a historically specific social
product and, as such, seeks to explain its relation to classes, state power,
and the functioning of surplus value as an effect of structural causality (q.v.
§2.3). Class positions in theory as "philosophies" are, in Althusser's terms,
lived ideologies that are invisible to the eye and instead exist in the *means of
perception*, i.e., words, world outlooks, and discursive indices of "philosophy".
Without critical research those bound to class positions in theory are unable
to detach themselves from a historically determinate hegemonic vision and are
so interpellated by it: this structure of misrecognition is a political function
of philosophy. Althusser suggests how 'individuals' become the bearers
of such class determinations in terms of "the structure of the theoretical
conjuncture" and the "play without an author" (q.v. §2.3). The structure of
the theoretical conjuncture, in philosophy, and the "human sciences" more
generally, is fundamental, according to Goran Therbörn, "for the overall
process of social reproduction" (Therborn, 1978: 171). This is due to the fact
that the theoretical conjuncture determines the "subjection-qualification of all
ideology" and "interpellates individuals in three basic ways" (ibid.: 171). The
"subjection-qualification" acts to define "[w]hat exists", "what is possible"

and "what is right" as interpellative effects. (ibid.: 172). In the first case, Therborn notes, "[i]deological formation tells individuals. . . who they are, how the world is, how they are related to that world. . . people are allocated different kinds of and amounts of identity, trust and everyday knowledge" (ibid.: 172). In the second case each individual-subject is told "*what is possible*, providing varying types and quantities of self-confidence. . . and different levels of ambition". In the third case the individual-subject is interpellated to "know": "what is right and wrong, good and bad, thereby determining not only conceptions of legitimacy of power, but also work-ethics. . . and views of interpersonal relationships" (ibid.: 172).

For Therborn "[a]ll ideology contains these three modes of interpellation, but one or other of them may receive greater emphasis in a given ideological discourse, or play a more important role in the process of social reproduction" (ibid.: 173). Balibar's suggestion that philosophy ties and reties the effects of conjuncture and writing in the terms of aporia, dispersion/dissemination and intersections of signification can be explained as correlatives of Therborn's three modes of interpellation. The "subjection-qualification" of interpellation vacillates between the instances of aporia, dispersion/dissemination and inter-sectionality within the signifying chain. Aporia, dispersion/dissemination and the intersections of the signifying chain thus determine the conjunctural events of interpellation. The circumstances of material existence, practical possibility, and moral right, as defined above by Therborn, are subjection-qualifications that are instantiated as the aporetic, dispersive and intersectional properties of mis/recognition within discursive structures. Each subjection-qualification requires certain epistemic conditions of articulation. As the material basis of possible 'knowledge' these discursive regularities are the constitutive symbolic elements that govern particular modes of sociality (cf. Foucault, 1972). "By *episteme*, we mean, in fact, the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures" (Foucault, 1972: 191). A problematic is a certain epistemologization of discursive relations delimited by socio-historical restrictions (q.v. Table 3.1). The theoretical conditions of a problematic "makes it possible to grasp the set of constraints and limitations which, at a given moment, are imposed on discourse. . . it is what, in the positivity of discursive practices, make possible the existence of epistemological figures and sciences" (Foucault, 1972: 192). The epistemological assumptions of philosophy, in Althusser's analysis, are embedded within the social reproduction of the capitalist mode of production thus contributing to the interpellative subjection-qualifications borne of ideological state apparatuses (q.v. §1.3).

The theoretical connections between writing practices and conjunctural conditions can either hasten or check the aporetic effects of discursive dis-

persion by the structures of social signification that are produced within an episteme. "[T]he episteme is not a motionless figure that appeared one day with the mission of effacing all that preceded it: it is a constantly moving set of articulations, shifts, and coincidences that are established, only to give rise to others" (ibid.: 192). This contingent totality of relations between discursive regularities that is the basis of an episteme is constantly reconfiguring the way a given problematic is defined (q.v. 2.1). These discontinuities and re-configurations of the discursive field manifest as aporias within the signifying chain (cf. Balibar, 1995; Foucault, 1972). In the case of Therborn's three modes of interpellation the dissolution of the "individual-subject" problematic would give rise to new questions regarding "what exists", "what is possible" and "what is right". Such new questions would require, according Balibar's analysis in "The Infinite Contradiction", new modes of discursive intervention to account for the "uneasiness or uncertainty" of the theoretical conjuncture. This, in turn, would engender the reconfiguration of discursive practices that attempt to mitigate the effects of the interpellated subject (q.v. §1.2.).

3.4   Being a Marxist in 'Philosophy'

"Such indeed is Althusser's singularity: for him, all philosophy 'is political,' but it is so only in the 'last instance,' as class struggle in the specific element of theory" (Balibar, 1994: 157). Accounting, theoretically, for the class effects of philosophy, Balibar observes, is one of the core features of Althusser's work. The domain of "philosophy", for Althusser, is not limited to what is taught in university philosophy departments: it includes the "arts" and "humanities" (including the social sciences) more generally (q.v. Althusser, 1990). This broad definition of philosophy enables Althusser to further his practices of conceptual demarcation between ideology and science and, consequently, marks the difference between being a Marxist in philosophy and being a "bourgeois" philosopher. As Badiou states in the chapter 'Louis Althusser' from *Pocket Pantheon: Figures in Postwar Philosophy*: "The difference between the philosophy of Marx and received philosophy, which can be said to be dominated by ideological questions, is that it thinks, *not guarantees of truth, but the mechanisms of the production of knowledge*" (Badiou, 2009: 59; emphasis added) (q.v. §1.2). Dialectical Materialism (i.e. Marxist philosophy) "is virtually the science of the knowledge-effect, or as Althusser will say, the theory of theoretical practice" (ibid.) (q.v. Table 3.1). Philosophy is divided along class lines and this division finds articulation in the theoretical conjuncture; the function of Marxist philosophy is to apprehend these effects in terms of "the mechanisms of the production of knowledge" (q.v.

§2.4). Hence, Badiou notes that, according to Althusser, "Marx's foundational gesture created two things, and not just one, in a single break. Marx created a new science — the science of History — and a new philosophy — dialectical materialism" (Badiou, 2009: 62). Marxist philosophy constitutes "the ability to draw lines of demarcation within the theoretical. Not so much a section through the theoretical as a severing or division [*sectionnement*]" (ibid.: 63). To be a Marxist in philosophy is to open up a space in theory (e.g. political theory, aesthetic theory, literary theory &c.) through discursive demarcation — Marxist philosophy is, therefore, not a closed philosophical system — but an open one — open to advances within theoretical practice (q.v. Table 3.1)[15]. In an interview with Fernanda Navarro, discussing his later writings, Althusser pronounces that "the materialism best suited to Marxism, is *aleatory materialism*" (Althusser, 2006: 256). Aleatory materialism is a materialist theory of "encounter" where the objectivity of social contingency reveals the institutional sources of interpellated truth guarantees (q.v. §1.3).

Aleatory materialism is not an instance of mechanical materialism — where mechanical materialism is entirely pre-determined by systemically homogenous parts which form a closed system — aleatory materialism is a network of contingent encounters between the systemically heterogenous parts which form an open system[16] . Where mechanical materialism is the determination of *repetition* aleatory materialism is the realisation of *difference*[17]. The contingent framework of aleatory materialism is conceptually adjacent to the problematic of virtual materialism (q.v. §5.4). Aleatory materialism is a philosophy "for Marxism", Navarro notes, where its objective is to provide a theoretical practice "capable of accounting for the conceptual discoveries that Marx puts to work in *Capital*" (ibid.: 258). Because of the conjunctural effects that occur in and through philosophy this discourse is liable to fall "into the grip. . . of the state, an institution Marx deeply distrusted. . . (ibid.: 259). Furthermore, Althusser contends that: "when Marx thought about the

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[15]For further reading regarding "open Marxism" see the three volumes edited by Werner Bonefeld, Richard Gunn, and Kosmas Psychopedis: *Open Marxism, vol.1: Dialectics and History* (1992); *Open Marxism, vol. 2: Theory and Practice* (1992); *Open Marxism, vol. 3: Emancipating Marx* (1995).

[16]In "Marxism, Structuralism and Vulgar Materialism" Jonathan Friedman finds that vulgar materialism (which he also calls "mechanical materialism") is a form of "empiricist ideology" (ibid.). "Structural marxism, unlike vulgar materialism, begins with the assumption of disjunction between structures in order to establish the true relationships that unite them as well as the internal laws of the separate structures which cause the contradictions of the larger whole (Friedman, 1974: 466)

[17]Paul Cockshott has written about Althusser's aleatory materialism in the *World Review of Political Economy* and notes the conceptual importance of contingency (i.e. "stochastic logic") for Althusser's late theory (q.v. Cockshott, 2013)

form of the future state, he evoked a state conceived as a 'non-state'. . . We can say the same of philosophy: what Marx sought was a 'non-philosophy' whose function of theoretical hegemony would disappear in order to make way for new forms of philosophical existence" (ibid.). Althusser identifies and carefully extrapolates upon, a differential, aleatory logic, in Marx's *Capital* that explains the contingency of individuation in social forms of different kinds: relations of production, technological developments, modes of communication, and so on. Taking the initiative to understand how such forms could be productive of a "non-state" or "non-philosophy", is for Althusser, the practice of being a Marxist in philosophy[18].

Engels, in *Anti-Düring* (1877), considers the decomposition (i.e., "withering") of the state inasmuch as repression is no longer necessary for social organisation in a classless society. "Society thus far, based upon class antagonisms, had need of the state, that is, of an organization of the particular class, which was *pro tempore* the exploiting class. . . for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited classes in the condition of oppression corresponding with the given mode of production (slavery, serfdom, wage-labour)" (Engels, 1975a: 267). The repressive function of the state ceases to be required with the dissolution of class division. In the event that exploitation should end so to, according to Engels, would class oppression via the state. "As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection. . . nothing more remains to be repressed, and a special repressive force, a state, is no longer necessary" (ibid.: 268).

The possibility of a non-state, and with it, a non-philosophy that does not function to uphold exploitative social practices is the virtual possibility of historical materialism. The machinery of large-scale industry and the machinery of state philosophy would thus no longer be organised for the reproduction of conditions of exploitation[19]. The formal subsumption of labour under capitalist relations of production can also be extended to include *philosophical labour* where the underlying purpose of philosophy is the valorization of surplus value. In *Capital* (vol. 1) Marx suggests that: "[t]he labour process becomes the instrument of the valorization process, the

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[18]Althusser remarks upon the seemingly paradoxical nature of Marx's research insofar as "Marx, who had been trained as a philosopher, refused to write philosophy. . . in writing *Capital*, a scientific, critical and political work, he *practised* the philosophy he never wrote" (Althusser, 2006: 259).

[19]Engels writes in *Anti-Düring*: "the appropriation of unpaid labour is the basis of the capitalist mode of production and of the exploitation of the worker that occurs under it...in the ultimate analysis this surplus-value forms those sums of value from which are heaped up the constantly increasing masses of capital in the hands of the possessing classes" (Engels, 1975a: 27).

process of the self-valorization of capital — the manufacture of surplus-value. The labour process is subsumed under capital (it is its own process) and the capitalist intervenes as its director, manager" (Marx, 1976: 1019). It is, therefore, conceivable that both intellectual and manual labour would no longer be subsumed by capital if philosophy was not subsumed by the operations of the state[20].

According to Pierre Macherey, from *In a Materialist Way*, philosophy is a practical "operation" upon discursive content. "To present philosophy as operation is to affirm its practical orientation, by detaching it from purely theoretical speculation; but it is also to connect it with a determinate mode of practice" (Macherey, 1998: 28). The operation of philosophy as a distinct mode of theoretical practice has specific discursive effects (q.v. §3.3). These effects are product of theoretical transformations (e.g. from ideology to science). Interpellation is guaranteed by theoretical transformations which maintain ideological conditions of existence: such as the scientific ideologies Canguilhem discusses (q.v. §3.2). Macherey further suggests that: "In order to express its nature as operation, it might be said that philosophy is a 'theoretical practice'...it indicates a process in which operations are produced, inside which theory and practice take shape concurrently" (ibid.: 35). As theoretical practice takes shape it does so on the basis of the raw materials available, which could be empirical, technical, or ideological, with each source having determinate consequences for the realised content (q.v. Table 3.1). In Althusser's analysis discursive content can potentially "bind the borrower" to a historically specific problematic insofar as a researcher uncritically adopts class-determined operations of theoretical practice, i.e., processes of discursive transformation that are informed by the questions (e.g. class presuppositions) of scientific ideology (q.v. §3.3).

The non-state/non-philosophy disjunction is the effect of distinct operations of theoretical practice (cf. Althusser, 2006). Dialectical materialism — as the "nonphilosophical" philosophy of the science of history — provisionally defines the problematic of a non-state by means of conceptually articulating a refutation of received philosophy (cf. Lecourt, 1971). In Lecourt's analysis, found in "Bachelard's New Problematics", "nonphilosophical philosophy" is called upon to intervene in the history of the sciences. "[P]hilosophy must be reversed: it must no longer be the spokesman of ideologies vis-a-vis the sciences...At the very least, it will set itself the task of distinguishing within

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[20]Sohn-Rethel notes in *Intellectual and Manual Labour*: "There can be little doubt, then, that the historical-materialist explanation adopted... satisfies the formal exigencies of a theory of cognition. It accounts for the historical emergence of a clear-cut division of intellectual and manual labour associated with commodity production" (Sohn-Rethel, 1978: 7).

given discourses between what derives from scientific practice and what originates in ideological discourses" (Lecourt, 1971: 4). To enact the process of separating science from non-science an ongoing engagement with *historical* epistemology is required[21]. Historical epistemology attends to the historicity of theories of knowledge and has a close theoretical relationship with the history of the sciences. Thus historical epistemology defines the continuities and discontinuities regarding the "knowledge-effects" of the sciences (cf. Badiou, 2012). The "beginning" of a science involves, Pêcheux and Balibar note in "Definitions" from *Theoretical Practice*, the displacement of earlier ideological assumptions: "to speak of a beginning means that the break which constitutes a science necessarily takes place in a given conjuncture, in which the origins (the philosophies and theoretical ideologies) undergo a displacement towards a new space of problems" (Pêcheux and Balibar, 1971: 10).

Historical materialism — as the science of history— begins by displacing the earlier ideologies of human history (e.g. philosophies of history) and instantiates new forms of scientificity without implicitly assuming the truth guarantees of class structures. When a rupture is made by scientific practice, this "has the effect of rendering impossible certain philosophical or ideological discourses which precede it. . . In a word, lines of demarcation. . . are traced on the basis of it, in the conflictual domain of philosophy" (ibid.: 11). The epistemic displacements of a particular era constitute the "period of formation of the conjuncture in which the break takes place" (ibid.: 11). For Balibar and Pêcheux a given historical conjuncture informs the historicity of epistemological and scientific development. "In the course of this formation elements linked to the economic base. . . to the juridico-political superstructure. . . and to practical ideologies intervene according to historically governed modalities, and it is the condensation of these elements which determines the historical conditions of the break" (ibid.: 11). An epistemological break is only possible once a certain amount of theoretical research has been achieved and is the outcome of specific "process of accumulation" (ibid.: 10).

For example, the epistemological basis of historical materialism relies upon the theories of class, legal-political ideology, and state apparatuses to provide the science of history with relative autonomy from other scientific domains and scientific ideologies (q.v. Table 2.3). The relative autonomy of a

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[21]Lecourt notes, commenting on Bachelard's researches, "The History of the Sciences will see in the principles which are abandoned the effect on the practice of the science of certain 'epistemological obstacles', which epistemology will teach it to characterize... i. the moment in which at one point at least, in a given domain, the texture of pre-existing ideology is torn and scientificity installed...ii. the moment, after the entry into scientificity, when a given science reorganizes its bases: this moment is styled <u>recrystallization</u> or reorganization" (Lecourt, 1971: 22-23; underlining in original).

science, according to Balibar and Pêcheux, "depends on its own continuation" and this continuation, in turn, "depends on the possibility of instituting an experimental procedure adequate to it" (ibid.: 11). Being a Marxist in philosophy is to recognize that the science of history draws its continuity and relative autonomy from ongoing theoretical practice. Dialectical materialism opens a "new space of problems" in terms of structural causality, discourse, and subjectivity effects, by demonstrating that philosophy is a domain of class struggle (q.v. Table 2.3). Because the "mechanisms of the production of knowledge" emerge in relation to practical ideologies scientific practice is subject to conditions of class antagonism[22]. Maria Turchetto maintains in "History of Science and the Science of History" from *The Althusserian Legacy* that "according to Althusser, it is only with Marx that history becomes, for the first time, a true 'science' or at the very least a 'mature science'. In other words, before Marx there was only a prehistory of the science of history" (Turcheto, 1993: 73-74). The function of Marxist philosophy is to question the object of a given science (or theoretical practice) in historical, materialist, and epistemological terms. "Philosophical discourse is specifically characterized by *putting the object of a science into question*" (ibid.: 74). The science of history provides Marxist philosophy with the conceptual means to evaluate scientific objects as being historically determined and thus open to the effects of ideology.

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[22]Pêcheux and Balibar directly cite Althusser to define the function of practical ideologies in class struggle. "Practical ideologies (for example morality, religion...) are complex formations of montages of notions-representations-images on the one hand and of montages of behaviour-conduct-attitudes-gestures on the other hand. The ensemble functions as a set of practical norms which govern the attitudes and the concrete positions which men take up in respect to the real objects and the real problems of their social and individual existence, and of their history" Althusser cited in Pêcheux and Balibar (1971:13).

Part II:
Logical

It is not at all necessary that writing should mean something for anyone at all, for it to be writing, and for it to manifest, as such, that each sign represents a subject for the one that follows it.

<div align="right">Jacques Lacan</div>

4

The Absent Cause

Figure 4.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Nature Bien Ordonnée* 1965

4.1   Structural Causality

Althusser sets great store in the concept of structural causality (cf. Straw-
bridge, 1984; Morfino, 2015; Veltmeyer, 1974; Balibar, 2011; Bosteels, 2001).
In 'Three Notes on the Theory of Discourses' he declares that the "question of
structural causality": "commands everything else. . . It commands the theory
of practice in general, and thus the theory of theoretical practice itself. . . and,
at the same time, the theory of the dialectic" (Althusser, 2003: 12) (q.v.
§3.1). Structural causality is, then, integral to the epistemological basis of
interpellation (q.v. §1.2). Tom Eyers notes, in 'French Philosophy of Sci-
ence, Structuralist Epistemology, and the Problem of the Subject': "[b]oth
Lacan and Althusser shared a concern for the articulation of varying themes
of structural causality" (Eyers, 2014: 268). Structural causality is defined
by Althusser in 'The Historical Task of Marxist Philosophy' as "the very
particular causality of a structure upon its elements, or of a structure upon
another structure, or of the structure of the whole upon its structural levels"
(Althusser, 2003: 201)[1]. Using the example of social class Althusser explains
how this phenomenon is determined in relation to the effects of structural
causality: "we have to mobilize the structural causality of three 'levels' of
society, economic, political and ideological — with structural causality oper-
ating in the form of a conjunction of these three structural determinations on
the same object, and in the variation of the dominant element within this
conjunction" (ibid.: 201).

Table 4.1: Structural Causality

Economic	Forces/Relations of Production
Ideological	Support-functions (Träger-function)
Political	State Apparatuses (Ideological and Repressive)

The "three structural determinations on the same object" are the effects
of economics, politics and ideology in relation to social class: the "variation
of the dominant element" is the variation that results from the economic
structure of valorization (e.g.: surplus value). "In order to think the nature of
a social class, it is indispensable to take conjointly into account the determi-
nation of the economic base, juridico-political superstructure, and ideological

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[1]In *Reading Capital* Althusser states: "The structure is not an essence *outside* the
economic phenomena which comes and alters their aspect, forms and relations... *it is the
very form of the interiority of the structure, as a structure, in its effects* (Althusser, 1970:
188).

superstructure" (ibid.: 199). "It is is also *indispensable*", notes Althusser, "to take into account the 'play' that occurs within this joint determination... to explain the *possible displacements of the dominant instance* among these different determinations" (ibid.: emphasis added). Here Althusser is insisting that due attention must be paid to the effects of dislocation (*décalage*) that are introduced to the functioning of structural causality through the different structures impinging upon each other (e.g. political, economic, ideological). The effects of such multiple causation, determining, and determined by, social practice Althusser calls "overdetermination" or in the words of G.M. Goshgarian the "necessity of contingency" (Goshgarian, 2003: xl). The notion of structural causality is intended, by Althusser, "to draw attention to the fact that the classic philosophical category of causality (whether Cartesian linear causality or Leibnizian 'expressive' causality) is inadequate for thinking the scientific analyses of *Capital*, and must be replaced by a new category" (Althusser, 2003: 200). By "Cartesian linear causality" Althusser is attributing to René Descartes the "causal independence of parts of time" or the idea that "all time can be divided into segments which are casually independent" (Secada, 1990: 47). By Leibnizian 'expressive' causality Althusser is referring to the philosophy of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz where causality is thought of as divine creation — the 'expression' of God (cf. Duncan, 2015). Neither the Cartesian nor the Leibnizian account of causality are sufficient for "thinking the scientific analyses of *Capital*" in terms of overdetermined causal relations between social structures. Althusser, however, is ultimately not convinced that his own account of structural causality is unequivocal: "I do not claim these formulations (structural determination, overdetermination) are satisfactory. They have to be tested, developed, and rectified" (Althusser, 2003: 201).

It was through the researches of Jacques-Alain Miller that Althusser developed the term "structural causality". This happened, he writes in *The Future Lasts Forever*[2], "after a talk of mine on Lacan during which Miller intervened to announced [sic] a 'conceptual discovery': 'metonymic causality' (otherwise known as the *absent cause*), which caused quite a stir" (Althusser, 1993: 209; emphasis added). Althusser went on to rename "metonymic causality" (the absent cause): "structural causality". "When I used the term 'metonymic causality', I referred in a footnote to the fact that I had borrowed it from Miller, but I immediately changed it to 'structural causality', which

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[2]Originally published in French as *L'avenir dure longtemps* (1992).

no one else had used and was therefore my expression!" (ibid.)[3].

While Althusser assumes nominal ownership of the concept "structural causality" it does undergo distinct changes in his usage (i.e., the concept is applied to the problematic of historical materialism). It is uncertain, however, whether Althusser was indeed the author of "structural causality" after all as the phrase appears in Miller's text 'Suture (Elements of the Logic of the Signifier)' (1966): "If *structural causality (causality in the structure insofar as the subject is implicated in it*) is not an empty expression, it is from the minimal logic which I have developed here that it will find its status" (Miller, 2012b: 101; emphasis added). In this article, as Miller states, he describes the "minimal logic" of structural causality in relation to the "logic of the signifier". What Miller is attempting to outline here is a theoretical project of considerable scope and ambition: the articulation of processes of signification with the epistemology of the unconscious. For Miller "the logic of the signifier... *is a general logic in that its functioning is formal in relation to all fields of knowledge* including that of psychoanalysis which... it governs" (ibid.: 92; emphasis added). The logic of the signifier is developed by "piecing together indications dispersed through the work of Lacan" (ibid.). Structural causality in the sense that Miller gives to it, as the logic of the signifier, is, therefore, distinctly Lacanian in its conception.

This Lacanian "logic of the signifier" Miller stands in juxtaposition to the "logician's logic" of Gottlob Frege (ibid.: 92-93)[4]. This comparision presents a conceptual difference between Lacan's psychoanalytic logic, as it is understood by Miller, and Frege's work in *The Foundations of Arithmetic*. Miller believes that the former is the condition for the second. The logic of the signifier (i.e., structural causality), Miller contends, "should be conceived as the logic of the origin of logic" (ibid.: 92). A key point to be taken from Miller's work on the logic of the signifier, as it relates to Althusser's concept of interpellation, is the effect of "suture". "Suture names *the relation of the subject to the chain of its discourse*... the general relation of lack to the structure — of which it is an element, inasmuch as it implies the position of a taking-the-place-of [tenant-lieu]" (ibid.: 93; emphasis added). The notion of "suture" is used to account for the effects of miscognition and its repression as psychoanalytic phenomena.

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[3]As Althusser states he references Miller's research in *Reading Capital* by way of a footnote to the term "metonymic causality": "An expression Jacques-Alain Miller has introduced to characterize a form of structural causality registered in Freud by Jacques Lacan" (Althusser, 1970: 188).

[4]Pêcheux also refers to Frege's logic in *Language, Semantics and Ideology* to demarcate between sense, reference, and subjectivity in Lacanian (and Althusserian) terms (q.v. Pêcheux, 1982).

In application the concept of suture is used to represent how: "misrecognition finds its point of departure in the production of meaning" (ibid.) (q.v. Table 2.2). According to Miller "anyone who says 'I' " *sutures* (ibid.). Further details that relate to the logic of the signifier appear in 'Action of the Structure' where Miller addresses interest in a theory of discourse, once again, with explicit reference to Lacan's research on the discourse of the unconscious[5]. 'Action of the Structure' contains many references to processes which simultaneously appear in Althusser's work of the same period, including: subjection, overdetermination, miscognition, support-functions, and the epistemological break. Miller concludes this article by indicating the possibility of a "unitary theoretical discourse" synthesizing the work of Marx and Freud (Miller, 2012a). "We know of two discourses of overdetermination", writes Miller, "the Marxist discourse and the Freudian discourse. . . the first has today been liberated by Louis Althusser, just as the second has been liberated by Lacan" (ibid.). These two discourses of overdetermination (i.e., Marx and Freud) methodologically assume interpellative operations regarding the social structure of support-functions (q.v. Table 4.1). Structuration, as the title to Miller's essay alludes, is "the *action* of the structure" (ibid.: 7; emphasis). Structure, in Miller's description, is "that which *puts in place an experience for the subject that it includes*" (ibid.; emphasis added). Structural causality is thus productive of a dual relation: subjective experience and, with it, overdetermined inclusion within a given social formation.

Maurice Godelier, the current Director of Studies at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (*Ècole des hautes ètudes en sciences sociales*), was an academic contemporary of Althusser in France, who in 1973 published, *Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology.* Applying the problematic of historical materialism to the domain of anthropology Godelier uses the concept of structural causality for research in *economic* anthropology. The first part of *Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology* is entitled 'Structural Causality in Economics and Some Ideas Concerning Marxism and Anthropology'. In his introduction to this work Godelier explains certain aspects of his research methodology. He states that: "In adopting Marx's materialism. . . we must discover and examine. . . the invisible network of causes linking together forms, functions, modes of articulation and the hierarchy, appearance and disappearance of particular social structures" (Godelier, 1977: 2). This methodology constitutes, according to Godelier, "the epistemological horizon of critical work in the social sciences" (ibid.). Godelier, remarking upon the logic of structural causality, declares: "[i]n so far as a structure has simultaneous effects on all the structures which together make up a unique society, capable

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[5]'Action de la structure' was published by *Cahiers pour l'Analyse* (1968).

of reproducing itself, we try to discover in different places and at different levels – the presence of the same cause" (ibid.). The "invisible network of causes" which has effects on all the structures of a given social formation is a close equivalent of Althusser's description of structural causality as that "very particular causality of a structure upon its elements, or of a structure upon another structure, or of a structure of the whole upon its structural levels" (Althusser, 2003: 201).

4.2   A Material Absence

The effects of interpellation have for their precondition particular relations to temporality (i.e., the material determinations of historical experience) (q.v. §5.4). Althusser was sharply critical of Georg Wilhem Friedrich Hegel's conception of time — where time is taken to be a metaphysical "expression" of a philosophical idea — specifically the "Idea" (cf. Hegel, 1953; Althusser, 1970). In contradistinction to Hegel's views on unilinear, "spiritual", time, Althusser proposes an overdetermined theory of temporality. Althusser comes to this position on historical overdetermination through a critique of "bourgeois economics". Beginning by noting some of the terminological and theoretical lapses (absences) found in the work of Adam Smith and David Ricardo the issue is then raised of their seemingly "eternalist" economic theories and the enduring class divisions that such eternalism entails. "The fundamental criticism Marx makes of the whole of Classical Economics in texts from *The Poverty of Philosophy* to *Capital* is that it had an ahistorical, eternal, fixed and abstract conception of the economic categories of capitalism" (Althusser, 1970: 102). This eternalisation of bourgeois economics is "reflected" by the State which provides the societal conditions (i.e. "civil society") for the ongoing exploitation of surplus value through private property and the legal protection of the capitalist order[6]. Althusser is opposed to any account of history which absolutizes social development as the unfolding of "Reason" through *ahistorical* time. Examples of such "ideological time" abound in the writings of Hegel. For example, in *Reason in History* Hegel writes: "[t]he universal idea manifests itself in the state" (Hegel, 1953: 51) and in the *Science of Logic* he proposes that: "[w]hen anything whatever possesses truth, it possesses it through its Idea, or, something possesses truth only in so far as it is Idea" (Hegel, 1969: 755).

  Capital, in Althusser's analysis, contains both a theory of political economy

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[6]Lawrence Krader's *Dialectic of Civil Society* examines the relationship between the bourgeois subject and civil society, see in particular, chapter III "Civil Society and the State"(Krader, 1976).

and a theory of history, or more accurately, histories. This multi-temporality, or heterochrony, Althusser reveals in his reading of Marx's *Capital* is an object of historical materialism insofar as it is "the science of history" (q.v. Table 2.3). "*Capital* really does contain a theory of history which is indispensable for any understanding of the theory of the economy" (Althusser, 1970: 131). Hegel's historiography, what Althusser describes as "Hegelian historical time", has "two essential characteristics": continuity and contemporaneity (ibid.: 104). Time, for Hegel, is continuous because it is homogeneous, and it is contemporaneous because it is the historical *present*. Hegel's philosophy of history is a covert justification of contemporary society that accepts the present state of social relations in terms of "Reason" realising itself — thus realised — societal conditions are rational insofar as they are an expression of the Idea. The social totality, i.e., society, is *absolute* social and temporal existence unified; Althusser's term for this is the "Hegelian whole". As Althusser explains "the Hegelian whole has a type of unity in which each element of the whole whether a material or economic determination, a political institution or a religious, artistic or philosophical, is never anything more than the *presence of the concept with itself* at a historically determined moment" (ibid.: 105; emphasis added).

Hegelian historical time, both homogeneous and contemporaneous, is where "the development of the Idea is manifest" (ibid.: 104). The philosophy of history, in the Hegel's terms, amounts to dividing this homogeneous time into "periods", viz., the periodization of the *same* self-identical process of historical "development". "In other words: the structure of historical existence is such that all the elements of the whole always co-exist in one and the same time, one and the same present, and are therefore contemporaneous with one another in one and the same present" (ibid.: 105). The Hegelian whole is an "expressive" whole where each part of the social whole "expresses" a particular aspect of the general totality (ibid.). It is the unity of an "expressive totality...a totality all of whose parts are so many 'total parts', each expressing the others, and each expressing the social totality that contains them, because each in itself contains in the immediate form of its expression the essence of the totality itself" (ibid.). It is this expressive totality — a "spiritual unity" — that Hegel calls the Idea (ibid.). Althusser regards this "Idea" as an ideological account of historical time with the Hegelian totality being "a 'spiritual' whole in the Leibnizian sense of a whole in which all the parts 'conspire' together, in which each part is *pars totalis*" (ibid.: 107). *In toto et pars continetur* is, then, a thoroughly Hegelian maxim[7].

While Hegel's social whole is ideological insofar as each part: economic,

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[7]Translated from Latin into English this reads: in the whole the part is also contained.

political, religious, aesthetic, philosophical or otherwise, is the Absolute made manifest, Althusser maintains the Marxist totality is of a categorically different kind. The nature of the "Marxist whole" articulates a complex social structure irreducible to the spiritual destiny of the Idea which justifies the class inequality found in "civil" society. "We know that the Marxist whole cannot possibly be confused with the Hegelian whole: it is a whole whose unity, far from being the expressive or 'spiritual' unity of Leibniz's or Hegel's whole, is constituted by a certain type of complexity, the unity of a structured whole" (ibid.: 108). The spiritual social totality of Hegel is no doubt a kind of structure, however, it is ultimately a structure which is metaphysical, suggesting justificatory recourse "in the last instance" to either Reason or God — which serve much the same ideological purpose. The Marxist social whole, Althusser evinces, is a material structure which is defined in terms of *temporal differentiation* not secularized theology. Althusser maintains that in *Capital* Marx presents the social whole, i.e. capitalist society, as a heterochronic system, with all the complexity that requires theoretically. "Society" is the sum of numerous heterochronic processes — with this heterochrony being determined in the last instance by the economy — a social processs which is itself multi-temporal (q.v. Althusser, 1970).

Contrary to the continuity of Hegelian ideological time Althusser finds that the theory of time in Marx's science of history is defined by material discontinuity. While Marx's science of history de-centres the subject within the empirical discontinuities of historical processes Hegel's philosophy of history seeks to reconcile the subject with an ideological time where all historical events are the "reflection" (i.e., the mirror structure of mis/recognition) of reason unfolding in the divine present (q.v. §1.2). As Michael Gordy explains in "Reading Althusser: Time and the Social Whole" from the journal *History and Theory*: "In its comprehension of the social whole, historical materialism seeks to delineate the structural and conjunctural articulation of the various social practices. Included among these practices is the practice of philosophy as it exists in bourgeois society" (Gordy, 1983: 18). The "invisible network of causes" conditioning the structures of society have relatively autonomous modes of existence and are exhibited as discontinuous effects within the social whole: these discontinuous temporalities, as political, economic, and ideological instances, are individual moments of social structuration (q.v. §4.1).

The historical discontinuities between structural elements that Althusser remarks upon exhibit relatively autonomous agency through the logic of the signifier, specifically, by the effects of "suture" (q.v. Table 1.2 & §4.1). Hegel's Idea fulfills the ideological function of filling the agentic void left by discontinuous, materialist, histories and, following Miller, "puts in place an

experience for the subject that it includes", i.e., the reasons-of-a-subject. The interpellative effects of this kind of ideological functioning produce misrecognition in two ways. Firstly, due to the multi-temporalities of social whole there is a basic incompatibility between discursive and non-discursive structures insofar as there is not a total language to detail every possible social relation. Secondly, discursive structures can only be effective if they are regulated by the state. The experience of a subject is mediated by state apparatuses inasmuch as discourse is an object of state control.

Time, in Althusser's account, is polymorphically overdetermined by the multiplicity of social practices that constitute multi-linear history. The overdetermination of relatively autonomous temporal structures produces instances of eventalization that breach formerly "self-evident" historical constants (e.g. political forms, state apparatuses, and hegemonic forces). New discursive objects come into view by means of aleatory encounters at the interstices of discontinuous temporality. The discontinuity and differentiation brought about by the conjunction of heterogenous social relations produces historical variations of the visible and the articulable (i.e. histories of discursive representation) (cf. Deleuze, 1988b). In the *Logic of Sense* Deleuze notes that any structure, being comprised of serial relations, produces "singularities" . These singularities are the effect of serial differentiation. Althusser is concerned to distinguish between "invisible times" and "visible times" of capitalism as instances of serialized structures. It is, according to Althusser, theoretically inadequate to simply observe that there are different temporal rhythms in the capitalist mode of production such as those of production, circulation and distribution: "I should say that we cannot restrict ourselves to reflecting on the existence of visible and measurable times. . . we must, of absolute necessity, pose the question of the mode of existence of invisible times. . . concealed beneath the surface of each visible time" (Althusser, 1970: 112). Alongside the visible, observable, times of the working day there are unobserved, invisible, times that are hidden within labour processes: "the time of economic production has absolutely nothing to do with the obviousness of everyday practice's ideological time. . . in no sense is it a time that can be *read immediately* in the flow of any given process. It is an invisible time, essentially illegible..." (ibid.)

The time of interpellation is an "invisible time" that reproduces the relations of production within a social formation. To discover the mechanisms of this invisible time is the work of theoretical practice towards defining "differential historical temporality" (ibid.: 118). The notion of differential historical temporality, Althusser contends, "obliges us to define what might be called. . . the *index of effectivity* currently attributable to the element of structure in question in the general structure of the whole. . . And this

is nothing but the theory of the conjuncture indispensable to the theory of history" (ibid.). An index of effectivity for interpellation would then take into account conjunctural modalities as contributing to the visible and invisible differential historical temporalities. "By index of effectivity we may understand the character of more or less dominant or subordinate and therefore more or less 'paradoxical' determination of a given element or structure in the current mechanism of the whole" (ibid.). The concept of the subject is an example of such a paradoxical element and one that is integral to the effects of "invisible time" and its virtualization.

4.3   Relative Autonomy

Multitemporality is the differentiated effect of the "relative autonomy" between each "level" or "instance" of the social totality (Althusser, 1970: 108). The overdetermined present is the complex result of multiple, relatively autonomous, discursive, histories. "This is the principle on which is based the possibility and necessity of different histories corresponding to each of the 'levels'. This principle justifies our speaking of an economic history, a political history, a history of religions, a history of ideologies, a history of philosophy, a history of art and a history of the sciences" (ibid.: 111). Each of these domains: economic, political, theological, ideological, philosophical, artistic, and scientific exists in a state of relative autonomy from the others — each domain is quasi-independent — and has a specific causal effectivity in relation to the others (q.v. Table 4.1). "The fact that each of these times and . . . histories is relatively autonomous does not make them so many domains which are independent of the whole. . . their relative autonomy and independence — is based on a certain type of articulation to the whole, and therefore on a . . . type of dependence with respect to the whole" (ibid.). Each history corresponds to "a peculiar time" (ibid.: 111). With each peculiar time "relatively autonomous, of the 'times' of the other levels" (ibid.: 110–111). The temporal discontinuity of Althusser's differential history, then, bears directly upon factors of structural causality insofar as the various regions of the social structure interact to produce a historically overdetermined society (q.v. §4.1).

   Pêcheux in his work *Language, Semantics and Ideology*[8] remarks upon the relative autonomy of linguistic systems within class societies and contends that "every discursive process is inscribed in an ideological class relationship"

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[8]Originally published as *Les vérités de La Palice*, Maspero, Paris (1975).

Table 4.2: Three Stages of Discourse Analysis

DA-1	subject supports single discursive machine
DA-2	subject an effect of power relations between discursive machines
DA-3	deconstruction of discursive machineries

(Pêcheux, 1982: 59)[9]. Discursive formations, Pêcheux contends, exist in a state of *relative* autonomy from other domains of social reality and so must not be considered functionally independent of class relations. Pêcheux's work on discursive processes evinces similarities with Althusser's prospective research programme outlined in the "general theory of discourse" (q.v. Table 2.1). The ideological relations between discourse and class, determined by the economy, in the last instance, according to Althusser in *Reading Capital*, exemplify the dynamics of relative autonomy between different different domains or "levels" of the social structure in discursive form.

With some self-deprecation Pêcheux labels himself a "theoretical amateur!...who has been working on the relations between language, discourse and ideologies (starting from the works of Althusser) since 1966)" (Pêcheux, 1983: 31). In the article, 'Ideology: Fortress or Paradoxical Space', from the book *Rethinking Ideology: A Marxist Debate*, Pêcheux discusses how he has contributed to the field of "Althusserianism" — broadly construed. He notes the theoretical impact Althusser's Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) concept had on his work and how he sought to "draw some conclusions regarding the conception of the dominating ideology within class struggle seen as a process of simultaneous reproduction and transformation of ideological formations" (ibid.: 32).

In "Three stages of discourse analysis" from *Automatic Discourse Analysis* (1995) Pêcheux raises for consideration, retrospectively, his contributions to

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[9]According to Pêcheux (1982: 58) "every linguistic system, as a set of phonological, morphological and syntactic structures, is endowed with a *relative autonomy* that makes it subject to internal laws...Hence it is *on the basis of these internal laws that the discursive processes develop*, and not as the expression of a pure thought, a pure cognitive activity, etc., which 'accidentally' makes use of linguistic systems". This statement of Pêcheux's follows Althusser's thinking in that scientific knowledge is produced without the operation of an absolute subject, e.g., 'pure thought' or 'pure cognitive activity': science thinks its processes using the theoretical discourse available and so may need to construct new concepts for new scientific questions thus precluding the pre-discursive possibility of a foundational or 'absolute' consciousness.

studying the the relative autonomy of discursive structures. He proposes his work progresses through three stages: DA-1, DA-2, and DA-3. Each stage questions specific conditions of discursivity with regard to the notion of the 'subject'. In DA-1 "[s]ubjects believe that they 'use' their discourse, whereas they are in fact subjected to it. They are its 'serfs' or 'supports' "(Pêcheux, 1995: 235): whereby a 'subject' is determined by a single "discursive machine (a myth, an ideology, an episteme)" (ibid.). In DA-2 "[d]iscourse analysis now takes as its object relations between discursive machines" (ibid.: 237). According to Pêcheux "these relations are unequal power relations between discursive processes which structure the entire field as 'a complex whole in dominance' consisting of 'mechanisms' with an unequal hold over one another" (ibid.: 237). To identify the unequal power relations between discursive machines Pêcheux makes use of Foucault's researches on "discursive formations" (ibid). Applying the concept of "discursive formation' to the "subject" outlined in DA-1 to DA-2 Pêcheux contends that a "support" is not the result of a single discourse but is in fact the support of several discourses in the uneven intrication of interdiscourse. Citing the "Althusserian problematic of ideological state apparatuses" Pêcheux notes that the 'subject of enunication', i.e., the speaking subject, can only be represented in terms of the illusion of the 'I' that results from subjection (q.v. Table 1.2) . DA-3 refers to the 'deconstruction of discursive machineries' where Pêcheux explains the limitations of DA-1, and DA-2 in terms of the consequences derived from the heterogeneity of discursive structures and 'the discourse of the other' (Pêcheux, 1995).

Pêcheux concludes "Three stages of discourse analysis" with several remarks concerning the future direction of discourse analysis. For example he asks: "How can we conceive of a *discourse analytic process* as a 'spiral' interaction which combines intersections, convergences and divergences between textual series (oral and written), constructions of networks of questions, structurations of memory-networks and productions of writing?" (ibid.: 241). These relations, as convergences and divergences of textual series, networks of questions (i.e. problematics), social structures, and productions of writing, all contribute to greater specification regarding the objects of interpellative practices. Any "context" to which the concept of interpellation can be applied will include interactions within the "discourse analytic process". In "Signature, Event, Context" from *Limited Inc* Derrida discusses how the "context" of discourse is always textually indefinite. "Stating it in the most summary manner, I shall try to demonstrate why a context is never absolutely determinable, or rather, why its determination can never be entirely certain or saturated" (Derrida, 1988: 3). Derrida's account of deconstruction goes some way in explaining the displacement of interpellated lingusitic systems.

"Deconstruction does not consist in moving from one concept to another, but in reversing and displacing a conceptual order as well as the nonconceptual order with which it is articulated" (ibid.: 21). The deconstruction of an interpellative context is, then, an overdetermined effect of heterogeneity and interdependence between textual series as instances of eventalization within the symbolic order (cf. Derrida, 1988; Althusser, 1969; Pêcheux, 1995).

Paul Henry — a colleague of Pêcheux's at the Sorbonne in Paris, working from the department of social psychology — took up related research questions to those addressed by Pêcheux's "Three stages of discourse analysis"[10]. Examining the relations between "messages" and "context", in his study: "On Processing Message Referents in Contexts" featured in the social psychology monograph *Social Contexts of Messages* (1971)[11]. Henry finds that "[w]e have to distinguish between *three types of effect* exerted on discourse by context" (Henry, 1971: 94; emphasis added). The three effects "exerted on discourse by context" are:

1. the social effect (*effet de société*)

2. the representational effect (*effet de représentation*)

3. the discursive effect (*effet de discours*)

The social effect refers to "the conditions of production of messages through the interdependence of the loci of individuals in a social structure" (ibid.); the representational effect is "exerted at the level of the conditions of production of messages through the interdependence of the situation and environment upon the state of the conditions of production out of which those representations are elaborated" (ibid.); the discursive effect is understood as a modality of the "assertion process" to qualify the differences between representations (ibid.). Henry's study thus exhibits features of structural causality whereupon each of the three effects exists in causal connection to the others in accordance with specific conditions that limit, or actuate, the efficacy of each contributing factor: social, representational, or discursive. Each effect is relatively autonomous insofar as it is triggered by the determining factors of the others.

The deconstruction of discursive machineries (DA-3) suggests how interpellation could not be adequately conceptualised without taking into account the structural intrication of social, representational and discursive orders as

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[10]Henry was a contributor to *Automatic Discourse Analysis* by Pêcheux, see chapter two: "Theoretical issues in Pêcheux's Automatic discourse analysis" (Henry, 1995).

[11]Published in co-operation with the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology.

contextual modalities of linguistic systems (q.v. Table 4.2). The textual uncertainty of a context is due to the extent to which social, representational, and discursive factors are co-constitutive of contextual communicability (cf. Balibar, 1995; Derrida, 1988; Henry, 1971). This contextual polysemy is realised in the differentiation of textual series[12]. Thus the contextual objectivity of textuality is relatively autonomous with respect to its generative structures. The three types of effect that Paul Henry describes (social, representational, and discursive) are, for this reason, contextual conditions of interpellation. Such contextual factors of interpellation are relatively autonomous in their functioning and undergo constant displacement in operation.

4.4   Interpellation and Totalisation

"For plainly, everything turns on the state" (Althusser, 2017b: 115). The capitalist mode of production cannot exist without the state: the state is sociologically necessary to the functioning of capitalist societies (cf. Therborn, 1978; Poulantzas, 1968, 1980; Althusser, 2017b). Interpellative effects rely on the existence of the state for their causal efficacy. This is not to say, however, that all the consequences of interpellation are ultimately derived from state power, it is to say rather that, the state is a particularly useful abstraction to consider in terms of the perpetuation of interpellation in several of its forms (q.v. §1.2). It is in the work of Nicos Poulantzas that one finds a critical, and comprehensive, theoretical engagement with the political relations between interpellative practices and state power. Poulantzas, in *Political Power and Social Classes*, agrees with Althusser's "anti-historicism" where the teleological ideology of Hegel's history of the "Idea" is revealed to be an inadequate account of the "social whole": "the Hegelian type of 'totality' and 'history'...this is, firstly, a type of simple and circular totality, composed of equivalent elements...secondly, it is a linear type of historicity, whose evolution is ...the self-development of the idea" (Poulantzas, 1968: 37–38). Poulantzas, instead, follows Althusser's understanding that society is not the self-realization of an abstract idea (i.e. Hegel's Idea) but a historically specific "structure in dominance" (q.v. §4.2 & §5.1).

Poulantzas maintains that "politics" and "the political" should not be confused when studying the effects of state power. There is a salient distinction between "the *juridico-political superstructure of the state*, which can be

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[12]S.D. Ullman (1951) provides an excellent example of this effect. "Should one describe 'a straight line' and 'shipping line, air line' as radical shifts in application or as mild cases of polysemy" (OED Online, 2018l). Polysemy: "The fact of having several meanings; the possession of multiple meanings, senses, or connotations" (ibid.)

designated as *the political*, and political class practices (political class strug-
gle) which can be designated as *politics*" (ibid.: 37). The differential history
of social practice is identified by Poulantzas, with reference to Althusser's
writing in *For Marx*, as being structurally determined by the historical con-
juncture. "Just as the levels of structures and practices present their own
specificity, relative autonomy and particular effectiveness inside the unity
of a mode of production and of a historically determined social formation,
so also do their time sequences have different rhythms and metres" (ibid.:
41). Poulantzas cognizes the effects of "differential time sequences" as being
caused by "uneven development" and "dislocations" (ibid.). Uneven develop-
ment is the product of historical differentiation between social practices (e.g.
scientific, ideological, artistic, and technical) and dislocations arise through
the axiological transformations internal to a particular social formation (e.g.
modes of valorization).

The relative autonomy that exists between "the political" and "politics"
is an example of the operation of heterochronic eventalization within the
history of a given mode of production. These temporal matrices of manifold
histories are the structural condition for the functioning of a "dispositif"[13].
A dispositif, in its structural articulation exhibits its own historical *a priori*,
i.e., those particular knowledges and practices available within a political
conjuncture. Deleuze discusses the notion of "dispositif" in the eponymous
essay: 'What is a Dispositif?' (Deleuze, 1991). He remarks how Foucault's
work is "often presented as an analysis of concrete social apparatuses [*dis-
positifs*]" (Deleuze, 1991). A *dispositif*, in Deleuze's account, constitutes a
multiplicity of intersecting social regions — Deleuze calls it: "a tangle, a
multilinear ensemble" (ibid.). The regions that make up the ensemble are a
"series of variables which supplant one another" including: knowledge, power,
and subjectivity (ibid.). To untangle this "social apparatus is. . . like drawing
up a map, doing cartography, surveying unknown landscapes" (ibid.). This
mapping exercise, Deleuze explains, requires determining the topography of a
given social apparatus. "The first two dimensions of a social apparatus [dis-
positif] — or those to which Foucault draws our attention in the first instance
— are curves of visibility and curves of enunciation" (ibid.: 159-160). A
dispositif represents the uneven histories of seeing and saying ."If apparatuses
have a historical nature, this is to be found in regimes of light, but also in
regimes of enunciation" (ibid.: 160). A "regime of light" constitutes the social
conditions of possibility that makes objects in all their myriad perspectives

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[13]Timothy J. Armstrong declares there is no satisfactory translation of dispositif available
in English: "[t]here is, in English, no straightforward way of translating dispositif. . . I
have used the terms "social apparatus" or "apparatus" as the closest available equivalent"
(Armstrong, 1991: 159).

"visible". The "curves of visibility" that form "regimes of light" operate in conjunction with the "regimes of enunciation" or "curves of enunciation": thus, the seeable is sayable. The statements that are possible within a dispositif are like points between the two axes of visibility and enunciation: "a science, at a given moment, or a literary genre, or a state of law, or a social movement...They...must be defined from the point of view of the visible and from the point of view of that which can be enunciated, with the drifting, transformations and mutations which this will imply" (ibid.: 160).

Table 4.3: Dispositif (Social Apparatus)

Curves of Visibility	Empirical Observation
Curves of Enunciation	Discursive Modalities
Force	State Power

Continuing this line of thought Deleuze outlines the third element of a dispositif: force. The seeable (visibility) and sayable (enunciation) of the dispositif are able to be controlled only on the condition that there is sufficient force to regulate the constant "drifting, transformations, and mutations" to which they, tendentially, pertain. Force has the potential to become politically desirable insofar as visibility (empirical observation) and enunciation (discursive modalities) can be organised politically (i.e. by means of state power). These preceding three elements of the dispositif are then ideologically represented by the subject-form. Seeing (visibility), saying (enunciation), and force (power) take on "personhood" in the subject-form[14]. The capitalist state apparatus (as a dispositif), then, regulates the social conditions necessary to structure the relations of production for the exploitation of surplus-value (cf. Rodríguez, 2008a; Althusser, 1973). The state apparatus is thus configured in such a way that the state is a major contributor to the reproduction of capitalist social relations. Balibar explains the difference between the "State" and the "state apparatus" in these terms: "The State rests on a relation of forces betweeen classes, which it develops and reproduces. It could not otherwise continue to exist. But it is not purely and simple *the same thing* as this relation of forces. It needs a 'special organ',

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[14]Deleuze, moreover, emphasizes the historical contingency of a given social apparatus (including the subject-form): "And everywhere there are mix-ups to sort out: the productions of subjectivity escape from the powers and the forms of knowledge [savoirs] of one social apparatus [dispositif] in order to be reinserted in another...These apparatuses, then, are composed of the following elements: lines of visibility and enunciation, lines of force, lines of subjectification, lines of splitting, breakage, fracture, all of which criss-cross and mingle together, some lines reproducing or giving rise to others, by means of variations or even changes in the way they are grouped" (Deleuze, 1991: 162).

created and perfected for the purpose. . . there can be no State power without a State apparatus" (Balibar, 1977: 88). Furthermore: [t]he State power held by a class takes material form in the development and action of the State apparatus" (ibid.).

For Balibar, as for Poulantzas, the structure-in-dominance of the capitalist mode of production, finds the basis of its power in the state apparatus. The state apparatus exists within the *dispositif* which presides over the relations of production. "The historical existence of the State is immediately linked to that of the class struggle, even when, indeed especially when it tries to fulfill 'general social functions', whether economic or cultural: for these general functions are necessarily subordinated to the interest of the ruling class and become means of its domination" (ibid.: 77). 'Individuals', with the status of legal persons, are interpellated to perform their general social functions in relation to the requirements of the capitalist state apparatus (Balibar, 1977). The legal ideology for subjects of the capitalist state, Balibar suggests, is actively imputed: "from their childhood in primary school to their adult participation in the political institutions of the country" (Balibar, 1977: 67). The State's legal authority, as State power, rests upon individualising apparatuses for the "truth guarantee" of "self-identification" (q.v. §1.1). "The law in practice, does not 'recognize' classes, which is to say that it guarantees the perpetuation of *class relations* by codifying and enforcing rules addressed only to 'free' and 'equal' individuals" (ibid.: 67).

Poulantzas explains how the process of individualization is a means by which the State atomizes social processes. "In certain of its aspects. . . the materiality of the State and its apparatuses is here constituted as having to exercise a hold over a divided social body — one which is homogeneous in its division, uniform in the isolation of its elements, and continuous in its atomization" (Poulantzas, 1980: 63). As examples of such social atomization Poulantzas notes "[w]e could draw up a long list, stretching from the modern army to the administration, the judicial system, prisons, schools, the media, and so on." (ibid.). These structures of individualization are state sanctioned to facilitate the reproduction of the relations of production. To such structures of individualization correspond, Poulantzas explains, citing the work of Foucault, *disciplines*, "forging this individuality through a set of techniques of knowledge" (ibid.: 66). These individualizing 'sciences' exist to the end of maintaining a strict division of labour which is upheld by the state. Poulantzas writes: "the State does not simply exist to record this socio-economic reality: it enters into the constitution of the social division of labour by constantly producing social fracturing-individualization. . . the State consecrates and institutionalizes this individualization by constituting the socio-economic monads as juridical and political individuals-persons-subjects"

(ibid.: 66-67).

Warren Montag, moreover, maintains in "The Soul is the Prison of the Body: Althusser and Foucault 1970-75" from *Yale French Studies*, "the individual does not prexist his or her interpellation as a subject but emerges as a result of strategies and practices of individualization" (Montag, 1995: 75). The individual is suitably normalized by disciplines organised to induce 'correct training'; this is consequence of disciplinary power. "Discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (Foucault, 1984: 188). "Normal" individuals are those that coincide with the objectives of the state's dispositif and are suitably interpellated to "reflect" its goals in accordance with the seeable and sayable insofar as they are enforced (q.v. Table 4.3). State power enforces the political context of the relations of production where the social, discursive and representational modalities of the historical *a priori* form the structure-in-dominance (cf. Henry, 1971; Poulantzas, 1980).

The "individual" is a particular effect of "the political" — and as such — this individual-person-subject is an object of considerable interest to state power (Poulantzas, 1968)[15]. When interpellated "correctly" subjects "work all by themselves" (cf. Althusser, 2014; Poulantzas, 1968). Acting in accordance with the legal requirements of the structure-in-dominance the subject avoids the overtly repressive arm of the state apparatus (RSA) while still being subjected to the ideological arm (ISA) (q.v. §1.2). Politics, Poulantzas maintains, as a form of class struggle, always involves a reconfiguration of "the political" that modifies the experience of an individual-person-subject before the law of the state. The potential deconstruction of the subject-form that occurs in instances of politics is restricted by the contingency of uneven development with differential historical temporalities indicating the discontinuity of state structuration as a material practice (q.v Table 4.1). State materiality, therefore, issues the contextual, and institutional, interpellative discourse of the visible and invisible times of capitalist reproduction (cf. Althusser, 1970; Poulantzas, 1968).

Cremonini's *Nature Bien Ordonée* [English trans. *Well Ordered Nature*] illustrates the absent causality of interpellation (q.v. Figure 4.1): the antecedent causes of figurative movement are depicted in relation to a structure

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[15]Poulantzas was well read in legal theory having completed a masters degree ("The Rebirth of Natural Law in Germany") and a PhD ("Nature of Things and Law") in law (Kanderakis, 2015). In the *New Left Review* (January-February 1980) Stuart Hall writes: "His doctoral thesis in the philosophy of law attempted to develop a conception of Law drawing on Goldmann and Lukács... An early article published in *Les Temps Modernes* attracted the attention of Althusser, and he then became one of that remarkable company of young Marxists... which constituted the core of the 'Althusser' group" (Hall, 1980).

of causality that is visibly absent. The "movement" presented is not attributable to the action of any individual but to the a-subjective play of structural causality within the scene. "What does the concept of structural causality mean?", writes Althusser in 'On Genesis', "It signifies (in crude terms) than an <u>effect B</u> (considered as an element) is not the effect of a cause A (another element), but is instead the effect of element A insofar <u>this element A is inserted in relations</u> constitute the <u>structure</u> in which A is situated [and caught up]" (Althusser, 2012: 2; underlining in original). Althusser maintains: "in order to comprehend the production effect B, it is not enough to consider cause A (immediately preceding, or visibly related with effect B) in an isolated manner, but cause A instead as an element of a structure in which it assumes a place, therefore as subject to relations, specific structural relations" (ibid.). Furthermore, Althusser notes, "[a] very basic form of structural causality appears in modern physics, when it uses the concept of a field [champ], and puts into play what can be called the causality of a field" (ibid.)[16].

Nature Bien Ordonée presents action at a distance visually. The field of forces in which Cremonini's subjects are "caught up" is invisible yet their figurative movement alludes to the relations between ideological structures in which they exist. The *dispositifs* Cremonini paints, as fields of visible invisibility, evoke the unobservable relations that determine structured, social, events. Through Cremonini's painted abstractions the curves of visibility, curves of enunciation, and forces of a dispositif can be depicted in their ideological absence (q.v. §1.1) . Each aspect of movement in Cremonini's *Nature Bien Ordonée* is relatively autonomous of the others and it is the movement between each of these aspects that gives motion to the image: in Althusser's researches it is the relative autonomy of the economic, ideological, political determinants of the capitalist mode of production that produces the structural motion of valorization (q.v. Althusser, 1973).

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[16]Aristides Baltas in "Physics as Mode of Production" from *Science in Context* uses Althusser's work (including: *For Marx*, *Reading Capital*, *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists*, as well as other of his writings) to analyse the domain of physics in relation to the concepts of historical materialism. Baltas states: "physics should be understood as particular kind of *activity* deployed in society that constructs or rather *produces*, not only our knowledge of the part of the world that is apportioned to it...but also the necessary means to attain this knowledge" (Baltas, 1993: 570).

5

History, Philosophy, Science

Figure 5.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Parentesi (1962)* 1962

5.1   Hegel's Philosophy of History

"In Hegel, philosophy and history meet" says Robert Hartman in his introduction to Hegel's *Reason in History* (Hartman, 1953: ix). Hegel's unifying efforts between the disciplines of history and philosophy result in their shared consummation and inseparable finality. "[I]n Hegel's philosophy", Hartman states, "the 'Idea,' the logical power of the divine, enters and guides, through mortal men, the scene of historical struggle, so has Hegel's philosophy itself, as an expression of the absolute Idea, entered history" (ibid.). Hegel uses the words "Reason" and "Idea" interchangeably to suggest that God is Reason itself. Hegel declares in the second chapter of *Reason in History* entitled 'Reason as the Basis of History': "this *Idea* or *Reason* is the True, the Eternal, the Absolute Power and that it and nothing but it, its glory and majesty, manifests itself in the world" (Hegel, 1953: 11). According to Hegel "philosophy has demonstrated that Reason. . . is both substance and infinite power, in itself the infinite material of all natural and spiritual life. . . for only in its image and by its fiat do phenomena arise...not only in the natural but also in the spiritual universe, in world history" (ibid.). For Hegel the spiritual "realisation" of the Idea "represents the rationally necessary course of the World Spirit, the Spirit whose nature is indeed always one and the same, but whose one nature unfolds in the course of the world. This, as I said, must be the result of history" (ibid.: 12). Hegel remarks that '[t]o him who looks at the world rationally the world looks rationally back" (ibid.)[1]. Hegel's account of "Reason", however, is one that makes social and 'spiritual' history but two sides of the same coin — resulting in an ideological justification of the historical present as being divinely ordained — hence the "end of history"[2] .

   Hegel's philosophical use of "Spirit" consistently reinforces the unity of the spiritual and the rational, or, the theological and the empirical, or — as he maintains — the subjective and the objective. The Idea ("Spirit") effectively becomes an all-encompassing, absolute, term used to spiritualize material history. "Spirit, and the course of its development, is the substance

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[1]The "rationality" of human history, for Hegel, is thus a reflection of divine Spirit.

[2]Francis Fukuyama in *The End of History and the Last Man* defends Hegel's spiritual history as, in fact, the end of history, with this theodicy being the present state of "liberal" capitalism, which is, for him, "the ultimate victory as the world's only viable economic system" (Fukuyama, 1992: 90) . "For Hegel's understanding of the Mechanism that underlies the historical process is incomparably deeper than that of Marx or of any contemporary social scientist" (ibid.: 135). According to Derrida *The End of History and the Last Man* is Hegelian Neo-Evangelism. "We return to the neo-evangelistic rhetoric of Fukuyama...If "the existence of the State is the coming of God into the world", as one reads in *The Philosophy of Right* invoked by Fukuyama, this coming has the sense of a Christian event" (Derrida, 1994a: 74-75).

of history. We must not contemplate nature as a rational system in itself, in its own particular domain, but only in its relation to Spirit" (ibid.: 20). Hegel's philosophy of history is incompatible with strict naturalism where only natural phenomena exist without recourse to supernatural (spiritual) explanation. His position is such that he reconciles "Spirit" with nature insofar as "Spirit" is "realised" in natural phenomena and then "discovers itself" as "Spirit" in this self-same process. "One may have all sorts of ideas about the Kingdom of God; but it is always a realm of Spirit to be realised and brought about in man" (ibid.: 20)[3].

"The State", according to Hegel is, "the form which the complete realization of Spirit assumes in existence" (ibid.: 22). As Michael Gordy explains in "Reading Althusser: Time and the Social Whole" from *History and Theory*: "[f]or Hegel, every historical whole is a 'spiritual' whole and every historical process is a 'spiritual process' " (Gordy, 1983: 1983). In *Reason in History* Hegel declares: "World history is the progress of the consciousness of freedom. . . Freedom is itself its own object of attainment and the sole purpose of Spirit. It is the ultimate purpose toward which all world history has continually aimed. . . This final aim is God's purpose with the world" (Hegel, 1953: 25). Hegel's philosophical system presents world history, Spirit, the progress of freedom and human consciousness, and the State, as One. In its deification by Hegel the State attains its purpose as the realization of God on Earth. The State fixes the constant flux of human activity in accordance with the "rational will", i.e., the Idea ("Reason"): "[t]his essential being is the union of the subjective with the rational will; it is the moral whole, the *State*" (ibid.: 49).

Table 5.1: A Spiritual State

Interiority of the Idea	Exteriority of the State
subjection of the subject (q.v. §1.2)	subjection to the Subject (q.v. §1.2)

Hegel contends that "law, morality, the State, and they alone, are the positive reality and satisfaction of freedom. . . The Idea is the interior; the State is the externally existing, genuinely moral life. It is the union of the universal and essential with the subjective will, and as such it is *Morality*" (ibid.: 50).

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[3]Hegel states, tele-theologically: "In contemplating world history we must thus consider its ultimate purpose. This ultimate purpose is what is willed in the world itself. We know of God that he is the most perfect; He can will only Himself and what is like Him. God and the nature of His will are one and the same; these we call, philosophically, the Idea. Hence, it is the Idea in General, in its manifestation as human spirit, which we have to contemplate. . . The purest form in which the Idea manifests itself is Thought itself" (Hegel, 1953: 20-21).

The State, as a moral endpoint within Hegel's philosophy of history, contains within it an unambiguous class structure. This class structure is detailed in *The Philosophy of Right.* Much like Adam Smith's "invisible hand" when every member of Hegel's 'civil society' is doing as they should the greater good of all prevails. "When men are thus dependent on one another and reciprocally related to one another in their work and the satisfaction of their needs, subjective self-seeking turns into a contribution to the satisfaction of the needs of everyone else" (Hegel, 1952: 67). With this interdependence there arises as the social propensity to truck, barter, and exchange; in turn, "the infinitely complex, criss-cross, movements of reciprocal production and exchange, and the equally infinite multiplicity of means therein employed, become crystallized. . . and distinguished into general groups" (ibid.: 68).

These "general groups" are the crystallization of the social life of the "Idea". The "classes are specifically determined" as "(a) the *substantial* or immediate [or agricultural] class; (b) the reflecting or *formal* [or business] class; and finally, (c) the *universal* class [the class of civil servants]" (ibid.: 68).

Table 5.2: Hegelian Classes

Substantial Class (Substance)	Limited reflection and independence of will
Formal Class (Form)	Reflection and Intelligence
Universal Class (Universality)	Universal Interests of Community

Hegel characterizes each class as possessing qualities appropriate to its social activity. The *substantial* class has an "immediate", i.e., more or less "unreflective" attitude towards the world: "the agricultural mode of subsistence. . . owes comparatively little to reflection and independence of will" (ibid.). The *formal* class "has for its task the adaptation of raw materials, and for its means of livelihood it is thrown back on its work, on reflection and intelligence" (ibid.). The *universal* class "has for its task the universal interests of the community" (ibid.). "Spirit" flows through Hegel's society and each social position is realised accordance with divine "Reason". "The state is the actuality of the ethical Idea" (ibid.: 80). This is the "Hegelian whole" which Althusser challenged through his work on historical materialism. For Althusser social relations are not to be understood on the basis of a divine Idea but the on the basis of scientific practice (q.v. Table 2.3).

In 1968 Derrida presented a seminar at the Collège de France entitled *The Pit and the Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel's Semiology.* Derrida's paper addresses "the Hegelian theory of the sign" (Derrida, 1982: 71). Hegel's

"Idea", as a metaphysical system is intelligible, according to Derrida, insofar the *signifier is Spirit objectified*. "The theory of signs...belongs to...the philosophy of spirit" (ibid.: 74). Hegel's "Spirit" is made manifest in signifying structures and the history of signs is thus the absolute history of the Idea. "The process of the sign has a history, and signification is even history *comprehended*" (ibid.: 71). Such comprehension is "spirit determining itself in itself as a subject for itself" (ibid.: 75). Such "comprehension" is the recognition of the Idea as the basis of signifying systems that eventually acquire legal status by the semiotics of the State. Thus even the signifiers that are used to designate the "general groups" or "classes" of the state have divine authority.

In an interview with Julia Kristeva entitled "Semiology and Grammatology" (1968) from *Positions* Derrida indicates how he found that Althusser's work on differential histories to be a useful theoretical direction to take in avoiding the ideological pitfalls of Hegelian metaphysics. "Althusser's entire, and necessary, critique of the 'Hegelian' concept of history and of the notion of expressive totality, etc., aims at showing that there is not one single history, a general history, but rather histories, *different* in their type, rhythm, mode of inscription – intervallic, differentiated histories. I have always subscribed to this..." (Derrida, 1981: 58). The general strategy of deconstruction is to register the différance of signifying structures. "Différance is the systematic play of differences, of the traces of differences, of the spacing by means of which elements are related to each other" (ibid.: 27). The "elements" of sign systems (graphic, phonetic, syntagmatic,and semantic &c.), exist in a play of dependencies, as "text", where they are interwoven with each other. Derrida notes, however, that "différance is not a-structural: it produces systematic and regulated transformations which are able, at a certain point, to leave room for a structural science" (ibid.: 28). Furthermore: "[t]his interweaving, this textile, is the *text* produced only in the transformation of another text" (ibid.: 26). Hegel's philosophy of Spirit for both Althusser and Derrida, is a metaphysical narrative that cannot explain the différance of the historical present as discursive "text". Philippe Sollers also registers this very issue in *Writing and the Experience of Limits* where he discusses Marx's "textual rupture" and the pressing need for a theory of semantic materialism derived from the practice of writing (Sollers, 1983).

5.2   Dialectical Materialism

In its basic design Hegel's philosophical system contains all the components of the theory of interpellation Althusser articulates in his 'Ideology and

Ideological State Apparatuses' essay. As stated in §1.2 Althusser's theory of interpellation has a quadruple structure comprised of:

1. "the interpellation of 'individuals' as subjects";

2. "their subjection to the Subject";

3. "the mutual recognition of subjects and Subject, the subjects' recognition of each other, and finally the subject's recognition of himself";

4. "the absolute guarantee that everything really is so, and that on condition that the subjects recognize what they are and behave accordingly, everything will be alright: Amen 'So be it' " (Althusser, 1971: 181).

Each part of this theory mirrors certain elements of Hegel's philosophy of history and philosophy of right (cf. Hegel, 1953, 1952; Althusser, 1971a). Civil society, as the notion appears in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, interpellates individuals as subjects, through the legal standing of the 'individual'; this is the first part of Althusser's analysis: 'the interpellation of 'individuals' as subjects. These 'individuals' (Hegel also uses the term "concrete person") are interpellated as subjects of the State: this corresponds to the 'Idea' where 'Spirit' what Althusser calls "the Subject" (S) hails the individual as subject (s). The 'mutual recognition' and identification between subjects (s) and the Subject (S) is 'equality before the law'. Finally the *absolute* guarantee is the acceptance of civil society and with it law, morality, and the State as the natural order which the subject freely 'chooses' by being a 'good subject': Amen 'So be it'[4].

   François Matheron in his introduction to *The Spectre of Hegel* (a collection of Althusser's early writings) notes that Althusser: "had read Hegel with great care" (Matheron, 1997: 6). Furthermore Althusser "made extensive annotations in his copy of the *Phenomenology*, the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, and the *Philosophy of Right*" and other of Hegel's works (ibid.: 6–7). Indeed this close familiarity with Hegel's works would prove to be necessary for the development of much of Althusser's research. The first sentence of Althusser's master's thesis (*On Content in the Thought of G.W.F. Hegel*) identifies "the problem of the content in Hegel's philosophy", which is this (as stated in the second sentence): "[i]f truth is nothing apart from its

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[4]Hegel contends in the *Philosophy of Right* that a subject's will is "free" when it acts in accordance with the rationality of Spirit as the Idea. "In the free will, the truly infinite becomes actual and present; the free will itself is this Idea" (Hegel, 1952: 17) . For further elaboration of Hegel's metaphysics of free will see, in particular, the section "Abstract Right": "The universality of this consciously free will is abstract universality...and from this point of view the subject is a person" (ibid.: 21).

becoming, then the becoming of truth appears as the truth of truth, and the development of truth as the manifestation of what truth is in itself" (Althusser, 1997a: 36). This thesis problematic (i.e. the truth of philosophy) appears and reappears, repeatedly, in different forms throughout Althusser's oeuvre and it acquires its most developed formulation in the theory of dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism according to Althusser is the formal recognition of class positions within philosophy. It is using the precepts of dialectical materialism that Althusser explains how philosophy intervenes politically in terms of discursive "truth effects". Althusser, as early as his master's thesis, discerned the elliptical nature of Hegel's philosophy, insofar as Hegel's truth does not admit of substantive difference; the circularity of Hegel's philosophy traces an eclipse where the measure of truth is the identity of history, i.e., the truth of Spirit. As Althusser states: "Hegel's philosophy presents itself not only as a corpus of truths, a finished whole we can consider in its place in the history of thought, but also as a totalizing whole...also as the act by which truth is fulfilled or accomplished, *sich vollzieht*, achieves plenitude" (ibid.: 41). Dialectical materialism (i.e. Marxist philosophy), for Althusser, does not have the form of a self-fulfilling prophecy as does Hegel's system where "Reason" develops through the truth of "Spirit" in its becoming, rather, Althusser suggests, amongst his other definitions of the term, that dialectical materialism is philosophy with a *scientific character*. Marxist philosophy is not, strictly speaking, a science, whereas historical materialism according to Althusser is (q.v. Table 2.3). "This means, above all, distinguishing the Marxist science of history or historical materialism, which is a science, from Marxist philosophy or dialectical materialism, which is a philosophy...albeit a philosophy of a scientific character" (Althusser, 2003: 11).

Althusser expended considerable effort attempting to define the differences between historical materialism and dialectical materialism: it is a central theme across many of his works. In *The Humanist Controversy and Other Writings* he contends that the two disciplines have specific differences with respect to their "objects" and "theoretical status". 'Lenin before Hegel' (1969) (an unpublished manuscript written by Althusser that appeared in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*) adopts the position that philosophy is a discipline that does not have an object. Here Althusser is experimenting with the thesis that *philosophy has no object* which he derives from Vladmir Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (Althusser, 1971a). Althusser states "[p]hilosophy is not a science, and it has no object, in the sense in which a science has an object" (ibid.: 107). Instead "[p]hilosophy is a practice of political intervention carried out in theoretical form" (ibid.: 107). Philosophy intervenes, writes Althusser, "in two privileged domains": politics and science.

Although not itself a science "[i]t [philosophy] intervenes...in the political domain of the effects of class struggle and theoretical domain of the effects of scientific practice" (ibid.: 107). In the aforementioned manuscript Althusser mentions how partisanship exists in philosophy insofar as discursive structures have a class basis: "[a]ll philosophy expresses a class position, a 'partisanship' in the great debate which dominates the whole history of philosophy, the debate between idealism and materialism (ibid.: 108). This notion is also promulgated in 'Philosophy as a Revolutionary Weapon': "[w]orld outlooks are *represented*...by philosophy. Philosophy represents the class struggle in theory. That is why philosophy is a struggle ...and basically a *political* struggle: a class struggle" (ibid.: 18).

The full extent of Althusser's work on the political implications of theoretical practice finds definition in the phenomenon of interpellation insofar as philosophy contributes to the agency of interpellative effects. For Althusser the most foundational distinction to observe in philosophical class struggle is that between idealism and materialism. "The ultimate stake of philosophical struggle is the struggle for hegemony between the two great tendencies in world outlook (materialist and idealist)" (ibid.: 18). The role of dialectical materialism is to demarcate between these philosophical positions and indicate which position has greater scientificity, which for Althusser, is the materialist tradition. In broad terms these two philosophical tendencies, as the class struggle within theory, are differentiated using dialectical materialism to demonstrate "the frontier between the scientific and the ideological" (ibid.). In Althusser's account idealism is on the "side" of the ideological and materialism on the "side" of science. "The philosophical struggle is a sector of the class struggle between world outlooks. In the past, materialism has always been dominated by idealism" (ibid.).

Table 5.3: Philosophical Partisanship

Materialist	Scientific
Idealist	Ideological

Marxist philosophy (i.e., dialectical materialism) studies the ideological effects of philosophical constructions in the attempt to articulate the conditions of "philosophical partisanship". Idealism is the term Althusser uses to designate forms of ideological thought which exist as limitations to materialist, i.e., scientific knowledge, in other words: idealism is an *epistemological obstacle* for the development of scientific knowledge.

Bachelard, with whose work Althusser was quite familiar, coins the term "epistemological obstacle" in his book *The Formation of the Scientific Mind*

(1938/2002)[5]. Bachelard suggests that *"the problem of scientific knowledge must be posed in terms of obstacles. . .* It is in the very act of cognition that we shall show causes of stagnation and even of regression; there too we shall discern causes of inertia that we shall call epistemological obstacles" (Bachelard, 2002: 24).

The social conditions of interpellation are epistemological obstacles to the science of history insofar as "primary experience" is delimited by the power of objectivation, which, according to Althusser is class determined. "Primary experience or to be more precise, primary observation, is always a first obstacle for scientific culture" (ibid.: 29). Dialectical materialism, for Althusser, as philosophy with a scientific character, questions the extent to which idealist philosophies obstruct scientific development. Ideological presuppositions tendentially condition 'primary experience' and must be overcome to further the pursuit of objective knowledge. These ideological prejudices impose limits to the questions posed by scientific inquiry. According to Bachelard: "[t]he idea of the epistemological obstacle can be examined in the history of scientific thought and also in educational practice" (ibid.: 27). Dialectical materialism thus examines the epistemological obstacles that obstruct the development of historical materialism (i.e., the science of history). The critical purpose of dialectical materialism marks the attempt to divest philosophy of its pre-scientific status. "An epistemological obstacle will encrust any knowledge that is not questioned" (ibid.: 25). The "knowledge" of primary experience, insofar as it is an effect of interpellation, must be freed from its ideological conditions of existence and "theoretical practice" is Althusser's attempt to formalise a system which represents the recursive relationship between science and social history (q.v. Table 3.1).

As a social "text" the semiological attributes of interpellation are deconstructed by the application of dialectical materialism to the insufficiently understood problems of philosophical partisanship (q.v. §5.1) . The movements of political intervention in philosophical discourse are articulated by the disseminated aporias of the signifying chain (q.v. Table 3.3). As real abstractions these aporetic matrices of mis/recognition form indices of performativity for the reproduction of the capital-relation. Dialectical materialism, then, registers the extent to which there are epistemological obstacles within the primary experience of capitalist social relations and attempts to articulate them in the terms of structural causality (q.v. §4.1). The 'I-function', as the subject form of discourse, is a formal condition of semiological structuration, that is, misrecognition finds its point of departure in the production of meaning (q.v. Table 1.2). To the semiotic correlatives of interpellative acts

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[5]Originally published as *La Formation de l'Esprit Scientifique* (1938) Paris.

there correspond state apparatuses that structure the 'primary experience' of society. For example, social class, is the product of "three structural determinations", economics, politics, and ideology, each of which is a relatively autonomous object of individual experience. Thus these three domains are discursively interdependent and this interdependence is made salient by theoretical practice (q.v. Table 3.1 & Table 4.1). The theoretical practice of dialectical materialism is, therefore, used to demonstrate the importance of materialist epistemology for the science of history in terms of the "forms and modes of production of knowledge' by making visible the discursive conditions of the historical *a priori* (cf. Poulantzas, 2008; Foucault, 1972).

Hegelian history, according to Althusser, is nothing other than the movement of "Spirit" in time. Material history is placed in parentheses and discussed only insofar as it is supervened by the Idea. Cremonini's artwork *Parentesi 1962* (English trans. *Brackets*, or alternatively, *Digression*) provides an illustration of ideation taking historical form (Fig. 5.1). The emergent geometrical shapes in *Parentesi 1962* are suggestive of both architectural and social forms from which the material history has been erased or remains to be envisioned. For Hegel whether this material history is temporarily left in abeyance or yet to culminate the result is the same: the realization of Absolute Spirit (q.v. §4.2 & §5.1). "The Absolute, then, in its own self-complete reality appears as the constitutive principle of experience. The experience here is the self-consciousness of Absolute Spirit; it appears to itself in all its objects" (Hegel, 1949: 683). Thus even the "primary" experience afforded by a work of art is absolute destiny: substance, form, and universality are represented in the image as the divine Idea.

Contrary to Hegel's image of history Althusser — following Marx — articulates a materialist history in the terms of "historical materialism". The transformations that occur throughout social history are determined by changing material conditions (including labour processes) and the vehicle this labour of transformation is social practice (q.v. §3.2) . It is social practice, in its various forms, that is the motor of history (Marx and Engels, 1848). Idealist explanations of historical processes, such as Hegel's, are in effect epistemological obstacles to the science of history. The ideological subjects of Hegel's philosophy of history are taken to be "reflections" of Absolute Spirit and the interpellated subject is merely the digression of Reason as divine providence.

The scientific practice of historical materialism attempts to formulate social history, materially, in terms of the activity of classes, political parties, law, state power, and ideologies (q.v. Table 4.1). Hegel writes, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "True reality is merely this process of reinstating *self-identity, of reflecting into its own self* in and from its other... That the

truth is only realised in the form of system, that substance is essentially subject, is expressed in the idea which represents the Absolute as Spirit" (ibid.: 80-85; emphasis added). For the reality of the historical process to be established scientifically Althusser breaks epistemologically with Hegelian history where the self-identity of subject is contemplated as the end or final purpose of historical development (Althusser, 1970).

5.3   Historical Materialism

"For Althusser...the crucial question is the relation between Marxist science and Marxist philosophy" (Brewster, 1971: 23). Historical materialism (i.e., the science of history) specifies the particular scientific practices necessary to objectively represent the — "History-continent" — as Althusser calls Marx's discovery (Althusser, 1973: 4). "Marx founds a new science, i.e., he elaborates a system of new scientific concepts where previously there prevailed only the manipulation of ideological notions. Marx founds the science of history where there were previously only philosophies of history" (Althusser, 1971a: 38) (q.v. §5.1). To further the practice of historical materialism Althusser suggests the following theories should be critically advanced:

1. the theory of social classes;

2. the theory of the legal-political superstructure (theory of law, theory of state power, theory of the state apparatus);

3. the theory of political practice;

4. the theory of transitional forms;

5. the theory of the forms of historical individuality (Althusser, 2003: 15).

The phenomena that comprise the study of historical materialism are, in the first instance, conceptually defined, so that they may become "visible": base, superstructure, classes, and are actively produced as "thought-objects" (Althusser, 1970: 60). According to Bachelard "[r]eality is never 'what we might believe it to be': it is always what we ought to have thought. Empirical thought is clear in retrospect, when the apparatus of reason has been developed" (Bachelard, 2002: 24)[6]. Empirical research is only ever factual

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[6]In *Bachelard: Science and Objectivity* Mary Tiles states: "Bachelard is concerned with scientific thought not so much in the static form of deductively interconnected sets of statements constituting scientific theories, but with the dynamic processes of correction, revision, rejection and creation of theories, with the dynamics of experimental and theoretical practices of science" (Tiles, 1984: 9).

after its accomplishment: the "apparatus of reason", and its instruments of objectification, are verified by their application in experimental conditions (cf. Pêcheux and Balibar, 1971; Bachelard, 2002). Althusser often discusses the dual relation between dialectical materialism and historical materialism with each informing the other reciprocally: dialectical materialism questions the terms in which a problematic is defined (i.e., its status of scientificity) and historical materialism represents the scientific practice to be followed. The difference, however, between the two fields (historical — viz-à-viz — dialectical — materialism) is not always quite as clear and distinct as Althusser sometimes suggests it is. In cases of theoretical equivocation Althusser has to reevaluate his existing theoretical practice to formulate the concepts necessary to advance beyond the problems currently being posed, i.e., he has to rectify his work in light of new research (q.v. Table 3.1).

According to Bachelard (from whose work Althusser took the "epistemological break" concept): "in scientific life. . . problems do not pose themselves. It is indeed having this *sense of the problem* that marks out the true scientific mind. For a scientific mind, all knowledge is an answer to a question. If there has been no question, there can be no scientific knowledge" (Bachelard, 2002: 25). Distinguishing between the dialectical materialism and historical materialism — by means of theoretical practice — Althusser is attempting to ascertain legitimate (scientific) from illegimate (ideological) problems with regard to the "science of history"[7]. Althusser's approach to scientific practice in fundamentally in agreement Bachelard's remarks concerning the notion of "epistemological obstacles" (cf. Althusser, 1970; Bachelard, 2002). Bachelard notes, regarding the apprehension of scientific objectivity, how "[k]nowledge gained through scientific effort can itself decline. . . An *epistemological obstacle* will encrust any knowledge that is not questioned. Intellectual habits that were once useful and healthy can, in the long run, hamper research" (ibid.: emphasis added). Thus, to follow Bachelard's methodological initiative, one must frequently reexamine the theoretical conditions of a given problematic to ensure they are not functioning as an obstacle to advances in scientific practice. Within scientific practice, Bachelard contends: "[n]othing is self-evident. Nothing is given. All is constructed' (ibid.).

Submitting Althusser's own work to revision and moving beyond some of its earlier formulations can be undertaken by analysing the social conditions of *virtual* materialism (q.v. §5.4). Indeed, such investigation is completely in accord with the object of historical materialism: the 'science of history'

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[7]Hak and Helsoot, in *Automatic Discourse Analysis,* note: "Bachelard developed his epistemology by studying the history of natural sciences such as physics...Subsequently, Althusser and Foucault applied epistemological concepts to the history of the social sciences (Hak and Helsloot, 1995: 6).

must, necessarily, ascertain changing historical circumstances, whether they be interpellative, technological, social, aesthetic, economic, or otherwise.

Historical materialism has to consider the historical conditions of social change in all forms of material culture and how such change arises over time. Althusser's theory of differential histories outlines the structural implications of pluralized temporality, however, many aspects of this problematic were left underdeveloped.

There is thus an incipient need to prevent Althusser's own research from becoming an epistemological obstacle to the theory of historical materialism. As Bachelard notes: "Not everything in the history of scientific thought contributes to the development of that thought, far from it. There are some kinds of knowledge which, even though they are accurate, bring useful research to a premature end" (ibid.: 27). The historical assumptions of Althusser's problematic must be identified for further development in the theory of historical materialism today. New technologies produce new material conditions and with them new social relations; these differential histories require, as a result of the new realities produced, new practices of historical epistemology (q.v. §9.3).

Althusser makes a bold, and innovative, attempt to describe the theoretical possibilities of an antihumanist historiography where the subject is not taken to be a cause, *causa sui*, but an effect of material practice (q.v. Cronin, 2001). Marx declares in a footnote from chapter seven (The Labour Process and the Valorization Process) of *Capital* (vol. 1) that "[t]he writers of history have so far paid very little attention to the development of material production, which is the basis of all social life, and therefore of all *real history*" (Marx, 1976: 286; emphasis added). Historical materialism, then, endeavours to correct this considerable oversight. In *Anti-Dühring* Engels, defines the general principle of historical materialism in the following terms: "[t]he mode of production and exchange in a definite historical society, and the historical conditions which have given birth to this society, determine the mode of distribution of its products" (Engels, 1975a: 136).

The real history of a "definite historical society" is a structural result of the relations of production: "with the differences in distribution, class differences emerge. Society divides into classes: the privileged and the dispossessed, the exploiters and the exploited, the rulers and the ruled" (ibid.: 136-137). Engels further declares: "[t]he materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life, and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure... *the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders, is dependent on what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged*" (ibid.: 254; emphasis added).

In 'Elements for a Theory of Transition' from *Reading Capital* Balibar maintains: "All social production is subject to structural social relations" (Balibar, 1997a: 306)[8]. The forms of transition between modes of production are dependent upon social practice and such transition "is itself a movement subject to a structure which has to be discovered" (ibid.). The discovery of the structures of transition between modes of production is an intrinsic part of the research project for historical materialism (q.v. Table 2.3). Social differentiation has virtual antecedents: the formation of classes, exchange-value, and the structures of labour process are eventalized in the terms of multiple histories (cf. Deleuze, 2004a; Althusser, 1970; Foucault, 2010). These virtual histories must be included in the historio-graphic researches of historical materialism as the virtuality of the grapheme is a mechanism of discursive individualization. Individualized discourse exists insofar as interpellation is occluded by the mis/recognition of discursive selection (q.v. Table 2.2) (cf. Poulantzas, 2008; Derrida, 1994b, 1974; Pêcheux, 1982).

The structures of transition between modes of production are an object of virtual sociality for the historical expression of theoretical practice. The science of history is *not* intended, Balibar explains, "to reflect, reproduce and *mimic* history, but to produce the knowledge of it" (Balibar, 1997a: 252). This knowledge necessitates: "concepts of the structures on which the historical effects depend" (ibid.) Balibar refers to Marx's research as the "science of combinations": with the combinations of labour-power, property, and the appropriation of surplus product determining the structural features of historical societies[9]. Furthermore, the science of history, is, in fact, the science of *histories* insofar as the historically specific forms of labour-power, property and valorization, each have their own particular forms of development: "we can never conceive history in general, but only *the history of something* (ibid.:

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[8]Balibar notes in 'Self-Criticism: An Answer to Some Questions in Theoretical Practice' from *Theoretical Practice*: "it has to be said that the object of historical materialism when it is analysing a determinate mode of production is first to define and explain a particular combination...of social 'factors' of production, which can be described as a 'combination of the relations of production and the productive forces' so long as it is pointed out...that this combination is always made, one a given basis, in the (social) form and under the influence of the relations of productions themselves" (Balibar, 1973: 63; underlining in original).

[9]Barry Hindess and Paul Q. Hirst examine the structural forms of primitive communism, the "ancient" mode of production, slavery, the "asiatic" mode of production, the feudal mode of production and the transition from feudalism to capitalism, in their work *Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (q.v. Hindess and Hirst, 1975). Their research clearly makes use of much of Althusser's problematic.

277)[10] . "History" is "revealed as aporetic... once it has been demonstrated that this object cannot be 'the past', nor ultimately any pure and simple definition of time" (ibid.: 278). History is not unified by an ideological subject but is produced by the plurality of practices that form multiple histories (e.g. political histories, histories of institutions, economic histories, histories of the sciences &c.) (Balibar, 1997a).

These plural histories are not reducible to the imaginary history of a transhistorical subject, indeed, the subject — as a referent — is only possible on the basis of other social practices (i.e. the practice of writing, the history of philosophy &c.). Thus the real process of history, according to Balibar, is the pluralization of historical practices as an a-subjective process of material production. Relatively autonomous histories combine and alter successive forms of social existence, and for Balibar, this is not the work of an *a priori* subject but the effect of historical combinations between determinate structural elements. "We can generalize this comment and say that each of the elements of the combination (*Verbindung*) undoubtedly has a kind of 'history', but it is a history without any localizable subject: the real subject of each component history is the *combination* on which depend the elements and their relations, i.e., it is *something which is not a subject*" (ibid.: 280). This "something that is not a subject" is, for Balibar, "the first problem of history as a science" (ibid.). This marks an epistemological break where history is not explained in terms of the subject but in terms the combinations of historical practice: "it is to determine the structure of a sphere of relative autonomy, such as what Marx calls the process of production and its modes" (ibid.: 280). The relative autonomy between historical structures within a mode of production can in this way, potentially, virtualize the relations of its elements (e.g. labour power, modes of distribution, property &c.) as new social relations that are articulated as transitions between social forms of existence. These virtual conditions of historical phenomena are an effect of the combinations of elements within a mode of production that exist as the relatively autonomous structures of a process without a subject (cf. Balibar, 1997a; Althusser, 1976; Deleuze, 2004a).

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[10]According to Foucault in *The Order of Things* an episteme determines the historical forms "representation" will take in a particular society. "In any given culture at any given moment, there is always only one *episteme* that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in a theory or silently invested in its practice" (Foucault, 1970: 183). An episteme informs the conditions of valorization that are used in processes of social exchange. "Money and pricing" and "The creation of value" are discussed in chapter 6 of *The Order of Things*: "Exchanging".

5.4   Virtual Materialism

Gilles Deleuze, in pursuit of a definition for the manifold, variegated, discourse of "structuralism" that rhizomatically[11] took root in the universities of France during the '60's and '70's of the twentieth century, wrote an article entitled "How do We Recognize Structuralism?"[12]. Here Deleuze demonstrates an appreciable awareness of the key texts and researchers deemed to be "structuralist" in their methodology, among whom, Althusser can be counted (Deleuze, 2004a)[13]. Deleuze's somewhat dissident *virtual* materialism (dissident insofar as Deleuze blurs the conventional distinction between idealism and materialism) finds nascent expression in "How Do We Recognize Structuralism?". Among those Deleuze calls "structuralists" he names: "a linguist like Roman Jakobson; a sociologist like Claude Lévi-Strauss, a psychoanalyst like Jacques Lacan; a philosopher like Michel Foucault renewing epistemology; a Marxist philosopher like Louis Althusser, once again taking upon the problem of the interpretation of Marxism; a literary critic like Roland Barthes..." (Deleuze, 2004a: 170). The structuralist project, for Deleuze, constitutes a specific problematic — a characteristic form of theoretical practice. "Each of them discovers problems, methods, solutions that are analogically related, as if sharing in a free atmosphere... but one that distributes itself into singular creations and discoveries in each of these domains" (ibid.). Deleuze, in his exposition of the analogies between the aforementioned structuralists, introduces the notion of the virtual (i.e. virtual materialism) in such a way that virtual phenomena are, definitively, what Althusser, Lacan, and Lévi-Strauss et al. are attempting to discover in their respective researches.

Deleuze reveals the analogical relationships of structuralist thought with reference to their shared virtual objectivity. This discursive analysis enables Deleuze to specify the structural connections between the fields he details (i.e. psychoanalysis, epistemology, dialectical materialism &c.). As he states: "To discern the structure of a domain is to determine *an entire virtuality of coexistence* which pre-exists the beings, objects and works of this domain. *Every structure is a multiplicity of virtual coexistence*" (ibid.: 179; emphasis added). Deleuze proceeds to cite Althusser's work in *Reading Capital* to

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[11]The notion "rhizome" is presented in *A Thousand Plateaus* by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in the first chapter: "Introduction: Rhizome".

[12]This article first appeared as "A quo reconnaît-on le structuralisme?" in *Historie de la philosophie tome 8: Le XXe siècle*, Paris, 1972.

[13]François Dosse has written two volumes on the object of structuralist research with the aim of historicizing its theoretical development: q.v. *History of Structuralism* —"*The Rising Sign* 1945-1966" Volume I & "*The Sign Sets* 1967-Present" Volume II.

exemplify the conditions of "virtual coexistence". "Louis Althusser, for example, shows in this sense that the originality of Marx (his anti-Hegelianism) resides in the manner in which the social system is defined by a coexistence of elements and economic relations, without one being able to engender them successively according to the illusion of a false dialectic" (ibid.). What Deleuze has in view here is Althusser's opposition to Hegelian time and Hegelian history (q.v. §5.1). Virtuality is identified by Deleuze as a functional element within Althusser's account of historical materialism and it for this reason that *historical* materialism cannot, conceptually, exclude the effects of *virtual* materialism when considering socio-historical systems.

"Time", according to Deleuze, "goes from the virtual to the actual, that is, from structure to its actualizations, and not from one actual form to another" (ibid.: 180)[14]. The conditions of virtual co-existence possess relatively autonomous temporalities, for example: the time of production, on the one hand, and on the other, the time of consumption, with structural differentiation occurring as a result of their virtual co-existence. "One will notice that the process of actualization always implies an internal temporality, variable according to what is actualized" (ibid.)[15]. The variation, and relative autonomy of temporal actualization, is a basic feature of virtual materialism. Such temporal differentiation instantiates the virtual histories that are specific to distinct fields (e.g.: psychoanalysis, linguistics, anthropology &c.). Structure, Deleuze contends, is only ever actualized insofar as it is differentiated and thus the necessary condition for actual structures is the variable coexistence of heterochronic virtualities: "structure is not actualized without being differentiated in space and time...Genesis, like time, goes from the virtual to the actual, from the structure to its actualization" (ibid.).

Virtual materialism, therefore, registers the contingent actuality of *reincorporating* ideality within a materialist, i.e., scientific, account of history (cf. Althusser, 1971a; Deleuze, 2004a). By re-materialising idealism the epistemological obstacles of idealist preconceptions can be reconsidered on the basis of their virtual genesis (q.v. §5.2). In the first instance this requires a thoroughgoing application and theoretical investigation of the principles of

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[14]Deleuze wrote a detailed commentary of virtual time in *Bergsonism*: "Bergson moves toward a distinction between to major types of multiplicities...the one actual, the other virtual...Scientific hypothesis and metaphysical thesis are constantly combined in Bergson in the reconstitution of complete experience" (Deleuze, 1988a: 117-118). Henri Bergson develops theories of temporal experience in *Matter and Memory*, *Time and Free Will*, and *Creative Evolution.*

[15]In another articulation of the virtual, from *Bergsonism,* he states: "Differentiation is always the actualization of a virtuality that persists across its divergent lines" (Deleuze, 1988a: 95)

structural causality (i.e., the absent cause) to "account for the very particular presence of a structure in its effects. . . at the same time as these latter assimilate and integrate it" (Deleuze, 2004a: 181). Deleuze uses the example of an economic structure, once again making use of Althusser's work, to explain the functioning of structural causality (q.v. §4.1). "An economic structure never exists in a pure form, but is covered over by the juridical, political and ideological relations in which it is incarnated. One can only *read*, find, retrieve the structures through these effects" (Deleuze, 2004a: 181). The ancillary juridical, political, and ideological relations that sustain the capitalist mode of production are structural effects arising from specific processes of valorization that are actualized on the basis of heterochronic virtualities, i.e., the antecendent temporal syntheses of differentiation.

The first draft of Deleuze's "How Do We Recognize Structuralism" was a transcribed tape recording from a talk he gave in 1967 (Stolze, 1998: 52). Ted Stolze notes in "Deleuze and Althusser: Flirting with Structuralism" from *Rethinking Marxism* that Deleuze then sent a copy to Althusser for comment to determine whether he thought it was "publishable" (ibid.). Althusser replied to Deleuze: "I have read your text with passionate attention, and I am indebted to you for having understood a number of decisive points whose importance I had not seen, and that I had not known how to express. . ." (Althusser, 1968 cited in Stolze, 1998: 56). Among these decisive points are included Deleuze's commentary on Lacan[16] and his exposition on the "empty square" (object = x) (q.v. §7.3) (Stolze, 1998). "Everything concerning the object x (value) in particular has profoundly struck and enlightened me (everything concerning it and everything due to it) (Althusser, 1968 cited in Stolze, 1998: ibid).

Stolze maintains "we should note a *striking affinity* between Deleuze's conception of time and the conception that Althusser and Balibar offer in *Reading Capital. . ."* (ibid.: 60; emphasis added). This striking affinity lies in Stolze's acknowledgement that "[q]uite clearly, then, Deleuze has embraced Althusser's critique of the 'homogeneous continuity'. . . in the Hegelian account of historical time" (q.v. §4.2) (ibid.). Embracing the critique of homogenous time found in *Reading Capital*, Deleuze, "agrees that the 'differential histories' comprising a given manifest there own distinctive rhythms and only exist in a complex state of interdependence" (ibid.). Deleuze, moreover, according to

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[16]Jane Gallop notes in "Lacan's 'Mirror Stage': Where to Begin" from *SubStance*: "The work of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan has had a tremendous and unsettling effect on the disciplines known in France as the 'human sciences', that is, on both what we call the humanities and what we call the social sciences...*Among the most far-reaching of Lacan's subversions of our traditions of knowledge is the havoc he wreaks upon temporal succession*" (Gallop, 1983: 118; emphasis added).

Stolze, has "enriched Althusser's analysis by further distinguishing the 'virtual coexistence. . . of these histories from their 'actualisation' as particular material *effects*" (ibid.). This virtual coexistence of multiple histories corresponds to the relative autonomy that is specific to the differential regions of the social totality (q.v. §4.3).

Virtual materialism, as the determining yet indeterminate future of historical materialism, can then account for the structural possibilities inherent within relatively autonomous domains and the co-existence of their differential histories. Historical actuality is, in effect, reliant, upon the virtuality of co-existing structures to determine new instances of theoretical practice (q.v. Table 3.1). For example, in the case of Althusser's discussion of Cremonini's paintings, this required an actualisation of multiple histories being instantiated as *text*, quite distinct from Cremonini's techniques with a brush on canvas (q.v. §1.1). Under the rubric of historical materialism décalage (dislocation) denotes the virtual differentiation of structural causality. These virtual relations, themselves a necessary condition of historical events, suggest a means to explain their present empirical indeterminancy, e.g., the indeterminancy of social history.

In the missive, "Against Vulgar Materialism" (a letter to Joseph Bloch), from the year 1890, Frederich Engels writes: "According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining factor in history is the production and reproduction of real life. Neither Marx nor I have ever asserted more than this. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic factor is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, absurd phrase" (Engels, 1996: 39). In no way is economic phenomena the *exclusive* determinant of history, Engels maintains, "[t]he economic situation is the basis, but. . . political forms. . . juridical forms, and especially the reflections of all these real struggles in the brains of the participants, political, legal, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas — also exercise their influence upon the course of historical struggles and in many cases determine their *form* in particular" (ibid.). Virtual materialism in its articulation as theory of multiple histories, then, circumspectly allows for further inquiry into the objects of the materialist conception of history while circumventing the particular issues of reductionism that beset economic determinism. The reality of the virtual is a distinct historical element contributing to the "production and reproduction of real life". Virtualisation is a condition for the possibility

of actual history[17] . "The reality of the Virtual", Slavoj Žižek writes, in *Organs without Bodies*, "stands for the reality of the Virtual as such, for its real effects and consequences (Žižek, 2004: 3). In *The Signature of the World* Éric Alliez contends that it is the through concept of the virtual that "Deleuze could recognize himself in a *certain* structuralism...by seeing structure as virtuality, as the multiplicity of virtual coexistences effectuating themselves at diverse diverse rhythms in accordance with a with a multi-serial time of actualization" (Éric Alliez, 2005: 92: emphasis added). The multi-seriality of time, in respect of the observations Engels makes, explains how the economy is virtually determined (i.e. overdetermined) by the "reflections" of the relations of production in forms of discourse: political, legal, religious, and philosophical. These forms of discursivity do not represent the objective conditions of economic production but "reflect" it "in the brains of the participants" (Engels, 1996). Such reflections require the inscription of political, legal, religious, and philosophical (what Althusser would call ideological) traces of experience. Virtual structuration is, then, a mode of actualization for the multi-seriality of history insofar as historical structures are discursively inscribed.

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[17]In an interview entitled "The Deconstruction of Actuality" from *Radical Philosophy* Derrida defines the consequences of virtual materiality in the following way: "Virtuality now reaches right into the structure of the eventual event and imprints itself there; it affects both the time and space of images, discourses, and 'news' or 'information' — in fact everything which connects us to actuality, to the unappeasable reality of its supposed present. In order to 'think their time', philosophers today need attend to the implications and effects of this virtual time" (Derrida, 1994b: 29).

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Plasticity and the Traces of Experience

Figure 6.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Maternitá* 1957

6.1 Originary Plasticity

Neural plasticity is a *formal* condition for the existence of interpellation (q.v. §1.2). A cognitive index of effectivity, for interpellation, is the result of certain plastic processes which leave traces of their effects in the brain — in the language of neuroscience — every effect leaves a trace (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007)[1]. For there to be interpellative effects there must exist conditions of neural plasticity (anatomical, physiological, and developmental) to trace and re-trace the psycho-social and synaptic specular moments of mis/recognition (cf. Althusser, 1971a; Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007). Plasticity denotes both the possibility *to be* formed and *to give* form: plasticity defines the neural structuration of experience (cf. Malabou, 2008; Miller, 2012b). This commutative capacity to both give and receive form, as the cerebral relation of plasticity, is not the absolute origin of interpellation but an originating, cognitive, mechanism of interpellative effectivity. Structures of interpellation must be formed and also provide form, by way of social practice, using the corporeal and ideational plasticity of the brain. Due to the neural variation of interpellative effects this necessitates forms of plastic structuration capable of co-determining various forms of cognition (e.g.: discursive, social, technological, and axiological, sentience).

The relations of convergence between agency and structure, sociologically, are a primary point of interpellative plasticity. One is both an agentic cause — and a structural effect — as a node within a plastic interpellative network[2]. For example, plasticity signifies the possibility of being both the structural effect of an ideological state apparatus and its "agent": hence the structural plasticity between the "mental" and the "material" or the "psychic" and the "synaptic" (q.v. Table. 4.1). The plasticity of social life is a function of structural differentiation amongst those processes called sociological insofar as individuals are collectively "moulded". It will be recalled that Paul Henry in "On Processing Message Referents in Contexts" contends that a given social "context" has specific effects on discourse with "the conditions of

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[1]I am here adapting Althusser's term "index of effectivity" and applying it to the plastic conditions of interpellation. "By index of effectivity we may understand the character of more or less dominant or subordinate and therefore more or less 'paradoxical' determination of a given element or structure in the current mechanism of the whole. And this is nothing but the theory of the conjuncture indispensable to the theory of history" (Althusser, 1970: 118).

[2]Althusser's theory of interpellation is conceptually aligned with Miller's psychoanalytic theory of structuration. In "Action of the Structure" found in *Concept and Form* Miller states: "Structure, then: that which puts in place an experience for the subject that it includes. Two functions qualify our concept of structure: structuration, or the *action of the structure*, and subjectivity, *subjected* [*assujettie*]" (Miller, 2012a: 71).

production of messages" informing both the "representation" of an object and the "differences between representations" as "assertions" (q.v. §4.3). These contextual circumstances are not independent of class relations and constitute *discursive traces* left by the relations of production within capitalist society (cf. Henry, 1971; Pêcheux, 1982). A unique, singular, cognitive structure for an individual — as a somatic singularity — is realised by means of the experiences it is *subjected* to: this is where the psychic (mental) trace finds its synaptic (material) mark[3].

Working together, François Ansermet, a psychoanalyst, and Pierre Magistretti, a neurobiologist, wrote *Biology of Freedom: Neural Plasticity, Experience, and the Unconscious* (2007), "based on a mutual observation, namely, that experience leaves a trace" (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007: xiii). "This observation", they declare (citing the research of E. R. Kandel[4] from the journal *Science*), "has found experimental confirmation through recent progress in neurobiology, which demonstrates a *plasticity of the neuronal network permitting the inscription of experience*" (ibid.: emphasis added). The research of Ansermet and Magisterri, and that undertaken in their respective fields more generally (i.e., psychoanalysis and neurobiology), is clearly applicable to the study of interpellation. The theoretical advances made in these fields, with particular reference to the concept plasticity, "which nowadays is believed to underlie the mechanisms of memory and learning", leads Ansermet and Magisterri to affirm that: "[w]e now take for granted that the subtlest elements of the process of transferring information between neurons, that is, the synapses, are permanently altered in accordance with lived experience. *The mechanisms of plasticity operate throughout a subject's life and significantly determine his future"* (ibid.: xiv; emphasis added). Any account of socialisation, such as that provided by Althusser using the concept of interpellation, must, objectively, be explained in material terms for it to demonstrate scientific rigour. By refining the theory of interpellation further to include the concept of plasticity, as presented by Magisterri and Ansermet,

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[3]Maurice Godelier in *The Mental and the Material: Thought, Economy and Society* maintains: "But whilst there is an element of the mental everywhere, this is no way implies that everything that is (socially) real is mental" (Godelier, 1986: 129). To understand the materiality of social cognition Godelier proposes to analyse the following: "1) The nature of the distinction between infrastructure and superstructures; 2) The relations between economic determination and the domination of a given superstructure and the basis of this domination; 3) The mental part of reality and the distinction between the ideological and the non-ideological; 4) The paradigm (and the paradoxes) of the 'legitimacy' of the birth of classes and the State" (ibid.: 129-130).

[4]In the year 2000 Eric Kandel received the Nobel Prize in Medicine resulting in "major recognition of the importance of the mechanisms of plasticity in modern neurobiology" (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007: xiv).

this enables the mechanisms of interpellation to be understood as *neural* phenomena.

The principal question for Magisterri and Ansermet in *The Biology of Freedom* is to ascertain whether "at the beginning of the twenty-first century" it is possible to "objectify the nature of the trace produced by experience, sketching a bridge between the psychic trace and the synaptic trace established in the neuronal network" (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007: xv). The traces left on the neuronal network by processes of "inscription" explain "how, on the basis of experience, an internal reality is constituted" (ibid.). It is only insofar as the brain exhibits structures of plasticity that such an "internal reality" can arise in relation to the "inscription of experience". Magisterri and Ansermet suggest that the inscription of experience is perpetually undergoing modification and erasure as an effect of neurogenesis. There is at once brute "experience and the trace it leaves on the neuronal network and, in addition, its mental effect" (ibid.: 45). These three processes combine (i.e., experience, trace and mental effect) to produce new, structured and structuring, instances of neuronal plasticity. "The trace of experience inscribed through the mechanisms of plasticity can undergo many reworkings and become associated with other traces, distancing the subject from the event that took place. These mechanisms of association operate in such a way that mental reality goes beyond the experiences that caused the initial trace" (ibid.)[5].

There is then, Magisterri and Ansermet suggest, a continuous, and diachronic, combination of neurological mechanisms actualizing instances of cognitive experience which diverge and converge in accordance with the synaptic relations inscribed by the traces of experience. "The system gets complicated to the point where it becomes organized in the form of new stimuli: a mental reality prevails over external reality" (ibid.). The *erasure* of the actual object of experience, Magisterri and Ansermet explain, is the virtual effect of the plasticity of inscription: "The mechanisms permitting the inscription of the experience are those that separate us from the experience. We find a trace, but we no longer find the experience, all the more because trace is recombined with other traces according to new laws proper to mental

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[5]The work of Ansermet and Magisterri demonstrates theoretical similarities to Miller's description of the structure of psychoanalytic experience in "The Action of Structure". Miller writes: "The structuring [*le structurant*], *by not being there*, governs the real. It is here that we find the driving discordance: for the introduction of this reflexive element, which suffices to institute the dimension of the structured-insofar-as-it-lives-it, as taking its effects only from itself, arranges an *imaginary* organization, contemporaneous with and distinct from the real order yet nevertheless coordinated with, and henceforth an intrinsic part of reality" (Miller, 2012a: 72).

life" (ibid: 45). The structural synthesis that occurs between experience, the
trace and its effects of erasure is based upon virtual antecedents[6]. These
antecedents being the virtual combination of prior actualizations where actual
experiences and traces recombine as effects of virtualization. New cognitive
states in the brain, on account of its plasticity, are the structural effect of prior
actualizations being virtualized. Pierre Lévy explains in *Becoming Virtual*
that "[a]ctualisation involves more than simply assigning reality to a possible
or selecting from among a predetermined range of choices. It implies the
production of new qualities, a transformation of ideas, a true becoming that
feeds the virtual in turn" (Lévy, 1998: 25).

The neural interplay between actuality and virtuality, as relations of
plasticity in the brain, generate syntheses between the experience, the trace,
and their combined, transcendent effects. These synthetic moments are
constitutive of "subjective" experience. Ansermet and Magisterri further
explain the inscription of experience as a serialized combination of traces:
"perception 1 leaves a trace 1; a perception 2 (signified 2) leaves a trace
2... and so forth. After this process an association may be established
between trace 1 and trace 2, hence between two initial signifiers (signifiers
1 and 2), producing a new trace A, that is a new signifier" (Ansermet
and Magistretti, 2007: 109). This process of neural virtualization is what
Ansermet and Magisterri denote as "transcription". Traces of perception,
i.e., the material inscriptions of experience, are abstracted from immediate
perception as they are transcribed in combinations of experiential events.
"What we are suggesting is that this new trace resulting from the association
of the two initial traces creates distance from the initial perception... and that,
by this process of transcription, the signifier, the signifier newly constituted
from the two initial signifiers is no longer in direct relation within the signified
corresponding to external reality" (ibid.: 110). Instances of experiential
transcription function as effects of virtualization; these virtualized phenomena
are then incarnated as actual experience and represented as abstract virtual
objects (e.g. processes of valorization) which are subsequently re-incorporated
as real conditions of social existence (q.v. §1.1).

The virtual, in this sense, is an experiential multiplicity of traces being
incarnated in accordance with differential chronologies (cf. Ansermet and
Magistretti, 2007; Deleuze, 2004a). As Deleuze notes multiplicity is a "mul-
tiple ideal connection, a differential relation" which "must be actualised in
diverse spatio-temporal relationships, at the same as its elements are actually

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[6]Deleuze writes a chapter in *Bergonism* entitled "Memory as Virtual Existence". This
chapter describes the virtual effects of memory in the work of Henri Bergson. "Duration is
essentially memory, consciousness, and freedom. It is consciousness and freedom because it
is primarily memory" (Deleuze, 1988a: 51).

incarnated in a variety of terms and forms" (Deleuze, 2001a). Moreover "[t]he actualization of the virtual...always takes place by difference, divergence or differenciation" (ibid.: 212) When Henry draws attention to "the conditions of production of messages" he details how messages are differentiated by contextual variation (Henry, 1971). A discursive context is never entirely actual; it is forever being virtualized in terms of a multiplicity of connections between an object's referent (referential effect), what can be said about it (assertion effect), and its interpersonal significance (social effect) (ibid.). The material conditions of an actual context are being ceaselessly virtualized and the realization of neural plasticity is an actualized virtuality that then engenders further virtualization in the form of actual signifiers (cf. Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007; Deleuze, 2001a). According to Deleuze: "[e]very object is double without it being the case that the two halves resemble one another, being a virtual image and the other an actual image" (Deleuze, 2001a: 209). The inscription of experience is both virtual and actual and exhibits the qualities of formal plasticity where the neuronal bridge between the psychic trace and the synaptic trace is discursively erased by the virtuality of actual, existing, social relations (cf. Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007; Deleuze, 1988a; Lévy, 1998; Shields, 2003).

Table 6.1: Traces of Experience

Synaptic Trace	Psychic Trace
Actual	Virtual
Inscription	Transcription

The conditions of interpellation correspond to this virtual-actual structure (q.v. Table 6.1). Mis/recognition, as the defining feature of interpellation, is the limit-form of a given problematic. "The 'problematic'...designates precisely the objectivity of Ideas, the reality of the virtual" (Deleuze, 2001a: 280). : "Ideas are genuine objectivities, made up of differential elements and relations and provided with a specific mode — namely, the 'problematic' " (ibid.: 267). A problematic frames a question or an object within particular terms and so poses a problem in a particular frame of reference (e.g.: a social context). Remarking upon Althusser's researches Deleuze notes that " 'the economic' is never given properly speaking, but rather designates a differential virtuality to be interpreted always covered over by forms of actualisation" (ibid.: 186). The capital-relation is thus an interpellated ideality actualized in numerous social forms (e.g.: art, politics, philosophy &c.) that consequently demonstrates the virtual cognition of historical experience (q.v. §1.1).

6.2   The Traces of Neuroscience

The field of neuroscientific research, as evinced by the work of Ansermet and Magistretti presented in *The Biology of Freedom: Neural Plasticity, Experience and the Unconscious*, is a remarkably apposite resource for the study of interpellation. On occasion, however, Ansermet and Magisterri make uncritical use of the term "subject": their usage implies a sense, following Althusser's work, which is in some ways "ideological" (cf. Althusser, 1971a; Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007). It is clear that Ansermet and Magisterri hope to circumvent such subjective essentialism with their concept of neural "traces" yet, in certain cases, their research is theoretically limited by the sedimented *meanings* attached to the philosophical notion of the "subject" (q.v. §1.1)[7]. The discursive relationship between the "subject" and the "trace", when examined using the concepts of structural causality, is in fact co-constitutive with each acting on the other and realising ternary moments of experience virtually (q.v. §4.1 & §6.1). The subject in its traced inscription is ideologically determinant but not absolutely determined due to fact that neural plasticity necessitates a certain mutability to be effective (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007). The ternary interactions that occur between a somatic singularity ("individual-subject-person") and its neural conditions of social experience have an aleatory character that is demonstrated by the actual differentiation of historically specific mental (psychic) and material (synaptic) traces (q.v. Table 6.1).

Fernanda Navarro in *Crisis & Critique* remarks that Althusser, during his later research, sought to discredit the use of any "subject" as an explanatory heuristic: "be it God or the proletariat" (Navarro, 2015: 48). The philosophical subject is, for Althusser, merely a convenient rhetorical device and not at all a rigorous, scientific, concept — a rhetorical device — that enables all manner of surreptitious attributes to be predicates of it, thereby letting the subject conveniently be *causa sui* (e.g.: "the subject is free"). There is much that can be usefully adapted from the work of Ansermet and Magisterri and applied to Althusser's research on interpellation, however, to be bound by the theoretical limitations of an ideological subject would be an insufficiently critical importation (q.v. Table 3.2). Navarro maintains that the aleatory materialism of Althusser's late work "*does not call for any subject* but rather proposes *a process without a subject*" (ibid.: 52; emphasis added). The subject

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[7]Mark Cousins in the journal *Economy and Society*, commenting on the researches of Althusser, describes this issue in the following way: "The subject's spontaneous experience is that he has always been such, that he is himself the space from which he speaks and acts. He sees what he sees and he knows what he knows. Human subjects mis/recognize the conditions of their own construction" (Cousins, 1985: 95).

is not the "First Cause", origin of "Sense", source of "Reason", or teleological "End" of history (ibid.). Historico-aleatory materialism is a process without a subject that does not reflect the closed teleology of ideological mis/recognition (q.v. Table 1.2). "Aleatory materialism is thus a materialism of chance, of contingency, not in the sense of an absence of necessity but in the sense of a...becoming necessary for contingent encounters" (ibid.: 52). Navarro, then, sees the aleatory materialism of Althusser's later work (e.g.: "The Underground Current of the Materialism of the Encounter") constituting a theoretical engagement with the conceptual intricacies of history as a "process without a subject" (cf. Althusser, 2006; Navarro, 2015)[8]. It is this subjectless (i.e., a-subjective) historical terrain of aleatory materialism that appears particularly well suited to investigate some of the hypotheses Magistretti and Ansermet advance in *The Biology of Freedom.* Both psychic traces and synaptic traces (i.e., the mental and the material) are instances of aleatory encounter — contingently structuring neural relations between "internality" and "externality" — and vice versa (cf. Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007; Althusser, 2006; Godelier, 1986). Furthermore Magisterri and Ansermet acknowledge that the plasticity of the neuronal network affords contingent mutability in its functioning with the effects of inscription being transcribed by historical conditions of cognition (i.e. neural plasticity is overdetermined). A possible extrapolation of these cognitive encounters is that class struggle is, "in the last instance", to use Althusser's phrase, a *synaptic struggle.* Althusser expresses a direct understanding of "the universal primacy of materiality" where he suggests that "matter could be the simple trace, the mark left by a trace", to exemplify this point "he invoked Derrida's demonstration of the priority of scripture, of writing, found even in the phoneme produced by the voice" (Navarro, 1998: 95)[9]. There is a pertinent confluence between Althusser's problematic of aleatory materialism and the research described by Magistretti

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[8]Panagiotis Sotiris states in "Rethinking Aleatory Materialism" from *Encountering Althusser*: "I think that the notion of the encounter can indeed be really useful as an attempt to theorise the transition from one mode of production to the other in non-essentialist and non-teleological terms" (Sotiris, 2013: 30). The historical continuity of social practice is aleatory, for Sotiris, because it is, under certain conditions, contradictory: "today the main danger comes from neoliberal ideology's pre-emptive denial of any form of history apart from social reality as an aggregation of individual choices and atomised social transactions. That is why it is imperative today to rethink dialectics" (ibid: 37).

[9]The neuroscientific foundations of language (including speech and writing) are discussed by Roy H. Smith in *Cognitive Neuroscience: A Functionalist Perspective* see "Chapter 10: Language" where the cognitive conditions of word recognition and phonological processing are presented (Smith, 2002).

and Ansermet in *The Biology of Freedom*[10]. Their theoretical concurrence announces how it is possible to read Magistteri and Ansermet in relation to Althusser (e.g. *The Biology of Freedom* viz-à-viz *The Philosophy of the Encounter*). The material practice of reading generates specific epistemic states about the world which, in turn, inform cognitive encounters with it (religious, scientific, aesthetic &c.). Althusser notes in his Ideological State Apparatuses essay how writing (i.e. inscription) or the "logos" has interpellative effects (Althusser, 1971a)[11]. There are many points of application for the findings of Ansermet and Magisterri in connection to the kinds of epistemic events that differentiate individuals throughout a mode of production, for example, the main point of encounter for ideological mis/recognition is social practice, but the cognitive "motor" of this process is the brain. Social practices are overdetermined by epistemic conditions and given their interpellative efficacy the "traces" (synaptic and psychic) of speech and writing are deserving of the most patiently detailed study.

Advancing Marx's maxim: "humans make their own history, but they do not know that they make it", Catherine Malabou[12] contends, by implication in *What Should We Do With Our Brain?*, "Humans make their own brain, but they do not know that they make it" (Malabou, 2008: 1). The original quotation that Malabou paraphrases from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852) by Marx reads: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living" (Marx, 1978: 595). The sense that Malabou gives to the syntagm "[h]umans make their own brain" is that of a "structural bond" that "defines an *identity*" (Malabou, 2008: 1). In the same way the interpellated

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[10]It is important to note Ansermet and Magisterri's work in *The Biology of Freedom* employs some of the same concepts derived from the researches of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan that are present in Althusser's article "Freud and Lacan"(cf. Althusser, 1996; Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007).

[11]Etymologically "logos" is of Ancient Greek origin and refers to "word, speech, discourse, reason" (OED Online, 2018k). The logos of the Christian Trinity is represented by the divine Word (i.e. The Word of God). "We cal him Logos, which some translate Word or Speech, and othersome Reason" *Trewnesses Christian Relig.* (1587) (ibid.).

[12]The genealogy of Malabou's researches can be traced, indirectly and incompletely, back to that of Althusser's theoretical milieu at the ENS. Malabou's PhD was supervised by Derrida. As she states in *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic*: "This book is a revision of my doctoral thesis, which was completed under the supervision of Jacques Derrida at the École Normale Supérieure" (Malabou, 2005: xlviii). Derrida himself was both a student, and later, colleague of Althusser at the same institution (Ffrench, 1995).

subject identifies with its subjection as an effect of structural causality the historicity of the brain constitutes the record of this interpellation. Malabou seeks to articulate "a constitutive historicity of the brain" in "philosophical, scientific, and political" terms (ibid.: 2). The production of the structural bond between the brain and an identity Malabou deems "a *work*" (ibid.: 4). "Talking about the plasticity of the brain thus amounts to thinking of the brain as something modifiable, 'formable,' and formative at the same time" (ibid.: 5). The inscription of experience from the virtual to the actual is a work of transformation at the synaptic level. The properties of plasticity are the precondition for the structural bond between the brain and identity. As Malabou states "[t]he work proper to the brain that engages with history and individual experience has a name: plasticity. What we have called the constitutive historicity of the brain is really nothing other than its plasticity" (ibid.: 3). "Brain plasticity operates", Malabou states, "on three levels":

1. "the modelling of neuronal connections";

2. "the modification of neuronal connections";

3. "the capacity for repair" (Malabou, 2008: 4).

The modelling of neuronal connections is determined "by the power of impression of existence in general. . . the plasticity of the brain. . . corresponds well to the possibility of fashioning a memory, to the capacity to shape a history" (ibid.: 6). Malabou states that "[s]ynaptic efficacy grows or declines under the impact of strictly individual experience" (ibid.). Virtuality, however, Deleuze maintains, is pre-individual and is only individuated as it is actualized (cf. Deleuze, 2002, 1988a). The actual instances of synaptic efficacy that grow or decline, do so, as a result of pre-individual conditions of virtual experience and are consequently irreducible to absolutely individual synaptic states. Malabou, citing the research of Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello from *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2005), suggests "neuronal functioning and social functioning interdetermine each other and mutually give each other form (here again the power of plasticity), to the point where it is no longer possible to distinguish them" (Malabou, 2008: 9). This alignment between neurological and sociological phenomena is in many ways an empirical extrapolation of Althusser's theory of interpellation where "subjects work all by themselves" (Althusser, 1971a). Malabou indeed remarks upon the need "to attempt to develop a critique of what we will call neuronal ideology. . . to disengage from a certain number of ideological presuppositions that implicitly govern the entire neuroscientific field. . . and, by a mirror effect, the entire field of

politics" (ibid.: 11)[13]. By bringing to the fore questions of neuronal ideology Malabou is raising for consideration "the transition from the neuronal to the mental. . . the very core of cerebral functioning. . . from the strictly natural base of the mind to its historical — and thus also, necessarily, its political and social — dimension" (ibid.: 56).

Table 6.2: Forgotten Functioning

Neuronal Functioning	Social Functioning
Forgetting no. 1	Forgetting no. 2

Synaptic structuration emerges within distinct socio-political conditions of existence and, for Engels, this amounts to "real struggles in the brains of the participants", and for Marx, this struggle "weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living" (cf. Engels, 1996; Marx, 1978). Althusser's conjunctural "mirror-effect" of interpellation — as misrecognition — finds an equivalent expression in Malabou's account of the ideological presuppositions of neuronal politics. Pêcheux's two types of 'forgetting', presented in *Language, Semantics, and Ideology*, can also be used to further this articulation of synaptic struggle (Pêcheux, 1982). The subject is occluded from its synaptic structuration insofar as — in the case of forgetting no. 1: the subject cannot locate itself outside its conditions of synaptogenesis, and — in the case of forgetting no. 2: the subject does not select its historical conditions of synaptic structuration: these conditions emerge in the course of being structured. This is, according to Pêcheux "the occlusion of the cause of the subject inside its very effect" (ibid.: 114). This neuronal occlusion is the forgotten precondition of socio-political subjectivity. The history of a brain, as Malabou, along with Marx and Engels, suggest, is simultaneously a history of its political subjection. There is, therefore, a specifically neuro-social encounter that arises between synaptic plasticity and state apparatuses which constitutes a structural basis for interpellation.

The suggestive, incipient, outlines of this materialist encounter are derived from Althusser's late text 'The Underground Current of the Materialism of the Encounter' (Althusser, 2006). This materialism of the encounter, the "take [prise]" and "and therefore of the aleatory and of contingency" is "a wholly different mode of thought to the various materialisms on record, including that widely ascribed to Marx, Engels and Lenin" and one that is opposed to the "materialism of necessity and teleology" (Althusser, 2006: 168-169). The

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[13]The mirror function of mis/recognition that is integral to Althusser's theory of interpellation can here be understood as neuro-social effect of mirror neurons (cf. Stamenov and Gallese, 2002; Malabou, 2008; Althusser, 1971a).

materialism of the encounter has been "repressed" historically by the philosophical tradition (ibid.: 168). Althusser ventures idealism (non-contingent representation) is "logocentric because it identifies philosophy with a function of the Logos charged with thinking the priority of Meaning over all reality" (ibid.: 168). Logocentrism prescribes "Truth" in advance of history (including the history of science). This repression of material contingency gives epistemological authority to the "accomplished fact", however, this accomplished fact, according to Althusser, arose from contingency[14]. "The world may be called the accomplished fact [fait accompli]... But *the accomplishment of the fact* is just a pure effect of contingency" (ibid.: 169) .

Taking the brain as an "accomplished fact" with its singular synaptic inscription Malabou raises the question as to how much a brain is, in fact, the product of contingency. "It is not the identity of cerebral organization and socioeconomic organization that poses a problem, but rather the unconsciousness of this identity" (Malabou, 2008: 52). By mis/recognizing the *identity* of neural plasticity and politics (i.e. the subject) one cannot apprehend the structural historicity of the brain as a social relation. Althusser declares that the "materialism of the encounter. . . is very important in Marx" with respect to the concept of the mode of production (Althusser, 2006: 196). "In untold passages, Marx. . . explains that the capitalist mode of production arose from the 'encounter' between 'the owners of money' and the proletarian stripped of everything but this labour-power...'It so happens' that this encounter took place, and 'took hold'...became an accomplished fact"(Althusser, 2006: 197). The capitalist mode of production is thus an accomplished fact in the brain of those subjects who experience it (i.e. labour power and the owners of money) and the contigency of this encounter is forgotten insofar as it is occluded by neuronal functioning. Althusser's "materialism of the encounter" indicates how Malabou's account of brain plasticity "takes hold" socially insofar as a certain form of neural modelling is a "fact" of capitalist production. The reality of capitalism, is for Althusser, an effect of its structural overdetermination: "the whole that results from the 'taking-hold' of the 'encounter' does not precede the 'taking-hold' of its elements, but follows it; it might not have 'taken hold'...'the encounter might not have taken place'. By extension the neuronal history of capitalist society is also, in Althusser's terms" "a pure effect of contingency".

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[14]Althusser states: "In other words, nothing guarantees that *the reality of the accomplished fact* is *the guarantee of its durability*. Quite the opposite is true: every accomplished fact, even an election... is only a provisional encounter, and since every encounter is provisional even when it lasts...History here is nothing but the permanent revocation of the accomplished fact by another undecipherable fact to be accomplished..." (Althusser, 2006: 174).

6.3   Neural Plasticity and Structuration

Ted L. Petit, N.W. Milgram, and Colin M. MacLeod in their article "Neuro-plasticity, Learning, and Memory" state "[w]e know that both the structure and the physiology of neurons can be modified by providing specific experiences...Such discoveries have established that plasticity is an inherent property of the nervous system" (Milgram et al., 1987: 1). The consequences of these discoveries, Milgram et al find, possess enormous scope for broader considerations of interpellation: "[i]t is no longer far-fetched to suggest that we will be able to identify how the nervous system is modified during learning and how stable memories are formed" (ibid.: 1–2). The modification of the nervous system that is facilitated by means of neural plasticity has a decisive connection to Miller's concept of structuration: "the action of the structure" (Miller, 2012a: 71). Miller defines "structure" as that "which *puts in place an experience for the subject it includes*" (ibid; emphasis added.). The subject, however, in Miller's account, is a mode of apperceptive occlusion that allows the experience of "subjectivity" to be thought with some degree of specification. "The relation of the subject to the structure...proves to be inconceivable without the mediation of an imaginary function of miscognition..., re-establishing reality in its continuity by means of the production of representations that respond to the absence in the structuring, and compensate for the production of lack" (ibid.: 72).

The structure of lack appears to correspond to the neurological conditions of plasticity insofar as the subject is not apodictically but relationally constituted by the "sutures" it accomplishes (cf. Miller, 2012b; Malabou, 2008; Milgram et al., 1987). In a general sense plasticity, according to Milgram et al. refers to "any kind of *experience-dependent modification* in neural structure or function" (Milgram et al., 1987: 7; emphasis added). Experience-dependent modifications are localized in the brain as "plastic neural events", of which, there are three categories: developmental plasticity, anatomical plasticity, and physiological plasticity. Developmental plasticity "applies to changes which occur early in an organism's development" (ibid.). During the developmental period a number of factors determine "synaptogenesis": "[n]ot only is the size of the synapses subject to external influence, but the number of synapses is variable as well" (ibid.: 7). Anatomical plasticity "refers to distinct changes in cellular structure that are experentially induced. These events occur after normal development developmental growth and differentiation have ceased" (ibid.: 9). The third category, that of physiological plasticity, "can be thought of as a change in the level of responsiveness, threshold of firing, or pattern of activation which can be related to experienced events" (ibid.: 10).

Richard F. Thompson (1987) states in *Neuroplasticity, Learning, and*

Memory that learned movements or motor programs are stored in the brain, specifically in the cerebellum, as "memory traces". "When we began this work about sixteen years ago, we had no idea that we would be led to the cerebellum as the key structure that appears to store the essential memory trace" (Thompson, 1987: 151). Within the general framework of plastic structuration the material trace, or as Althusser and Derrida both refer to it, "the trace" is then a condition for the existence of experience-dependent modifications of neural events (cf. Derrida, 1974; Navarro, 1998). In *Plasticity at the Dusk of Writing: Dialectic, Destruction, Deconstruction* Malabou provides an exposition of plastic and graphic cultural phenomena which takes its starting-point from the anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss and his study of indigenous masks. The trace marks oscillations between plastic and graphic instances of material inscription (e.g.: the production of material culture). Such oscillations register "the articulation between what Lévi-Strauss calls the *plastic* and the *graphic components* of the mask" (Malabou, 2010: 3). "Masks thus reveal the *interchangeability* or *conversion relation between plastic and graphic, image and sign, body and inscription*" (ibid.). The plastic is made graphic as it is inscribed — and according to Ansermet and Magisterri — the plasticity of the neuronal network permits "the inscription of experience" (cf. Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007; Malabou, 2010).

Table 6.3: Neural Structuration

Plastic	Graphic
Image	Sign
Body	Inscription

The neural inscription process with its ever-present oscillations between plastic and graphic "writing" is the *sine qua non* for the structuration of experience. Malabou asserts that her work should be read as an ongoing effort to "situate the *symbolic rupture between the plastic and the graphic*" (Malabou, 2010: 3). This symbolic sundering is an attempt by Malabou to understand "the engimatic relation between *figure* and *writing*" (ibid.). The configuration of the neuronal network where inscription is written (i.e. inscribed) exists, in Malabou's terms, as a relation between "the differential structure of form and, inversely, the formal structure of difference"(ibid.). This formal structure of differential "traces" suggests that interpellation could be studied in conjunction with a general economy of plasticity with the plastic neuronal network becoming an object for the analysis of interpellation (q.v. §4.1 & §6.1).

To appropriately consider the engimatic symbolic ruptures that Malabou

suggests occur within the structuration of experience a theoretical engagement with Derrida's work in *Of Grammatology* (where the possibility of a "science of writing" is addressed) provides a pertinent frame of reference. The material traces of writing are often so immediately "understood" that the production of its discursive structures are mis/recognized because they form such a tacit part of day-to-day life (cf. Pêcheux, 1982; Derrida, 1974). By critically raising the question of the "meaning" of writing — and with it — the neural traces that it leaves — this analysis could provide the humanities and social sciences with greater explanatory capacity. Althusser was sometimes disparaging of the social sciences and humanities in their present state of development for being awash with pre-scientific notions and today such issues are particular significant with regard to what Malabou calls "neuronal ideology" (Malabou, 2008; Althusser, 2003).

In 'Zombie Dawn: Slavery and the Self in the Twenty-First Century' (2014) from *Brain, Mind and Consciousness in the History of Neuroscience* David Hawkes states: "According to Althusser, whose ideas were widely disseminated by his pupil Michel Foucault in the 1970s, the autonomous, unified self was not merely an ideological it was the archetype of ideological illusion, and the source of all other ideological illusion. . . By the end of the twentieth century, such arguments converged with a tendency to deny the existence of any unified subject on empirical grounds" (Hawkes, 2014: 334). Any given, "unified", subject is perpetually being overdetermined by the numerous histories that constitute it and as it is being placed under erasure by these relatively autonomous histories the subject is thus being differentiated as an effect of neuronal plasticity.

It could be presupposed that a person has a linear, "continuous", historical development where this linearity presents the apparent immediacy of the "unified self" . "Yet", for Ansermet and Magisterri, "the person's reality is different. This is especially true for mental development, which cannot be reduced either to the idea of a preprogrammed course or to that of direct mental causality" (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007: 181). On both the 'psychic', i.e, mental plane, and on the 'synaptic', i.e., material plane "we may say that the combination of multiple determinants leads to effects that are not predictable *a priori*" (ibid.). The person, or subject, Ansermet and Magisterri use these terms interchangeably, develops through the inscription of experience and does not exist prior to this constitutive, social, process. There are, they note, multifarious external factors (e.g.: political, pedagogical, axiological &c.) "influencing the the organization of the neural network beyond all genetic determination" (ibid.: 182). "Experience is inscribed. It leaves a trace, and this trace is determinative. . . by the reworking of the neural network corresponding to the establishment of the trace" (ibid.). The

concatenation of traces — as a manifold of experiential plasticity — is the overdetermined cause of the subject, a cause which is visible by its historical contingency. "Through the structural and functional modifications produced by experience, it introduces the possibility of change. The process of becoming is neither determined nor undetermined: it is plastic" (ibid.: 183).

In Althusser's work the process by which an individual becomes a subject is neither determined nor undetermined but overdetermined and this overdetermination is the consequence of multiple histories (q.v. Althusser, 1969, 1970). Historical discontinuity traces its effects through the contingency of plasticity *a posteriori*. The "absence in the structuring" as "the imaginary function of miscognition" produces the continuity of experience for a subject within a reality which is discontinuous by virtue of its non-linear historical overdetermination (cf. Althusser, 1969; Miller, 2012a). Miscognition in Miller's account enables a subject to say 'I', or suture, a unified experience in the face of an overdetermined, historical, reality (q.v. Table 1.2). The inscription of experience as it is actualized in the neuronal network is compatible with the precepts of virtual materialism due the contingent interaction of synaptic and psychic plasticity . As a structuring agency the reality of the virtual denotes "something which is not a subject" by relations of plastic coexistence, and in this way, articulates the differentiating effects of neural structuration (q.v. Table 6.1).

This neuronal history of the present is the result of a theoretical combination that virtualizes historical materialism in terms of "differential forms of historical individuality" (cf. Balibar, 1997b; Malabou, 2008; Deleuze, 2002). According to Balibar in *Reading Capital*: "Marx formulated the very concept of the dependence of the forms of individuality with respect to the structure of the process or the 'mode' of production" (ibid.: 282). As each "man" is individualised so is the inscription of "his" cognitive experience. Balibar further notes: "[m]en do not appear in the theory except in the form of supports for the connexions implied by the structure, and the forms of their individuality as determinate effects of the structure" (ibid.: 283). The inscription of experience occurs, then, as a relation between structures (q.v. Table 4.1). Due to the virtual co-existence of structural elements "men-subjects" do not exhibit a "centre" (cf. Balibar, 1997b; Deleuze, 2004a). "Marx's whole analysis excludes this possibility. It forces us to think, not the multiplicity of centres, but the radical absence of a centre. The specific practices which are articulated in the social structure are defined by the relations of their combination before they themselves determine the forms of historical individuality which are strictly relative to them" (Balibar, 1997b: 284). Althusser discusses the theory of historical individuality in "Reply to John Lewis" from *Essays in Self-Criticism* where he notes: "each society has

its own individuals, historically and socially determined. The slave-individual is not the serf-individual nor the proletarian-individual, the same goes for the individual of each ruling class" (Althusser, 1976: 53).

Given that the subject, in the work of Ansermet and Magisterri, is under constant erasure by the conditions of plasticity, this suggests that any essential structure or "centre" of a subject is, in effect, only ever the mutable instance of social practice and therefore never absolute (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007). The contingency of historical individuality pertains directly to the relative autonomy of particular structures of synaptic and psychic experience (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007; Balibar, 1997b; Althusser, 1976). Furthermore insofar as capitalist relations are sustained by the mysteries of the Trinity so too will the apparent structures of the interpellated subject-form (Table 1.3). Thus interpellation is directly overdetermined by the conditions of neural plasticity. The disjunction between psychic and synaptic traces then becomes a conjunction in the terms of virtual materialism with the virtual coexistence of plastic and graphic instances being the result of relatively autonomous differential histories (cf. Deleuze, 2004a; Althusser, 1970). Plasticity as an experience-dependent modification of the neural structure exists in forms of historical individuality where social practice is 'reflected' — as an consequence of interpellation — by the mode of production. Theoretical practice, then, presents the possibility of delineating the causes of interpellation within the mirror-structure of ideological misrecognition (q.v. Table 3.1). These traces of experience, which do not originate exclusively with the subject-form, are the product of differential historical times both visible and invisible.

The discovery of "mirror neurons" further illustrates the neuronal basis of interpellation (i.e. the mirror structure of misrecognition). Maxim I. Stamenov and Vittorio Gallese in *Mirror Neurons and the Evolution of Brain and Language* discuss "the recent scientific discovery of the so-called 'mirror neurons' and its potential consequences...from the point of view of our understanding of the evolution of the brain, aspects of social intelligence (like imitation, behavioral and communicative role identification and theory of mind) and language" (Stamenov and Gallese, 2002: 1). Social activity is mirrored between individuals (i.e. neurologically reproduced) by means of the Mirror Neuron System (MNS). The MNS functions without the individual, conscious, agency of the subject. To use Althusser's terminology the MNS is a process without a subject (cf. Althusser, 1976; Stamenov and Gallese, 2002). "The mirror neurons become activated independently of the agent of the action — the self or a third person whose action is observed. The peculiar 'intersubjective character' of the performance of mirror neurons... may help shed light from a different perspective on the functional architecture of the conscious vs. unconscious mental processes" (ibid.: 2). Experience is thus

inscribed in such a way that a subject's agency is 'intersubjectively' generated by overdetermined social practices which correspond to the relative autonomy of the MNS (cf. Stamenov and Gallese, 2002; Althusser, 1969; Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007). Joseph LeDoux advances a synaptic understanding of subjectivity in *Synaptic Self: How Our Brains Become Who We Are* where the neurological structures of the brain explain the basis of "personality". "Let's start with a fact: People don't come preassembled, but are glued together by life. And each time one of us is constructed, a different result occurs... The particular patterns of synaptic connections in an individual's brain, and the information encoded by these connections, are the keys to who that person is" (LeDoux, 2002: 3). Neurological plasticity thus structures forms of individual consciousness in relation to the historical conditions of synaptic inscription insofar as history produces socially differentiated synaptic selves.

6.4   Traces of an Absent Cause

The psychoanalytic content of Jacques-Alain Miller's research shares conceptual similarities with aspects of Althusser's theory of interpellation (cf. Miller, 2012b; Althusser, 1971a). This is particularly evident when Miller's "logic of the signifier" is contrasted with Althusser's "general theory of discourse". Althusser, through the researches of Miller, established the concept of the "absent cause", however, Althusser applies this concept to a broader range of phenomena than were described by Miller's tendentially psychoanalytic account of "metonymic causality"[15]. Miller's metonymic causality became, by way of some theoretical modifications, Althusser's structural causality (q.v. Althusser, 1993). It is clear that Althusser incorporates Miller's research on metonymic causality and uses this work to explain social effects which are not directly considered (i.e., absent) from Miller's writings. The most apparent distantiation Althusser takes from Miller's work is a much more critical, indeed at times antithetical, analysis of the "subject". While for Miller there is "causality in the structure insofar the subject is implicated in it", Althusser, in some cases, seeks to deny the very existence of the subject (cf. Althusser, 2003; Miller, 2012b).

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[15]Katja Kolšek maintains that the materialist dialectic is at its "core" a question regarding absent causality. In "The Repetition of the Void and the Materialist Dialectic" from *Filozofski vestnik* Kolšek writes: "The aim of this paper is to outline the core of the question of the continuation of the material dialectics...The core of this question leads us back to *the structure without a cause, or the so-called vanishing cause of the structure or the transformation of the structure as such.* The basic frame of this problem appears in the face of the events of May 1968 in France" (Kolšek, 2013: 115; emphasis added).

The logic of the signifier, and with it, the general theory of discourse exemplify the kinds of cognitive changes that occur between the oscillations of the plastic and the graphic that constitute "the inscription of experience" (q.v Table 6.1). In Miller's case there is the question of how the subject can adequately maintain a sense of unity throughout a lifetime of subjective inscription (i.e. the condition of suture or misrecognition) and in Althusser's case there is the question of coherence of discourse in relation to epistemological foundations (i.e. the discourse-object relation). Discourse and signification are traces of an absent cause: for Miller this absent cause is the psychoanalytic subject and for Althusser it is the effect of structural overdetermination (cf. Althusser, 1969; Miller, 2012b). Suture, in Miller's account, is the mechanism of unification that functions through the mis/recognition of the 'I' (q.v. 2.2). Similarly, in Althusser's account, ideology functions through mechanisms of mis/recognition based upon indices of apparent, but in fact imaginary, adequation between a particular discourse and what it is intended to explain and/or name (q.v. Table 2.1).

The structuration of the brain, as a cognitive object of neuroscientific inquiry, undoubtedly has much to offer to the theoretical problematic of specular sociology and those involved with similar research questions at the intersection of virtuality and materialism[16]. Mapping the royal road to both conscious and unconscious theories of cognition neuroscience has the potential to apprehend the material effects of social relations upon cognitive processes (q.v. Table 4.1). "In neurobiological terms the trace is dynamic. It is subject to modifications... This is how, on the basis of experience, an internal reality is constituted. This reality may, of course, be conscious, underlying the memories we can recall to awareness, but it may also involve inscriptions from the domain of the unconscious" (Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007: xv). Guiglielmo Carchedi, in several of his works, delineates between 'mental' and 'material' modes of transformation within the capitalist mode of production (Carchedi, 1983, 1987, 1991, 2011). These transformations, when studied in relation to the findings of neuroscience highlight the political dimensions of neuroeconomics. When considering the political economy of plasticity it is evident that the absent causality of the subject is an effect of inscription. The subject, structurally misrecognized, temporarily "self-identifies" while proceeding to become the object of further and further inscriptions of experience, without, however cognizing the historical conditions of this neuronal "writing" (cf. Malabou, 2008; Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007). In Hegel's terms these

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[16]The term "structuration" is also used by Anthony Giddens in *The Constitution of Society*, see in particular, chapter one "Outline of the Theory of Structuration" (Giddens, 1984).

plastic moments could be simply explained away as the inner rationality of the Idea or Reason itself, however, Althusser, as well as Ansermet and Magisterri and Malabou, were unwilling to do so (q.v. Table 5.1). The material moments of plastic inscription, in accordance with Althusser's work on historical time, appear to exhibit a nonlinear structure. Cognitive "experience", in its historical determination, comprised, as Althusser states, of multiple histories (ideological, scientific, technological, aesthetic, political &c.) corresponds to the discontinous neuronal inscription of these plural histories, by means of plastic processes, and thus to their continuing temporal instantiation in the same form. It is then conceivable to move from these micro-structural instances of historical plasticity to social classes, and correspondingly, modes of production. "Social formations are 'structures of structures' integrated or articulated into a meaningful whole, yet each individual structure has a distinct existence in its own right. *Social structures within a social formation are inscribed within a hierarchy of determinations. . . yet each possesses its own relative autonomy*" (Resch, 1992: emphasis added). The multi-structural, multi-historical, multi-temporal "meaningful whole" that Robert Paul Resch remarks upon in *Althusser and the Renewal of Marxist Social Theory* is an expression of Althusser's "uneven" social totality and the relative autonomy of these histories is directly applicable to the study of interpellative effects.

Instances of synaptogenesis as experience-dependent modifications of the neuronal network must take into account not only the conditions of human cognition — determined by differential histories — but also their interplay, transformation, continuity and relative autonomy — through neural plasticity. The experience-dependent modifications of synaptogenesis constitute, in Althusser's terms, a "process without a subject or goals" (cf. Milgram et al., 1987; Althusser, 1976). Synaptogenesis is both subject-less and goal-less insofar as their is not a unified subject 'behind' the experience-dependent modifications, rather, the subject (as the sum of experience) is discontinuously constituted *within* these moments of cognitive structuration. Experience-dependent modifications of the brain are the product of historical processes and not a spiritual manifestation of a divine Idea (q.v. Table 5.1). The sociological conditions of synaptogenesis are not *prescribed* by fiat but inscribed by the plurality of social practices of a historically specific mode of production. This inscription of experience, to follow Derrida's work, is the inscription of non-identity as différance. Différance is an a-signifying signifier that defers presence. The absolute historical present is forever being deferred by the a-signifying force of non-identity. Presence, for Derrida, is thus infinitely deferred by traces of différance. In *Positions* Derrida declares: "What defers presence . . . is the very basis on which presence is announced or desired in what it represents it, its sign, its trace. . . " (Derrida, 1981: 8). Generalized

writing, including the inscription of experience, 'represents' the non-identity of symbolic traces wherein the effects of différance are registered as kind of a-signifying economy: "there is no economy without différance" (ibid.: 8-9).

The metonymy of the capitalist economy (e.g: "free enterprise") is founded upon relations of absent causality, such as the invisible times of social structuration, that are experience-dependent processes without a subject. Developmental, anatomical, and physiological plasticity are the neural preconditions for the différance of suture (cf. Miller, 2012b; Milgram et al., 1987; Derrida, 1981). These plastic deferrals constitute the inscription of the trace as the contingent foundation of generalized writing. Every subject, according to Derrida, is deferred by the différance of the symbolic order. "Nothing — no present and in-*different* being — thus precedes *différance* and spacing. There is no subject who is agent, author, and master of *différance*. . . Subjectivity — like objectivity — is an effect of différance, an effect *inscribed* in a system of *différance*" (Derrida, 1981: 28; emphasis added). Differance defers the presence of generalized writing by articulating the aporetic conditions of prescriptive representation: "which holds that an element functions and signifies, takes on or conveys meaning, only by referring to another past or future element in an economy of traces" (ibid.: 29). Derrida calls this the "economic aspect of différance": "[i]t confirms that the subject. . . depends upon the system of differences and the movement of différance, that the subject is not present, nor above all to itself before différance, that the subject is constituted only in being divided from itself, in becoming space, in temporizing, in deferral' (ibid.: 29).

The relation, then, of the graphic to the plastic, or the symbolic order to the inscription of experience, occurs within a matrix of transcription (cf. Ansermet and Magistretti, 2007; Malabou, 2010). The absent causality of experience-dependent modifications of synaptogenesis is, for this reason, determined by the conceptual limits of a-signifying structures (cf. Derrida, 1981; Milgram et al., 1987). This logic of supplementarity outlines the virtualization of non-linear, neuronal transcription in terms of the movement of différance with these inscribed traces perpetually deferring self-identification. Cremonini's visual composition in *Maternitá* [English trans. *Maternity*] represents the plastic art of sculpture as a work-in-progress that puts the experience of subjectivity in perspective by deferring its finality (Fig. 6.1). The birth of the subject's form is contingent upon the form that it is yet to take (i.e. its plasticity): the plasticity of this body is displayed graphically as a number of traces carved into the work. *Maternitá* is an image of plasticity – moreover, the body of the scupltural form defers the discernible identity of the subject — Cremonini thus portrays, formally, the différance of plasticity by painting a form that is not prescribed.

Part III:
Empirical

For isn't the involvement of concepts in judgment precisely what we mean when we use the word *empirical?*
GASTON BACHELARD

7

Transcendental Empiricism

Figure 7.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Le luminaire* 1965

7.1 Dogmatic Empiricism

Althusser takes issue with the discourse of "empiricism" because he finds
it to be conceptually inadequate in epistemological terms (q.v. Althusser,
2003, 1996, 1970, 1990, 1969). In *The Humanist Controversy* he writes:
"[e]mpiricism thinks that knowledge is an act of vision [*une vue*]: it is incapable
of explaining the appearance of new objects in the field of 'the seen'...It
does not 'see' that the seeing [*la vue*] of what one sees in science depends
on the apparatus of theoretical vision" (Althusser, 2003: 276). In a passage
from "The Historical Task of Marxist Philosophy" Althusser suggests that
"[e]mpiricism, as a theory of knowledge, neglects or underestimates the role of
the properly theoretical elements that come into play in all knowledge, even
'empirical' knowledge. Empiricism does not take into account the specificity
and nature of the practice that produces knowledge — that is to say, theoretical
practice" (ibid.: 185) (q.v. Table 3.1). The conceptual failings of empiricist
philosophy pertain directly to the failings of bourgeois ideology insofar as the
"vision" of empiricism is limited to the "everyday obviousness" of capitalist
social relations (cf. Althusser, 1970; Pêcheux, 1982). If the general tenet of
empiricism is that all knowledge is derived from experience[1] this position must
explicate the theoretical means by which experience is determined (q.v. §3.1).
As Althusser declares in *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the
Scientists*: "[e]mpirical concepts are not pure givens...They are themselves
the result of a whole process of knowledge...An investigation or an observation
is in fact never passive: it is possible only under the direction and control of
theoretical concepts in it — in its rules of observation, selection, classification,
in the technical setting that constitutes the field of observation or experiment"
(Althusser, 1990: 48).

Empiricism constitutes a "what you see is *only* what you get" theory of
knowledge that is common to the ideological historiography which Althusser
finds to be so unequivocally unscientific: "we must...purify our concept of the
theory of history, and purify it radically, since we know that this 'empirical
history' is merely the bare face of the empiricist ideology of history" (Althusser,
1970: 105). Althusser maintains in *Reading Capital* that the empiricist
problematic is notionally hegemonic in the discipline of history: "the empiricist
ideology...with a few exceptions, overwhelmingly dominates every variety of
history (whether in the wide sense or specialized economic, social or political

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[1]According to Ian Buchanan's *A Dictionary of Critical Theory* empiricism denotes: "[a]
mode of philosophical reasoning which holds that the only reliable source of knowledge
is experience (i.e. that which can be observed). It denies that there is any knowledge
outside the realm of the observable. The main empiricist philosophers are David Hume,
John Locke, and John Stuart Mill" (Buchanan, 2016).

history, the history of art, literature, philosophy, the sciences, etc.).” (ibid.: 110). In a summary fashion he states: “history lives in the illusion that it can do without theory in the strong sense... What history lacks is a conscious and courageous confrontation of one of the essential problems of any science whatsoever: the problem and constitution of its theory... And... the place left empty by scientific theory has been occupied by an ideological theory” (ibid.: 109) (q.v. Table 3.1 & Table 3.2). Althusser applies the same rationale to the domain of history as he does to that of political economy. Althusser's critical “vision” of empiricism encompasses not only the theoretical deconstruction of political economy but also, *necessarily*, the theoretical deconstruction (*décalage*) of ideological historiography[2]. “The only difference that can be established between the theory of political economy... and the theory of history as a science, lies in the fact that the theory of political economy only considers one relatively autonomous component of the social totality, whereas the theory of history... takes the complex totality as such for its object” (ibid.). If Marx's theoretical separation (i.e. break) from his predecessors (e.g. Adam Smith and David Ricardo) — by the redefinition of surplus value — requires a moment of dècalage regarding the everyday obviousness of the valorization process in capitalism, the same must be said for a scientific theory of history, with historical “experience” becoming an object of scientific analysis not an metaphysical starting-point (Althusser, 1970) (q.v. Table 2.3).

The interpellative correlate of the empiricist vision is *personal identity* and with it “consciousness” (cf. Balibar, 2013; Althusser, 1971a). Althusser finds both consciousness and personal identity to be critically misunderstood phenomena (q.v. Althusser, 1971a). In the writings of the British empiricist John Locke an inextricable union is forged between empiricism, personal identity and consciousness. Balibar discusses this philosophical event in his studies of Locke's work entitled *Identity and Difference: John Locke and the Invention of Consciousness* (2013). Locke's empiricism provides a convenient unification of the “facts” of the world and the “facts” of consciousness[3].

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[2]Marx states in *The Poverty of Philosophy*: “When economists say that the present-day relations — the relations of bourgeois production — are natural, they imply that these are the relations in which wealth is created and productive forces developed in conformity with the laws of nature. *These relations therefore are themselves natural laws independent of the influence of time.* They are eternal laws which must always govern society. *Thus there has been history, but there is no longer any*” (Marx, 1975: 174; emphasis added)

[3]According to William Uzgalis: “Locke's monumental *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) is one of the first great defenses of modern empiricism and concerns itself with determining the limits of human understanding in respect to a wide spectrum of topics. *It thus tells us in some detail what one can legitimately claim to know and what one cannot*” (Uzgalis, 2019: emphasis added).

This all-too-convenient unity is none other than what that receives the name "bourgeois" ideology (Pêcheux, 1982; Althusser, 1990). Althusser maintains that interpellation must somehow "reflect" this kind of thinking to be efficacious, i.e, the ideological subject must believe that the facts of the world and the facts of consciousness correspond for social relations to be "self-evident" (cf. Pêcheux, 1982; Althusser, 1971a; Balibar, 2013). Should the facts of the world and the facts of consciousness not coincide the subject is labelled "bad", defective, and the ideological or repressive state apparatuses must intervene to restore "correct" thinking, that is, correct "consciousness" (q.v. Althusser, 1971a). Balibar contends that Locke's work in Book II of *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, particularly the Chapter XXVII 'Of Identity and Diversity' (1694) "would become the acknowledged or unacknowledged reference for all the great 'theories of knowledge' and 'sciences of of the experience of consciousness' in Western philosophy" from Leibniz through to Condillac, Kant, Hegel, Bergson, and Husserl (Balibar, 2013: 1). In 'Locke's Treatise on Identity', the first chapter of *Identity and Difference: John Locke and the Invention of Consciousness*, Balibar states that: "[b]y making consciousness the criteria of personal identity, Locke was led, in effect, to revolutionize the very conception of subjectivity. . . This theoretical revolution which still governs us, up to and including our critiques of psychologism, the primacy of consciousness and the imperialism of the subject — is the decisive moment of *the invention of consciousness* as a philosophical concept, with Locke himself as the primary protagonist" (ibid). This moment was a decisive one in the history of philosophy, according to Balibar, because Locke's revolutionary "consciousness" established a new philosophical problematic: "this revolution crystallizes the different implications of the invention (the possibility of an interior experience with direct access to 'mental reality', the recasting of the classical conception of time and of the relation between knowledge and responsibility)", moreover, this new Lockean theory of knowledge, marks "the first philosophical modernity", and subsequently induced the "conditions for the opening of a second modernity" beginning with the work of Hume, Kant, and Hegel (ibid.: 2).

Balibar discusses how in Locke's treatise the question of consciousness becomes a question of ownership: "[t]hat is, 'consciousness' is the perception of what passes in a man's mind; but also, it is the fact of a man's perceiving what passes or happens in his own (*in a mind that is his, that properly belongs to him, that is his property*)" (ibid.: 9; emphasis added). The invention of consciousness "concerns the entire field of theology, of politics, of moral and philosophical thought, as well as literature'. . . The first episode. . . is quite visible in Locke's personalization of consciousness and and his identification of its continuity with the autonomy of the 'self' " (ibid.: 17) Balibar observes

that "[t]he definition of a criterion for *personal identity...* is nothing other than consciousness itself" (ibid.: 43). Self-consciousness "is essentially linked to the idea that the continuity of consciousness is the criterion of personal identity, for which Locke invents or systematizes the nominal expression 'the Self' (ibid.: 56)[4]. "The Lockean subject", Balibar writes, "to which the functions of intellectual vigilance as well as as those responsibility and of 'property in oneself' will be attached, is thus essentially a self-consciousness, or more precisely a consciousness of 'the Self' " (ibid.: 56). Personal identity and "the self" are , in effect, "the continuity of consciousness" in time (ibid.: 57).

Table 7.1: Locke's Invention

Self-Consciousness	Property of Self
Identity as Appropriation	Continuity of Consciousness

The interpellated subject, in Lockean terms, "owns" its consciousness insofar as the individual is made a subject by the personal identity of "self-consciousness". Taking possession of "oneself" in this way is an act of mis/recognition regarding the conditions that produce an experience of subjectivity (q.v. Table 1.2). To resist this interpellative effect necessitates, according to Althusser, the incursion of state apparatuses to restore the subject to its self and position within the relations of production (Althusser, 1971a). Ownership and subjectivity are "closely linked" Balibar declares in his glossary of Lockean concepts. "As in the case of SELF. . . Locke puts into play the totality of semantic and syntactical resources that the English word *own* offered him, by binding together — not only at the level of theory, but also at the level of the expression and the utterance itself — the different aspects of a theory of *identity* as *appropriation*" (ibid.: 98). State apparatuses, as interpellative agencies, appropriate identity for the valorization of capitalist social relations, to do this a subject must appropriate *its own* identity appropriately. "The uses of own and to own are thus situated at the centre of a constellation that also includes the terms *belonging, imputation, concern, recognition* and *recollection*" (ibid.: 98). The empirical subject cannot,

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[4]Locke's treatise *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) was published on the eve of the Enlightenment. The beginning of this "Age of Reason", according to Foucault in *Madness and Civilization*, transformed the preceding meaning of madness into one that defined it as a deficit of "consciousness". "The asylum no longer punished the madman's guilt...it did more, it organized that guilt; it organized it for the madman as a *consciousness of himself*, and as a non-reciprocal relation to the keeper; it organized it for the man of reason as an awareness of the Other, a therapeutic intervention in the madman's existence (Foucault, 1988: 247; emphasis added).

therefore, be separated either from its personal identity — as a condition of appropriation — or the ends for which such appropriation exists. "Person, as I take it, is the name for this self. . . It is a forensick term appropriating actions and their merit" (Locke, 1689: 246). As a "forensick" term "person" allows actions to be appropriated and by means of the identity of consciousness. "This personality extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness, whereby it becomes concerned and accountable, owns and imputes to itself past actions" (ibid: 246). It is important to note the juridical relationship between the continuity of consciousness and criminality: a "forensick" unit, the self, as person, can be appropriated as evidence and made accountable to 'own' past actions[5]. Althusser explains that the category of the subject is fundamental to the functioning of legal ideology — the subject as a "person" — is appropriated by legal ideology to become an object of interpellation where the self is made to become "conscious" of its actions and, if necessary, be punished (or "corrected") accordingly[6]. The risk of empiricism, for Althusser, is to think that the "consciousness" of a person, self, or subject is capable of directly "reflecting" reality without the need of theoretical practice to expand the vision of historical experience .

7.2   Empiricism according to Gilles Deleuze

Deleuze's empiricism is of an entirely different kind to that which Althusser opposes and Locke initiates (cf. Deleuze, 2001b; Althusser, 1970; Balibar, 2013). Deleuze thus gives a *new* sense to the concept of empiricism. His continuing interest regarding the empiricist problematic can be read in his early monograph *Empiricism and Subjectivity* (1952)[7] through to his final essay

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[5]The Oxford English Dictionary references John Locke's use of "Forensick" (1694) etymologically for the current definition of "forensic" (2018): "Pertaining to, connected with, or used in courts of law; suitable or analogous to pleadings in court"(OED Online, 2018d).

[6]Foucault's research in *Discipline and Punish* (*Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la prison*) considers this general issue in relation to the history of punishment in Western societies. "Punishment, then, will tend to become the most hidden part of the penal process...it leaves the domain of more or less everyday perception and enters that of abstract consciousness" (Foucault, 1995: 9). Surveillance of the human interior becomes a method used to enforce compliance with social norms. "On this reality-reference, various concepts have been constructed and domains of analysis carved out: psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness, etc... The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy..." (ibid.: 30).

[7]Originally published as *Empirisme et Subjectivité. Essai sur la Nature Humaine selon Hume* (1952) Presses Universitaires de France.

"Immanence: A Life" (1995)[8]. Dissatisifed with empiricism in its historical forms Deleuze uses the term "transcendental empiricism" to distinguish his particular statement of empiricist epistemology from those that preceded it. The "transcendental field" of Deleuze's new empiricism (from which the sense of transcendental empiricism is derived) "can be distinguished from experience in that it doesn't refer to an object or belong to a subject (empirical representation)" (Deleuze, 2001b: 25). In Deleuze's estimation "empirical experience" usually prescribes the correspondence between subject and object which qualifies an "empirical representation" (q.v. §7.1). The transcendental field, instead: "appears therefore as a pure stream of a-subjective consciousness, a pre-reflexive impersonal consciousness, a qualitative duration of consciousness without a self... *we will speak of a transcendental empiricism in contrast to everything that makes up the world of the subject and the object* (ibid: emphasis added).

Table 7.2: Empirical Variation

Prescriptive Empiricism	Identity of Subject and Object
Transcendental Empiricism	Non-Identity of Subject and Object

It is evident Deleuze detects a prescriptive element in the empirical world of subject and object with its "experiences" of "empirical representation" (Deleuze, 2001b). The subject-object relation is not one of timeless uniformity because, according to Deleuze, it is constantly being eluded by impersonal "transcendents" those a-subjective instances which exceed present empirical reality (ibid.: 26). Transcendents are the virtual indices that are in excess of empirical facts and thus, non-definitively, exceed any empirical moment. "That is why the transcendental field cannot be defined by the consciousness that is coextensive with it" (ibid.). The aleatory moments of the virtual become actualized insofar as they are transcendentally determined (q.v. §5.3). "What we call virtual is not something that lacks reality but something that is engaged in a process of actualization following the plane that gives it its particular reality" (ibid.: 31). Research on transcendental empiricism is yet to be exhaustively circumscribed because it is always beginning anew in relation to the conditions of virtual materialism: "[t]here is a big difference between the virtuals that define the immanence of the transcendental field and the possible forms that actualize them and transform them into something transcendent" (ibid.: 32).

The a-subjective activity of analysing the aleatory conditions of transcendental empiricism has been furthered by the work of Jean-Clet Martin in

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[8] "L'Immanence: Une Vie" was published by the journal *Philosophie* in 1995.

Variations: The Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze (2010). Martin states: "*without being inscribed in the measured identity of subject and object*...Deleuze's transcendental empiricism traces its own differentiated topological course, and liberates part of the event that is irreducible to empirical forms, thereby marking the event's real but nevertheless non-actual conditions" (Martin, 2010: 21; emphasis added). Martin is here making special mention of the division between subject and object that is required to instantiate an *event*. In *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze discusses the "double structure" of events as a discontinuity of sense (Deleuze, 2004b: 172). "With every event, there is indeed the present moment of its actualization, the moment in which the event is embodied in a state of affairs, an individual, or a person...But on the other hand there is the future and the past of the event in itself, side-stepping each present, being free of the limitations of a state of affairs, impersonal and pre-individual" (ibid.). There is an uncertain irregularity that engenders events in their determinate singularity. Transcendental empiricism insofar as it possesses a double structure that supersedes moments of actual identity and transcendental non-identity is a particular example of structural overdetermination. A key conceptual index of this overdetermination is "heterogenesis": the perpetual heterogeneity of structural differentiation (cf. Deleuze, 2010; Deleuze and Guattari, 1994; Guattari, 1995). "The transcendental field should not be traced over the empirical...it must be explored for its own sake, and therefore experimented with (but in a particular way). This type of experiment furthers the discovery of more multiplicities" (Deleuze, 2010: viii). Deleuze, therefore, looks to the elements of an event (i.e. its sense) which are non-actual and hence productive of aleatory, not empirical, multiplicities to the articulate the conditions of transcendental empiricism.

Deleuze's definition of structure in *The Logic of Sense* draws upon the work of Lévi-Strauss from his *Introduction to Marcel Mauss*[9] whereby any structure must admit of seriality (e.g: juridical, economic, aesthetic, religious &c.) (cf. Lévi-Strauss, 1987; Deleuze, 2004b). A structure, Deleuze suggests, following Lévi-Strauss, is comprised of two or more series and it is the relations between — different — series that constitute a given structure. According to Deleuze "a single series never suffices to form a structure" (Deleuze, 2004b: 58). The minimal conditions of a structure are threefold:

1. "There must be at least two heterogeneous series";

2. "Each series is constituted by terms which exist only through the relations they maintain with one another";

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[9]Wendy James notes in *Marcel Mauss: A Centenary Tribute*, how Mauss was "nephew, pupil, and collaborator to Durkheim, and later a major influence on Lévi-Strauss" (James, 1998: 7).

3. "The two heterogeneous series converge toward a paradoxical element, which is their 'differentiator' " (Deleuze, 2004b: 60).

It is the convergence towards displacement by differentiation that is the locus of structure and it is these points of differentiation which make a structure *visible*. For example the structure of class is comprised of multiple elements that repeatedly oscillate, crystallize, and disintegrate through the formation of value. Value is the differentiator of class relations within the capitalist mode of production, however, value is transcendent to these relations because its valorization is relative to the productivity of labour-power[10]. In this sense value is virtual and not actual as any absolute measure is curtailed by relative forms and the virtuality of the valorization process is strictly a-subjective due to the discontinuity between subject and object within the transcendental field of valorization. Thus identity is appropriated by actual interpellative mechanisms to contain the transcendent structure of virtual relations in order by maintaining the non-actual parallels of the class structure (q.v. §1.2). Yet, as Deleuze notes, the displacement of identity is an effect of the heterogeneity of the structure of transcendental empiricism.

The question of "experience" that is given so little attention in dogmatic forms of empiricism, according to Althusser, is critically revised by Deleuze, in the form of *transcendental* empiricism, to examine the matrices of virtual and actual experience as structural relations (cf. Althusser, 1990; Deleuze, 2001b). Class relations insofar as they exist within a transcendental field of experience interpellate virtuality and actuality as both a-subjective and subjective conditions of material existence. Transcendental empiricism is then capable of studying the a-signifying structures of experience that are beyond the current "empirical" vision and appear as epistemologically paradoxical (cf. Deleuze, 2004b, 2001b). It is these paradoxes of empirical genesis that adduce the heterogeneity of structural causality. Structural causality is empirically transcendent to the elements of a given structure; for this reason non-empirical structuration virtualises the actual through an index of effectivity found in the relative autonomy of the transcendental field. This index of effectivity and its transcendent indices are a-signifying in their functioning with regard to the dogmatic — empirical — imperialism of the subject with its coefficient appropriation of identity (cf. Balibar, 2013; Deleuze, 2001b). For Althusser an epistemological break marks an empirical break with an object that was formerly a-signifying and effectively virtualizes the actuality of science as a discontinuous process of development.

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[10]In *Capital* volume one Marx details the generation of *relative* surplus value. See in particular: "The Concept of Relative Surplus Value" and "Changes of Magnitude in the Price of Labour-Power and in Surplus-Value" (Marx, 1976).

Theoretical practice is the virtualisation of a discourse-object unity in terms of its problematic (q.v. Table 3.1). Actual, existing, theoretical practice is virtualised by expanding the depth of epistemic vision as a relation that delineates the empirical genesis of the "real object" and the "thought object" (Althusser, 1969). The structure, then, of theoretical practice determines the generation of these objects as heterogeneous series, however, as Deleuze suggests, in *The Logic of Sense*, each element of a given series is constituted through the relations they maintain with the others (Deleuze, 2004b). The imbrication of heterogeneous series, as the object of virtual materialism, demarcates the relations of coexistence for heterogenesis. To these virtual structures are ascribed effects of misrecognition as empirical events, and for Althusser, the function of theoretical practice is to consider the empirical genesis of historical forms of knowledge. Following this, and using ideological conditions as raw material, the process of theoretical practice continues transforming the three generalities of theoretical production as instances of virtual co-existence (q.v. Table 3.2). These a-subjective modes of virtual co-existence form the transcendent moments of theoretical practice and their subsequently contingent events of serialized heterogenesis. Heterogenesis, in this way, functions as a modality of différance and defers the absolute empirical present by means of theoretical practice and this includes the virtual practice of transcendental empiricism (cf. Derrida, 1981; Deleuze, 2001b).

Transcendental empiricism does not, for Deleuze, hypostatize the identity of subject and object, on the contrary, it actualizes the virtual a-subjectivity of multi-serial, overdetermined, temporality (cf. Althusser, 1970; Deleuze, 2001b). The discontinuity of relatively autonomous histories transcends any discursive unity of subject and object due to the heterogeneity of structural series. Virtual history — overdetermining the possible hypostatization of empirical history — eclipses extant scientificity and these effects of trans-historical individuation are not *a priori* states of consciousness but transitive moments of a-subjective theoretical practice. This activity of theoretical production is, in Althusser's terms, a process without a subject wherein any relation of subjectivity is excluded from the object of historical knowledge (cf. Althusser, 1976, 2003).

Transcendental empiricism thus develops unevenly, and necessarily so, in relation to the differential time sequences of theoretical practice (q.v. Table 3.1). The conjuncture of "politics" and the 'political", to use Poulantzas' distinction, within a range of effectivity, acts upon the empirical conditions of a dispositif, determining the "conditions of visibility" and "curves of enunciation" of social apparatuses: this range of effectivity also includes the *theoretical* conjuncture where paradoxes of structure take form as enunciative modalities (q.v. Table 4.3) . In *Le luminaire* [English trans. *The lighting*

unit] Cremonini paints a perspective of illuminated vision (Fig. 7.1). The field of visibility within the space of the canvas is marked by the effects of the lighting unit — perspective is depicted in relation to illumination — i.e., the three dimensions of the painting, are made visible by the lighting unit insofar as this apparatus is apprehended as a technical device (q.v. Table 4.3). Transcendental empiricism, similarly, represents the visibility of changing perspectives by the a-subjective activity of theoretical practice.

7.3   The Empty Square (Object=x)

"Empty square" is the term Deleuze uses to signify the paradoxical element of structure: "above all, we can conclude that there is no structure without the empty square" (Deleuze, 2004b: 61)[11]. An empty square is a threshold of heterogeneity where a given series of structure meets its limit (psychical, economic, technical, ideological, political &c.). Between series there must be a-subjective conditions to realise both the excess and lack of seriality. The empty square is a "differentiator" that "has the function of articulating... series to one another, of reflecting them in one another, of making them communicate, coexist, and be ramified" (ibid.: 61). This "differentiator" that functions as a heterogeneous space within structure is also a mechanism key to the determination of sense: for this reason the empty square is an object of transcendental empiricism (q.v. §7.2). "Distributing the differences through the entire structure, making the differential relations vary with its displacements, the object $= x$ constitutes the differenciating element of difference itself" (ibid.: 186). Sense, as Deleuze notes, is the "frontier" or "cutting edge" of thought but can only act in this way by means of differentiation (ibid.: 35). "When I designate something, I always suppose that the sense is understood, that it is already there" (ibid.: 35). The displacement that is effected through structural heterogeneity (i.e., sense genesis) — registers the movement — "*perpetuum mobile*" — of sense and series[12].

Object $= x$ is supernumerary: "a place without without an occupant and a occupant without a place" (ibid.: 78). Deleuze suggests that "[t]oday's task is to make the empty square circulate and to make the pre-individual

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[11]Alternatively Deleuze refers the "empty square" as: the great mobile element; the riddle object; and object $= x$ (Deleuze, 2004a).

[12]In *Matter and Memory* Henri Bergson studies sense perception as a relation between virtual and actual states of consciousness (Bergson, 1929). Deleuze details various aspects of virtual and actual "planes of consciousness" to explain the structure of transcendental empiricism. It is evident that Deleuze is indebted to Bergson's problematic (cf. Deleuze, 2001b; Pearson, 2005).

and nonpersonal speak — in short, to produce sense" (ibid.: 84). Being both pre-individual and nonpersonal the empty square conforms to neither subjective nor objective determination and therefore does not exist actually but virtually. Object $= x$ is only ever a virtual object rather than an actual one: the moment it is actualised it ceases to be virtual. This "empty square" is always extrinsic to the actual insofar as it acts virtually, however, the actual is dependent upon the virtual given the structure of seriality (cf. Deleuze, 2004b, 2002)[13] .

Instances of serialization occur between the actual and the virtual concomitantly due to the fact that neither can realise an absolutely independent serial structure. As a synthesis of the heterogeneous the empty square is the differentiating element of actual and virtual series. Deleuze notes "the serial form is necessarily realised in the simultaneity of at least two series. . . The serial form is thus essentially multi-serial" (ibid.: 44). To "make the empty square circulate" is to reveal the points of a structure that are liminal to an actual state of affairs, generally speaking, such inquiry is the aim of transcendental empiricism. The modes of differentiation that are manifested as serial structures are the result of virtual effects and it is these effects which serve as the non-actual objects to be studied by means of transcendental empiricism. Deleuze insists in "The Actual and the Virtual" from the collection *Dialogues II* that "[p]urely actual objects do not exist" (Deleuze, 2002: 148). This is because the actual is, for Deleuze, discontinuously superseded by the virtual — subject to historical actualisation. The transcendental empiricist does not go about looking for actual objects alone (for they do not exist); the transcendental empiricist must always study the actual as a historical correlate of the virtual. There is a disjunctive constancy between the actual and the virtual: "[t]he actual and the virtual coexist, and enter into a tight circuit which we are continually retracing from one to the other." (ibid.: 150).

To articulate the actual-virtual relation between sense and series Deleuze outlines the functioning of the empty square as a condition of existence for structure. "The structural orders – linguistic, familial, economic, sexual, etc. – are characterized by. . . the variety of their differential relations. . . and finally by the nature of the object $= x$ that presides over their functioning" (Deleuze, 2004a: 188). As each series of structure pertains to individuated orders so the attributes of the virtual and the actual co-determine such individuation. Furthermore Deleuze states "[b]etween structures, causality can only be a

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[13]Deleuze maintains, in "How Do We Recognize Structuralism?" that games function using displaced structures in the form of rules to give players their positions. "Games need the empty square, without which nothing would move forward or function" (Deleuze, 2004a: 186). Deleuze also addresses the structural functions of games in *The Logic of Sense*: "Tenth Series of the Ideal Game" (Deleuze, 2004b).

type of structural causality" (ibid.) (q.v. §4.1). The possibility of dislocation within a given structure is, in Deleuze's account, driven by displacement: "In each structural order...the object $= x$ is not at all something at all unknowable, something purely undetermined; it is perfectly determinable, including within its displacements and by the mode of displacement that characterizes it (ibid.)

The epistemological features of structural causality vary from domain to domain because "[e]very structure is a multiplicity of virtual coexistence" (ibid.: 179). Thus, Deleuze notes,"[t]o discern the structure of a domain is to determine an entire virtuality of coexistence which pre-exists the beings, objects and works of this domain" (ibid.). The process of actual individuation, as derived from virtual multiplicities, is realised insofar as it is "incarnated" as structure. Actual individuation is incarnated structure nothwithstanding the conceptual limits Deleuze places upon actual objects. "Every structure is an infrastructure, a micro-structure. In a certain way, they are not actual. What is actual is that in which the structure is incarnated or rather what the constitutes when it is incarnated" (ibid.: 178). There can never be absolute actualization of any structure due to the functioning of the virtual and the dècalage (dislocation) it brings. The dislocation brought about by the empty place or "riddle" element always serves to undermine the possibility of a total structure (Deleuze, 2004a). Žižek contends, in *Organs Without Bodies: On Deleuze and Consequences* that "[t]he genius of Deleuze resides in his notion of 'transcendental empiricism'...it is the infinite potential of virtualities out of which reality is actualized" (Žižek, 2004: 3).

Table 7.3: Epistemic Virtuality

Object $= x$	A-subjective element
Differentiator	Heterogenesis

Claude Lévi-Strauss, in *Structural Anthropology*, considers how to "model" structure. "The question then becomes that of ascertaining what kind of model deserves the name "structure". This is not an anthropological question, but one which belongs to the methodology of science in general" (Lévi-Strauss, 1963: 279). Methodologically Lévi-Strauss models structure in accordance with four conditions:

1. "the structure exhibits the characteristics of a system. It is made up of several elements, none of which can undergo a change without effecting changes in all the other elements";

2. "for any given model there should be a possibility of ordering a series of transformations resulting in a group of models of the same type";

3. "the above properties make it possible to predict how the model will react if one or more of its elements are submitted to certain modifications";

4. "'the model should be constituted so as to make immediately intelligible all the observed facts"; (Lévi-Strauss, 1963: 279-280).

The first condition Lévi-Strauss details represents the virtual co-existence of structural elements in terms the systemic change actually modelled (1). The "possibility" of modelling such change depends on the empirical constancy of serial elements (2); this constancy allows variation to be predicted as a result of systemic virtualisation for each actual series (3). Thus the facts observed are capable making of systemic differentiation intelligible by virtue of the simultaneity of series insofar as "none. . . can undergo a change without effecting changes in all the other elements" (4).

Henry Veltmeyer in "Towards an Assessment of the Structuralist Interrogation of Marx: Claude Lévi-Strauss and Louis Althusser" from *Science & Society* notes that "Lévi-Strauss, like Althusser, formulates the concept of society as a structured whole of different structural levels. . . Societies differ from each other in time because *each actualizes in different form* the possible combinations of 'invariants' in every social system" (Veltmeyer, 1974: 414-415; emphasis added). This concurs with Deleuze's remarks in "How Do We Recognise Structuralism?": "above all, the relations of production are determined as differential relations...And if it is obvious that concrete men come to occupy the places and carry forth the elements of the structure, this happens by fulfilling the role that the structural place assigns to them... and by serving as supports for structural relations" (Deleuze, 2004a: 178). Furthermore — Althusser's comments to Deleuze, regarding object $= x$, indicate the possibility of modelling the structure of value virtually (q.v. §5.4)[14]. Given the differentiation that obtains to use-value and exchange-value in terms of the general equivalent, i.e., money, actual use-value is virtualised as exchange-value by the functions of the empty square (i.e. structural displacement) (cf. Deleuze, 2004a; Marx, 1976) . As Deleuze suggests the structural order economic relations is dependent upon the displacement of object $= x$ and the systematicity of this structure, to follow Lévi-Strauss, "is made up of several elements, none of which can undergo a change without effecting changes in all the other elements"(Lévi-Strauss, 1963). Thus any valorization of actual use-value will result in a corresponding change in exchange-value by virtue

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[14]According to Stolze in "Deleuze and Althusser: Flirting with Structuralism" from *Rethinking Marxism*: "Moving on to the criterion of the 'empty case' or 'object$=x$' I would highlight... Deleuze's now explicit identification of 'value' as Marxism's paradoxical object which is always 'displaced in relation to itself' " (Stolze, 1998: 60).

of the general equivalent. Such transformations of use and exchange, being transformations between actuality and virtuality are serialized and "make it possible to predict how the model will react if one or more of its elements are submitted to certain modifications" (Lévi-Strauss, 1963). The non-personal, a-subjective, axiological elements of this process are present within labour processes that are transcendent to any actual instance of valorization, that is, the actuality of use-value is dependent upon the virtuality of exchange-value. It is only because object $=x$ (value) circulates that the use-exchange relation can be sustained by the general equivalent (i.e., money). For an event to be modelled within the transcendental field the intelligibility of its theoretical conditions must not be based upon the "empirical" identity of subject and object (cf. Balibar, 2013; Lévi-Strauss, 1963; Deleuze, 2001b; Althusser, 1970). Theoretically a model of the transcendental field requires engagement with the problematic of structural causality as a series of relations that are external to both identity as appropriation and the continuity of consciousness (q.v. §7.1 & §4.1).

The discontinuous a-subjective elements of social structures are neither predicates of "self-consciousness" nor a "property of self" (cf. Balibar, 2013; Deleuze, 2004a). With reference to the conditions of interpellation object$=x$ is then strictly extra-interpellative for the very reason that the a-subjective processes of transcendental experience do not actualize but virtualize the "experience" of a subject. Economic, political, and ideological structures are differentiated in terms of the circulation of object $=x$ (value)[15].The value-form articulates the movement of structural causality as that of: "the very particular causality of a structure upon its elements, or of a structure upon another structure, or of the structure of the whole upon its structural levels" (Althusser, 2003: 201). Given this systematicity interpellative mechanisms are intelligible on the basis of social differentiation insofar as this process functions virtually.

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[15]Deleuze states "Let us again consider the analyses of Althusser and his collaborators: on the one hand they show in the economic order how the adventures of the empty square (Value as object $= x$) are marked by the goods, money, the fetish, capital, etc., that characterize the capitalist structure. On the other hand, they show how contradictions are thus born in the structure... it cannot be said that the contradiction is apparent, but rather that it is derived: it derives from the empty place and from its becoming in the structure...It is always a function of the empty square that the differential relations are open to new values or variations, and the singularities capable of new distributions, constitutive of another structure" (Deleuze, 2004a: 190-191).

7.4   An A-Subjective Position

Deleuze's "transcendental field" is specifically applicable to socio-historical phenomena due to the ever-changing nature of cultural conditions and the extent to which these conditions are represented by changes in sense (e.g.: modes of valorization) and series (e.g.: class relations) (cf. Deleuze, 2004a, 2001b; Althusser, 1970; Godelier, 1977). Deleuze, once more drawing on the work of Lèvi-Strauss, notes that structure is *positional*. For this reason the elements of a given domain (economic, linguistic, aesthetic &c.) are perpetually engendering, in differentiated form, new forms of sense (cf. Deleuze, 2004a; Dejanovic, 2014). "The elements of a structure have neither extrinsic designation, nor intrinsic signification. . . they have nothing other than a sense [sens = meaning and direction]: a sense which is necessarily and uniquely 'positional' (Deleuze, 2004a: 173). Due to the way sense is distributed within structure and the frequent, actual changes it undergoes, Deleuze's transcendental empiricism offers a novel way to model social research (q.v. §7.2). For example, in regard to interpellation, Althusser is highly critical of the subject as a quasi-empirical concept[16]. In part this is due to the sense of subjectivity inherited from Hegel's philosophy of History (q.v. Table 5.1).

Changes in sense are arrived at, Deleuze suggests, through the "empty square" of structural displacement, which functions by means of virtual differentiation. "There is no total language...There is no total society, but each social form embodies certain elements, relationships, and production values (for example "capitalism"). We must therefore distinguish between the total structure of a domain as an ensemble of virtual coexistence, and the sub-structures that correspond to diverse actualizations in the domain" (Deleuze, 2004a: 179). Daniel W. Smith explains in "The Conditions of the New" from *Deleuze Studies* (2007) that "Deleuze frequently said that the question of the conditions for the production of novelty. . . was one of the fundamental questions of contemporary thought" (Smith, 2007: 1). Transcendental empiricism can thus articulate new conditions for actualising social phenomena (q.v. §7.2). To represent the transcendental field, socially, is to define virtual-actual series as these bear upon the production of the "society-effect" (i.e., the meaning and direction of sociality) (cf. Althusser, 1970; Deleuze, 2004a). "The virtual", Smith suggests, is in an ongoing "process of actualization" in terms of "difference (the differential relation) or divergence (divergent series) — in other words, creation and novelty" (Smith,

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[16]Deleuze states: "And when Althusser speaks of economic structure, he specifies that the true 'subjects' there are not those who come to occupy the places, i.e., concrete individuals or real human beings... Rather these 'subjects' are above all the places in a topological and structural space defined by the relations of production" (Deleuze, 2004a: 174).

2007: 17).

Class is an a-subjective actuality without total, trans-historical, identity that can be elucidated with reference to Deleuze's transcendental field. While class structures possess relative autonomy they operate without absolute determination and are instead relational effects within a matrix of structural causality (q.v. Table 4.1)[17]. The virtual effects of actual social conditions are positional instances of structural displacement inscribed by conjunctural writing insofar as discourse is class-determined (q.v Table 4.2 & Table 6.1). Therefore the signification of class structures is an aporetic condition of uneven semantic dispersion and the interminable rewriting of philosophical texts that ideologically structure social practice (q.v. §3.3). The uneven discursive effects of conjunctural writing on class structuration are the object of interpellative subjection-qualification (cf. Balibar, 1995; Therborn, 1978). Yet the subjection-qualifications of interpellation are actually a-subjective and virtually transcendent to the historiality of social formations (q.v. Table 9.2). This historiality of iteration exists as a structure of mis/recognition by which questions concerning the social status (i.e., class position) of a subject are answered in advance: who one is, what is possible, and what is right, are performatively re-iterated by means of various mechanisms of textuality securing the reproduction of the relations of production (cf. Therborn, 1978; Rheinberger, 2009; Althusser, 1971a). Althusser's general theory of discourse seeks to discover how subjective discourses — such as ideological and aesthetic discourse — can be demarcated in relation to the a-subjective discourse of science (q.v. Table 2.1). Transcendental empiricism, then, theoretically registers the virtual a-subjectivity of scientificity[18]. The "canonical structures" of meaning, subject and truth, are all ideologically legitimated and therefore, can be regarded as conceptual constraints within the general theory of discourse, similarly, these subjective constraints are antecedent to the empirical threshold of Deleuze's transcendental field (cf. Deleuze, 2001b;

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[17]For a materialist analysis of uneven class effects see Michel Pecheux's *Language, Semantics, and Ideology*, in particular, chapter 7 "On the Ideological Conditions of the Reproduction/Transformation of the Relations of Production": "To sum up: the material objectivity of the ideological instance is characterised by the structure of unevenness-subordination of the 'complex whole in dominance' of the ideological formations of a given social formation, a structure which is nothing but that of the reproduction/transformation contradiction constituting the ideological class struggle" (Pêcheux, 1982: 101).

[18]Althusser discusses the conditions of scientificity as the "norms of theoretical validity recognized by science" in *Reading Capital*. "This is still a problem of great scope and complexity... The essential problem presupposed by the question of the existing type of *demonstrativity* is the problem of the history of the production of the *different forms* in which theoretical practice (producing knowledges, whether 'ideological' or 'scientific') recognizes the validating norms it demands" (Althusser, 1970: 49).

Sollers, 1983; Althusser, 2003) . Recalling that the empirical threshold of transcendental empiricism exceeds the measured identity of subject and object such breaches of historical constancy are evidently actual examples of virtual eventalization (cf. Foucault, 2010; Deleuze, 2001b). Locke's "invention of consciousness", Balibar notes, eliminates anything extraneous to "conscious" experience: there is nothing transcendent to consciousness insofar as the experience of consciousness is the continuity of personal identity and "property in oneself" (q.v. Balibar, 2013). The discontinuity of *a-subjectivity* as a process without a subject is antithetical to Locke's invention (q.v. §2.2). Locke's "person" is self-contained and unified by the continuity of consciousness, however, the very precondition of scientific investigation is the a-subjective discontinuity of theoretical and experimental practice (cf. Althusser, 2017b; Pêcheux, 1982; Althusser, 1976). By working on those — experimental — conditions transcendent to present knowledge and experience the activity of scientific research is an ongoing rupture with the continuity of consciousness. Theoretical practice, in the plurality of its forms, transforms the process of knowledge production in terms of Althusser's "Three Generalities" (q.v. Table 3.2). It is not possible, according to the framework of transcendental empiricism proposed by Deleuze, for the transcendental field to exhibit empirical constancy for it is ceaselessly undergoing epistemic displacement (q.v. §7.2.). The "double structure" (i.e. virtual/actual structure) of transcendental eventalization is irreducible to the continuity of Lockean consciousness because the impersonality of a-subjectivity breaks with form Locke's subject-form as "person".

Transcendental empiricism envisions a permanent vanishing point into which the subject repeatedly disappears through new modalities of theoretical abstraction (q.v. Table 1.1). The novelty of the transcendental field supplants the absolute identity of subject and object. Thus the mirror-reflection of mis/recognition determining interpellative structures is under constant erasure by way of a-subjective transcendents reconfiguring the structure of "experience" (Table 6.2). As the mirror-structure of apparently self-evident social structures is stripped away by new knowledge-effects the absolute guarantee of interpellation fades into the distance where the sense of dogmatic empiricism can be no longer perceived. Deconstructing the problematic of dogmatic empiricism and substituting the continuity of "personal" self-consciousness for the discontinuity of "impersonal" a-subjectivity, Deleuze exemplifies, the heterogenesis of transcendental empiricism as a discursive practice[19].

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[19]Martijn Boven explores Deleuze's account of structural diversity in "A System of Heterogenesis: Deleuze on Plurality" from *Phenomenological Perspectives on Plurality*. Boven contends Deleuze's system of heterogenesis operates through the "logic of expression" using virtual ideas and actual concepts (Boven, 2014).

In Foucault's *History of Madness* he presents an analogy between social structures and the structures of "consciousness": "if we admit that what was once the visible fortress of the social order is now the castle of our own consciousness" (Foucault, 2006: 11). The fortress-like structure of Locke's account of consciousness suggests that subjects remain within confines of *their own* personal identity (q.v. §7.1). The positional sense of class, i.e, the self-perception of one's class position (e.g. proletarian/bourgeoisie) is, for Althusser, an effect of interpellation. The meaning and direction, i.e., 'sense' of class position "is the the fact of a man's perceiving what passes or happens as his own (in a mind that is his, that properly belongs to him, that is his property)" (Balibar, 2013: 9). The class relation in which the subject finds itself "properly belongs to him, that is his property" by means of the continuity of consciousness. In Marx's analysis, for the proletariat, that class relation will be defined by an absence property, but nonetheless in Locke's analysis, this experience of consciousness still "properly belongs to him, that is his property". The castle of consciousness is then, in this sense, the interpellated fortress of the social order[20]. The continuity of consciousness naturally reflects the continuity of the social order as being based upon identity as appropriation, property in oneself, and property of one's things (Table 7.1). Being a person for Locke means that one's actions can be appropriated by "the Self" (Balibar, 2013: 56). After being appropriated by the self "its" actions can be safely stored in the castle of consciousness as the property of self, however, once discontinuity has been introduced to the identity of consciousness the self is no longer secure in what it has appropriated. The individual, whole, complete and indivisible is rendered divisible by the discontinuity of the subject-form. Identity cannot be appropriated as "property in oneself" if the castle walls cannot interiorize, and contain, the continuity of consciousness[21].

This "self" is of great importance to the coherence, Althusser remarks, of legal ideology. "For bourgeois law, every human individual is a subject of law. 'Subject of' means that he has defined legal capacities: above all, the capacity to possess property...The subject of law is, then, the owner of his property" (Althusser, 2017a: 103). A subject's consciousness — which

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[20]Michel Pêcheux outlines some research questions of this kind in "Ideology: Fortress or Paradoxical Space" from *Rethinking Ideology*: "In my own way...I have attempted to draw some conclusions regarding the dominating ideology within class struggle... I have taken an interest in the efforts to construct the link between this conception and that which Foucault has named >>discursive formation <<, as well as in some descriptions of linguistic-discursive phenomena of interpellation and subjection" (Pêcheux, 1983: 32).

[21]Foucault states, in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*: "If the history of thought could remain the locus of interrupted continuities... it would provide a privileged shelter for the sovereignty of consciousness. Continuous history is the indispensable correlative of the founding function of the subject" (Foucault, 1972: 12).

is progressively accumulated — is its property. The theoretical connection is then made in legal ideology from the capacity to accumulate and possess, or own *experience*, to the legitimate *possession* of property. All subjects are therefore equal before the law and — insofar as all subjects possess their experience of consciousness — so too can they possess legal property. The discursive relation of subject to object, Althusser maintains, is simply an incredibly elaborate justification of private property. "This whole history of the guarantee, this long, painful conceptual history of the guarantee thus culminates, pathetically, in a guarantee of private property" (ibid.: 110). This is the "absolute guarantee" of intepellation: the identity of subject and object as the identity of a subject's experience and its legal property (q.v. §1.2). The basic mechanism of interpellation is to transform individuals into subjects., i.e., to transform a somatic singularity into a bearer of the social structure. "That is how the ideas making up an ideology forcibly impose themselves on people's free 'consciousnesses': by interpellating people in forms such that are compelled freely to recognize that these ideas are true" (Althusser, 2017b: 112). Interpellated consciousness is thus, in Althusser's analysis, an interiorized invisible fortress of the social order.

The a-subjective practices of scientific research are *de facto* exempt from any need to posit a subject of appropriation and therefore poses problems of a different type to the ideological questions of philosophy (q.v. Althusser, 2017a). "The fact that the development of scientific practice has the character of a 'process without a subject' marks each of its moments and elements, its raw material no less than its agents (researchers), instruments of production, and results" (Althusser, 2017b: 102). Formulating research questions in experimental, materialist, terms is procedurally very different from re-interpreting preconstructed meaning for ideological reasons. "Philosophy never expects solutions; that is to say, it never expects knowledge of its object, for such knowledge is not its goal" (Althusser, 2017a: 29). A-subjective elements, (whether these be new hypotheses, experimental methods, results, or instruments of scientific practice), supersede earlier ideological constants by means of theoretical production, permanently altering the history of epistemology (q.v. Pêcheux and Balibar, 1971; Althusser, 2003). The subject, in Althusser's view, is primarily used for purposes of identificatory interpellation and has no conceptual use in scientific thinking. "It is plainly he, not someone else, and he is one and indivisible: such is the subject in principle... The subject is, then, the self... capable of saying 'it is plainly I, not another', one and self-identical, identity being reflection of the one upon itself as subject" (Althusser, 2017a: 92). Scientific investigation, as a process without a subject, has no need to identify a subject within its theoretical activity and hence circumvents theoretical ideologies by virtue of avoiding the truth guarantee

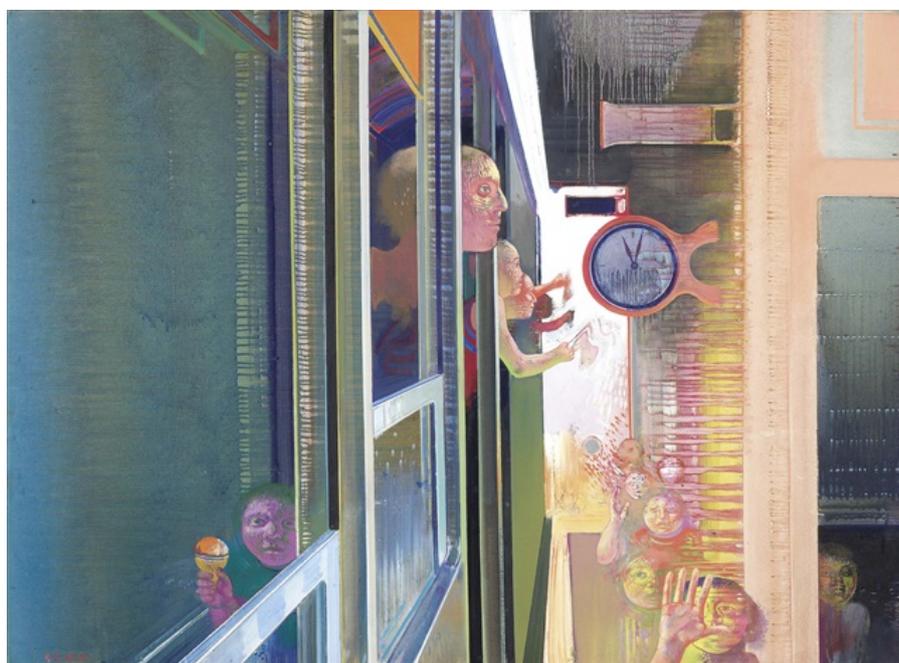of ideological interpellation.

8

Class

Figure 8.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Le départ* 1972-1973

8.1   Structures of Class

The positional sense of class Deleuze attributes to the work of Althusser is the polymorphic effect of structural causality (cf. Deleuze, 2004a; Althusser, 1970). "In order to think the nature of social class, it is indispensable to take conjointly into account the determination of the economic base, juridico-political superstructure, and ideological superstructure" (Althusser, 2003: 199). The conjoint operation of these three factors engenders particular class positions within the capitalist mode of production. Poulantzas, in *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (1975) writes: "a social class is defined by its place in the ensemble of social practices, i.e., by its place in the social division of labour as a whole. This includes political and ideological relations." (Poulantzas, 1975: 14). Furthermore, according to Poulantzas, "[s]ocial class. . . is a concept which denotes the effects of the structure within the social division of labour (social relations and social practices). This place thus corresponds to. . . the structural determination of class, i.e., to the existence within class practices of determination by the structure" (ibid.). Poulantzas is in agreement with Althusser's definition of class as a structural effect of social relations (cf. Jessop, 1985). Class positions or 'places' within the capitalist mode of production are determined by the tripartite matrix of three orders: economic, juridico-political, and ideological. These three orders, as structural matrices, determine the intersections of class effects. Interpellation is the term that designates the process of being "put in position", to reproduce the relations of production, insofar as interpellation is the structuration of class phenomena. The interpellative structures that actualize class are, although nominally distinct, in fact, virtually interdependent (cf. Deleuze, 2004a; Althusser, 1970, 1971a). The virtual interdependency of economic, juridico-political, and ideological structures determine specific instances of interpellation as class practices (q.v. §1.2 & §5.4).

The State, for Poulantzas, is the specific result of particular social relations, namely, the juridico-political framework of the relations of production. "The position of the State vis-a-vis the economy is never anything but the modality of the State's presence in the constitution and reproduction of the relations of production" (Poulantzas, 1980: 17)[1]. The tripartite matrix of

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[1]Bob Jessop defines the State as being composed of three main elements: "(1) a clearly demarcated core territory under the more or less uncontested and continuous control of a state apparatus; (2) a political organized coercive, administrative, and symbolic apparatus with both general and specific powers; and (3) a permanent or stable population on which the state's political authority and decisions are regarded, at least by that apparatus, if not those subject to it, as binding" (Jessop, 2018: 74). Jessop has written several books on state theory using the work of Poulantzas (q.v. Jessop, 1982, 2008, 1985).

class structures is comprised of "that totality of economic, political, and ideological determinations which fixes the boundaries of these spaces, sketching out their fields and defining their respective elements" (ibid.). Class positions are individualized series and interpellation is inseparable from the process of serialization into classes (i.e., bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, and proletariat, as well as other intermediary class fractions) (cf. Poulantzas, 2008, 1975; Althusser, 1971a). Taking each class as a distinct series of the capital-relation, i.e., a relation to the production of surplus value, class — in general — is a series of series, what Althusser refers to as "the structure of the whole upon its structural levels" (Althusser, 2003: 201). "From the historical materialist standpoint, classes are the bearers of definite relations of production" (Poulantzas, 1980: 134)[2].

Table 8.1: Structures of Class

Economic	Valorization
Political	State Power
Ideological	Subject-form

Individualization, Poulantzas explains, is a function of the State to serialize classes and a necessary factor to guarantee the interpellative effects of structuration: "[t]he specialization of the capitalist State, its hierarchical-bureaucratic functioning and its elective institutions all involve the atomization of the body-politic into what are 'individuals' – that is juridical persons" (ibid.: 63). These individuals as "juridical persons" or "individuals-subjects" are the structural effect of the relations of production that produce class positions (ibid: 63-64). The class positions which are individualized as "individuals-subjects" exist, Poulantzas posits, as the distinct product of "spatial and temporal matrices which are the presuppositions of the capitalist social division of labour" (ibid.: 64). These spatial and temporal matrices determine the economic, juridico-political, and ideological features of the capitalist mode of production (q.v. Table 8.1). "It is in this individualization that the institutional materiality of the capitalist State takes root. . . its apparatuses are moulded in such a way that they exercise power over the ensemble so constituted: they realise the very material frame of reference of the space-time matrix that is implied by the relations of production" (ibid.: 65). The individual is then delimited by the legal system of the state to ensure that the juridical apparatus is suitably regulated (i.e., individualized) to maintain

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[2]The research of Poulantzas continues to exhibit relevance for contemporary analyses of state and society (q.v. Barrow, 2016; Wilkes, 2017; Martin, 2018; Hürtgen and Wissel, 2018).

the class positions of its "subjects" (cf. Althusser, 2017a; Poulantzas, 1980) . Thus the structures of class are realised through the relations of production rendering serial individuals successfully interpellated.

To extract surplus value by the valorization of the labour process the economic, political, and ideological structures of class operate, Althusser notes, "conjointly" as intersections of structural causality. The conjunction of these structural elements formalize particular abstractions as social practices. For example, economic abstraction formalizes the abstract relations of use-value and exchange-value, political abstractions formalize the sovereign individual as the legal subject, and ideological abstractions formalize the conditions of interpellation: "people live in abstraction, under the domination of abstract relations that command all their practices. . . These general abstractions are the social relations: relations of production, circulation and distribution, political relations and ideological relations – all of them organized in relation to [ordonnes aux] class relations and the class struggle" (Althusser, 2017b: 156).

Thus the economic abstraction of exchange-value, the political abstraction of state power and the ideological abstraction of the subject-form are abstract structures that are made concrete as class practices (q.v. §1.1). The capitalist mode of production must produce these abstractions in order to reproduce the concrete reality of the class structure.   The subject's spatio-temporal matrix within the relations of production, Poulantzas maintains, is realised as it is individualized by the "instititutional materiality" of the capitalist state (Poulantzas, 1980: 49). Althusser shares this view: "the social existence of ideologies...are inseparable from what we call institutions, which have their statutes, codes, language, customs, rituals, rites and ceremonies. . . ideologies require their material conditions of existence, their material support. . . since this corpus of ideas is, properly speaking, inseparable from this system of institutions" (Althusser, 2017b: 114). These institutional networks of statutes, codes, language, rituals, rites and ceremonies form the basic social conditions for the existence of ideological state apparatuses. Foremost among these institutions, within the capitalist mode of production, is the legal doctrine of private property. Property — beginning with identity ("property of oneself") and extending to private law — is state sanctioned using the ideological subject of law (cf. Althusser, 2017a; Balibar, 2013). The subject of law depends, conceptually, on the continuity of time to substantiate the continuity of consciousness. If there is a break in the continuity of historical time so too is their a break in the continuity of consciousness and, consequently, a break in the continuity of property (between the subject-form and its legal possessions). As Poulantzas notes an individual (somatic singularity) becomes a juridical person as it is determined by the "very frame of reference of the

space-time matrix that is implied by the relations of production": subjects of law are the instantation of this matrix within the territorial space of the nation-state and its temporal conditions of valorization.

This ideological space-time of historical continuity does not consider the effects of what Althusser calls "differential histories" (Althusser, 1970). History is not a uniform process but, is rather, discontinuously compromised of plural histories with each history functioning under overdetermined conditions of *relative* autonomy. "This principle justifies our speaking of an economic history, a political history, a history of religions, a history of ideologies, a history of philosophy, a history of art and a history of the sciences" (ibid.: 100). The subject of law is therefore conceptually discontinuous insofar as it is product of plural historiality as differential history (cf. Rheinberger, 1994; Althusser, 2017a)[3]. The juridical relationship between the legal subject and what it owns (either as "property of self" or private property) is not an eternal and immutable, ahistorical unity: this relationship exists within a multiplicity of other social practices (q.v. Table 2.3). The genesis of class relations, Althusser explains, takes the form of an "encounter" between structural elements: "every encounter takes place under the domination of [sous] that other encounter of time, space and their contents that we call a conjuncture...every encounter is...contingent, and necessarily contingent — all this opens up unprecedented perspectives on events, and thus also on history and time" (Althusser, 2017a: 101).

According to Althusser "Marx...demonstrated that capitalism, as a mode of production, had sprung up from a *historic 'encounter'* — which, although it had been necessary [pour avoir été nécessaire], had nothing inevitable about it" (Althusser, 2017b: 134). This historic encounter brought together three primary elements: "owners of money", "free workers", and "important *scientific and technical discoveries* that revolutionized the work process" (ibid.)[4]. The actual history of each of these elements is relatively autonomous, however, under certain aleatory conditions — encounters between elements —"take". "Thus the encounter 'takes' [prend] the way water crystallizes [prend] to become ice, the way mayonnaise 'takes', the way state power 'takes' in people's consciousness, the way a mode of production 'takes' " (Althusser,

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[3] "Historiality", Rheinberger declares, "is nothing less than the effort to think historical development in an open horizon of unprecedented meaning, to conceive of a kind of historical cohesion that is no longer either chronological or teleological" (Rheinberger, 2009: 183).

[4] Althusser describes how the "owners of money" arose by way of primitive accumulation to subsequently capitalise on the "free labour "that had been "violently dispossessed of their means of labour" (Althusser, 2017b: 134). For further information on the historical conditions of primitive accumulation see chapter 26 of Marx's *Capital* volume one: "The Secret of Primitive Accumulation" (Marx, 1976: 873).

2017a: 102)[5] . Social positions within the capitalist mode of production — as the *individualized* experience of class relations (i.e. bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, proletariat &c.) — necessitate the 'take' (combination) of certain social structures concurrently (q.v. §4.4) . The process of interpellation, then, denotes the specific relations that the subject-form articulates specularly in the social division of labour (q.v. Table 1.2).

Being individualized performatively stages the ideological space-time of a unified subject and with it the truth guarantee of identity, however, the continuity of this identity is a social practice — as an effect of multiple histories — and it is only ever, for Althusser, a contingent 'take' or encounter of differential structural elements. Institutions with their "statutes, codes, language, customs, ritual, rites and ceremonies" give apparent certainty to a subject's experience of "freedom" and also provide continuity to the structures of class in economic, political, or ideological forms. These institutional practices are organized in and around the interpretation of particular conditions of textuality that normalize the subject-form and the canonical structures of meaning, subject and truth as class relations (cf. Sollers, 1983; Poulantzas, 1980; Pêcheux, 1982). The ground (i.e. the material base) of class structures requires a cursive (i.e. a written *script*) form to dissimulate the readability of social inequality textually. To convey this mis/recognition a normative framework (i.e. the ideological superstructure) must exist to discern legitimate from illegitimate interpretations of the social order[6]. Reflecting this mis/recognition specularly the subject positions itself according to the means of textuality embedded within the state apparatus: what Poulantzas calls the "institutional materiality of the state" (q.v. Poulantzas, 1980). Thus class relations articulate, discursively, the "experience" of subjectivity as a naturalized abstraction of the capital-relation and, moreover, this ideology of subjectivity, performs the function of inducing the mis/recognition of the continuity of consciousness in the form of ideological discourse (cf. Balibar, 2013; Althusser, 2003).

8.2   Classes of Interpellation

Classes of interpellation can be divided — for conceptual and analytic purposes — into two kinds. There are the classes of interpellation that are the effect

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[5]The french word "prend" can be alternatively translated as "set" or coalesce, combine, aggregate &c.

[6]The work of Jürgen Habermas examines the normative conditions of social communication, see, in particular, "Historical Materialism and the Development of Normative Structures" in *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (Habermas, 1979).

of the relations of production (i.e. class positions) and there are also classes of interpellation that exist within the material culture of historically specific interpellative processes (i.e. class practices). The first — class positions — can be considered the object of interpellation and the second — class practices — the means of interpellation (cf. Poulantzas, 1980; Althusser, 1971a). The means of interpellation can be represented, in one modality, as a discursive code which, once made intelligible, reveals the particular functioning of various social practices for the production of sense in its various forms, these interpellative variants include: literature, art, philosophy &c., as well as their sub-disciplines, that determine the "distribution of the sensible" within social formations[7]. In *Art History and Class Struggle* (1978) Nicos Hadjinicolau, remarking upon bourgeois thought in art history, notes that "the exercise of the profession of art historian, which must strictly speaking entail writing on the history of art in a scientific way" is practically ruled out (Hadjinicolaou, 1973: 9). "The most elementary concepts and instruments of analysis are *absent* from those 'sciences' which deal with the subjects called Arts by middle class ideology since the sixteenth century: principally history of music, history of painting, history of architecture, philosophy of art, aesthetics, or even sociology of art" (ibid.: emphasis added). These are all arts, following Hadjinicolau, which produce certain forms of sense experience and yet the scientific status of the historical development of these sensible phenomena is plainly indefinite.

The distribution of the sensible within the history of art has then, according to Hadjinicolau, been categorically ignored because of a paucity of scientific research in this domain. This is an example of Althusser's thesis regarding class struggle in theory (i.e. practices of knowledge production) (q.v. §2.3)[8]. The means of interpellation — as mechanisms to assign class positions on the basis of 'thought' and 'perception' — take manifold forms (q.v. §3.4). Balibar and Macherey in their essay "On Literature as an Ideological Form" propose that

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[7]The phrase "distribution of the sensible" hails from Althusser's colleague Jacques Rancière: "I call the distribution of the sensible the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it... This apportionment of parts and positions is based on a distribution of spaces, times, and forms of activity that determine the very manner in which something in common lends itself to participation and in what way various individuals have a part in this distribution" (Ranciére, 2005: 12). Rancière worked with Althusser on *Reading Capital* where he wrote Part Two: "The Concept of Critique and the Critique of Political Economy: From the *1844 Manuscripts* to *Capital*".

[8]According to Hadjinicolau: "Any scientific treatment of the history of art must encompass not only the concepts of 'social class' and 'class struggle', but also the terms which describe particular social groups, autonomous fraction of a class, fraction of a class, and social stratum" (Hadjinicolaou, 1973).

the cultural phenomenon of literature is directly connected to the functioning of ISAs (i.e., Ideological State Apparatuses) (Macherey and Balibar, 1996). Hence literary effects, in their account, are part of the interpellative process which inculcates class structures of cultural sensibility[9]. Literary effects (as the effects of literature in relation to interpellative conditions) should be analysed, Macherey and Balibar suggest, using the methods of historical materialism: "this means that the problem must be posed *in terms of a theory of the history of literary effects, clearly showing the primary elements of their relation to the material base*, their progressions (for they are not eternal) and their tendential transformations (for they are not immutable)" (ibid.: 277; emphasis added).This overdetermined relation between material base (i.e. the economy) and the production of literature is thus their object of analysis.

In positing a theoretical correlation between literature and the economic base Balibar and Macherey further note that "[i]t is important to 'locate' the production of literary effects historically as part of the ensemble of social practices" (ibid.: 279). The ensemble of social practices (*dispositif*) provides the material conditions of existence for the effects of literature and it is within this ensemble that Balibar and Macherey explicate the link between literary interpellation and the state: "[t]he objectivity of literary production therefore is inseparable from given social practices in a given ISA (ibid.: 280). "More precisely", Macherey and Balibar write, "it is inseparable from a given linguistic practice...in itself inseparable from an academic or schooling practice which defines both the conditions for consumption of literature and the very conditions of its production also" (ibid.). Macherey and Balibar contend that bourgeois ideology (i.e. the ideology of capitalist society) is supported and produced, in part, through certain literal forms[10]. The discursive formation of literature "submits to a threefold determination: 'linguistic', 'pedagogic', and 'fictive' [*imaginaire*]" (ibid.: 280). These three elements are present throughout the "general schooling process" (ibid.). Literature, according to J.A. Cuddon, is "[a] vague term which usually denotes works which belong to the major genres: epic, drama, lyric, short

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[9]This general idea is also addressed by Pierre Bourdieu in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. "Thus, for an adequate interpretation of the differences found between the classes and within the same class as regards their relation to the legitimate arts, painting, music, theatre, literature, etc., one would have to analyse fully the social uses, legitimate or illegitimate, to which each of the arts, genres, works or institutions considered lends itself" (Bourdieu, 2010: 19).

[10]The Oxford English Dictionary defines "literal" as: "Of, relating to, or of the nature of a letter, or the letters, of the alphabet. Also: consisting of or expressed in letters: written" (OED Online, 2018i). N. Hooke (1751) provides this usage: "The art of expressing their thoughts by literal characters" (ibid.).

story, ode" (Cuddon, 1991: 505). Cuddon further notes that there are examples of "literature" which do not fit within these categories. "However, there are many works which cannot be classified in the main literary genres which nevertheless may be regarded as literature" (ibid. 506). Here Cuddon includes — Aristotle's *Poetics and Rhetoric*, Descarte's *Discourse on Method*, Berkeley's *Platonic Dialogues* and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* — "[s]cores of others might be added to such a list" (ibid.: 506). In their account of the pedagogical contradictions inherent within the schooling process of capitalism Macherey and Balibar explain how literature is at once unifying — and simultaneously — divisive. Literature forms the basis of national unity through the heritage of a "common language" and, at the same time: "the national language, is bound to the political form of 'bourgeois democracy' and is the outcome of particular class struggles" (ibid.).

Table 8.2: Institutional Literation

Fictive	Narrative (Imaginary)
Pedagogic	Academic (Schooling Process)
Socio-linguistic	National (Official Language)

The education system of bourgeois society effectively encodes the linguistic structure of its "common language" to reproduce the relations of production *literally* (q.v. Table 8.2)[11]. The inculcation of linguistic forms, then, in the analysis of Macherey and Balibar, is founded upon class relations whereby those that possess the greatest access to the means of education, i.e. the bourgeoisie, can control both the 'common language' and any of its more advanced (or derivative) forms. "This is the basis of the contradiction in schooling techniques, particularly between the basic exercise of '*rèdaction – narration*', a mere training in 'correct' usage and the reporting of 'reality', and the advanced exercise of comprehension, the 'dissertation – *explication de texts*', so-called 'creative' work which presupposes the *incorporation and imitation of literary material*" (ibid.: 281; emphasis added)[12]. In the essay 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation'

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[11]The Oxford English Dictionary defines "literation" as follows: "[t]he action or process of representing (sounds or words) by letters or in writing; transcription" (OED Online, 2018j). In one usage from 1824 T. Martin states: "[t]he business of Orthography, the first part of Grammar, may be distinguished under two different heads: Literation or Articulation, and Syllabication" (ibid.).

[12]Pierre Macherey's *A Theory of Literary Production* advances Althusser's problematic in the direction of literary criticism. *Pour une théorie de la production littéraire* was published in Paris in 1966 — one year after the publication of Althusser's *Reading Capital* — to which Macherey also contributed (q.v. Macherey, 1978).

Althusser declares: "what the bourgeoisie has installed as its number-one, i.e., as its dominant ideological State apparatus, is the educational apparatus" (Althusser, 1971a: 154). The educational apparatus interpellates its students for the purpose of capitalist rule with "elements. . . of 'scientific' or 'literary culture', which are directly useful in the different jobs of production (one instruction for manual workers, another for technicians, a third for engineers, a final one for higher management etc)" (ibid.: 132). As well as vocational "techniques and knowledges" students are taught "the 'rules' of good behaviour. . . according to the job he is 'destined' for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and. . . the rules of order established by class domination" (ibid.: 133).

The structures of class, to be reproduced, must maintain a certain vision or "perspective" of social reality (q.v. §1.1 and Table 8.1). This vision is *prescribed* by distinct classes of interpellation (i.e. class positions viz-à-viz class practices). Institutionally literalized by state apparatuses — aesthetic, moral, and literary — class practices produce historically specific distributions of the sensible with each interpellated structural class position (e.g.: bourgeois, petty-bourgeoise, proletarian) "communicating" with the others via generalized writing, that is, the *lingua franca* of interpellation is text. Generalized writing prefigures the duplicity, or double structure, of interpellative mis/recognition insofar the "comprehension" of a given text is performatively articulated by individual-subjects who are the träger-function of class relations[13].

Roland Barthes, commenting on the materialist theory of writing outlined by Sollers, suggests the possibility of an "eccentric" reading — a new definition of *readability* — that dispenses with the conventional grammar of traditional "literature" (cf. Barthes, 1979; Sollers, 1983). The sentience or sensibility of the sentence is, according to Barthes, dubious: "[p]eople are beginning to see the meaning of the Sentence as suspect. . . that in a certain way the sentence is always religious, and that any attempt to call it into question is

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[13]Derrida discusses the phenomena of "generalized writing" in *Of Grammatology*. He states: "I believe that generalized writing is not just the idea of a system to be invented, a hypothetical characteristic or a future possibility. I think on the contrary that oral language already belongs to this writing" (Derrida, 1974: 55). Jonathan Basile provides a recent commentary on "arche-writing" in relation to "generalized writing" in the *Oxford Literary Review*: "Misreading Generalized Writing: From Foucault to Speculative Realism and New Materialism"(Basile, 2018).

always repressed, on academic or psychiatric grounds" (Barthes, 1979: 80)[14]. The grammatical relation between subject and object in the sentence where the subject *acts upon* the object produces the (verbal) action of the literary subject (I, he, she, they, me &c.). This grammatical form *appropriates* action, and its "origin", is then assigned to an individual-subject (the subject of the sentence). Both anonymous and invisible the action of this grammatical structure assigns the traces left by the inscription of social experience to the interpellated subject (q.v. Table 6.1). Classes of interpellation constitute the index of effectivity for the reproduction of the relations of production: each class position is comprised of relatively autonomous class practices with generalized writing "translating" between each instance of overdetermined articulation.

In cases of institutional literation the performativity of writing actualizes the linguistic, pedagogic, and fictive elements of a text as well as their concomitant discursive forms in ideological state apparatuses. Because each class of interpellation exists in a state of *relative* autonomy to the others these classes are contextually overdetermined by the effects of structural causality within the capitalist mode of production (q.v. §4.1). The indeterminancy of interpellative contexts produces discursive variation in each class insofar as these classes 'reflect' specific aspects of the mode of production figuratively. State apparatuses institutionalize these social reflections as distinct pedagogical practices (q.v Macherey and Balibar, 1996). In such a "gallery of mirrors", Barthes notes — remarking on the ideology of narration — "[w]here he cannot see his own reflection is the way out. There lies the world" (ibid.: 73) (q.v. §1.2). Theoretical practice must therefore work upon the "raw material" of these interpellative contexts to determine their *a-subjective* materiality (q.v. Table 3.2)[15]. Althusser's prospective General Theory of Discourse with its "elements/constraints" distinction suggests the possibility of examining classes of interpellation insofar as they are the discursive modalities of generalized writing (q.v. Table 2.1).

The interpellated subject "forgets", according to Pêcheux, that its discourse has an a-subjective basis and simultaneously forgets its discursive

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[14]Barthes states: "In Soller's view... literature has for centuries been characterized, and still is characterized by the subjection to a certain form of *readability*...Now the rules of this deep grammar — a grammar of reading — are now starting to be taken to pieces...It renders out of date the concepts of *subject, reality, expression, description, story, meaning*, according which these texts were contructed and read (Barthes, 1979: 71).

[15]Barthes notes that literature has historically made use of visual art to convey the "perception" of experience in written form (q.v. §1.1). "For centures literature has modelled itself upon painting, inasmuch as painting represents actions, landscapes, and characters" (Barthes, 1979: 72).

selection is determined by pre-given classes of interpellation (q.v. Table 6.2). Classes of interpellation are thus *epistemological obstacles* that must be studied without reference to the self-referentiality of the subject-form (cf. Bachelard, 2002; Althusser, 2003). Economic, political and ideological structures of class are virtualized in the phenomena of literature, philosophy, and aesthetic forms, as actual moments of allusion/illusion. Althusser notes that art "does not give us knowledge in the strict sense" but can "make us see", "make us perceive", "make us feel something that *alludes* to reality"(q.v. §1.1) . This system of mis/recognition in which the interpellated subject "finds itself" is completely *self-referential.* "There you have ideology: cognition-miscognition, allusion-illusion, a system with no possible outside to which it might be compared, a system which is nothing but 'outside' ... and pronounces the truth about everything in advance of the slightest experience" (Althusser, 2017b: 127)[16].

Classes of interpellation are a-subjective relations that produce the experience of subjectivity by means of discursive guarantees (q.v. §1.3). Through their subjection to the Subject, as Althusser explains, subjects "work all by themselves" thanks to the truth guarantees of ideological discourse (q.v Althusser, 1971a)[17]. Transcendental empiricism, however, suggests a methodological direction that bypasses the self-reference of subjectivity in virtual terms (q.v. §7.2). Within the conditions of textual experience "[e]verything begins not with the subject, but by the instrument of production" (Barthes, 1979: 78). The preceding quasi-axiomatic statement — made by Barthes providing an exposition on the work of Sollers' theory of writing — registers the material basis of subjective inscription (q.v. Table 6.1). While classes of interpellation tendentially structure the repetition of social forms by means of cultural practices that suit the assumed narrative within the social division of labour transcendental empiricism reconfigures the ideological problematic of self-referential discourse by turning to the a-signifying structures of virtual experience as a new object for theoretical practice.

This self-referentiality of interpellated subjectivity exists in relation to the structured time of capitalist production. In *Le départ* [English trans.

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[16]If a material condition of ideology is *text* this raises the question of what is "exterior" to textuality. The non-discursive exterior of textual reality is thus an epistemological obstacle to the science of writing, i.e., grammatology. "*There is nothing outside of the text* [there is no outside-text; *il n'y a pas de hors-texte*]" (Derrida, 1974: 158).

[17]Althusser states: "There are no subjects except by and for their subjection. That is why they 'work all by themselves'... The reality in question in this mechanism, the reality which is necessarily ignored (méconnue) in the very forms of recognition (ideology = misrecognition/ignorance) is indeed, in the last resort, the reproduction of the relations of production and of the relations deriving from them" (Althusser, 1971a: 182-183).

The departure] Cremonini paints a departure point at what appears to be a station in view of a public clock — the mis/recognition of "shared" time is the precondition of departure — the beginning and the end of the subject's journey is invisibly determined (q.v. Figure 8.1). Class relations, according to Marx, have for their basis socially necessary labour time, however, under capitalism this time is dissimulated (q.v. Marx, 1976). Althusser's ideological subjects recognize this time, and indeed must do so to participate in social life but this social time does not represent the class effects of the relations of production visibly, as Althusser notes, it is an invisible time (q.v. §4.2). Cremonini's faces at the station convey the allusion/illusion of the social distance inscribed by unseen time as a vision of mis/recognition.

8.3   Interpellative Contexts

Over the course of his academic career Basil Bernstein became a professor in the sociology of education at the University of London (Institute of Education) where he was the head of the sociological research unit (q.v. Bernstein, 1971). His research broadly examined the relationship between language and social class (cf. Bernstein, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1996). "Professor Bernstein was one of the leading sociologists of the world, whose pioneering work over the past four decades illuminated our understanding of the relationship among political economy, family, language and schooling" (Sadovnik, 2001: 1). Working on the other side of the channel from Althusser in England, during the same era, Bernstein came to a number of conclusions that followed those expressed by his academic counterparts in France[18]. Translating Bernstein's research into Althusser's lexicon it is evident Bernstein took the existence of ISAs and the effects interpellation very seriously indeed — as is evinced by the volumes he wrote using title *Class, Codes, and Control* and other of his writings[19].

Bernstein studied — from his earliest papers onwards — the relations between class and cognition and how specific cognitive attributes are correlated with particular class positions[20]. Bernstein sought to "indicate a

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[18]Bernstein, in *Class, Codes and Control* (vol.3) directly references Louis Althusser's *Lenin and Philosophy* and *La Réproduction: eléments pour une théorie du système d'enseignement* by Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (Bernstein, 1975).

[19]q.v. *Class, Codes and Control*: Theoretical Studies towards a Sociology of Language (vol. 1); Applied Studies towards a Sociology of Language (vol. 2); Towards a Theory of Educational Transmissions (vol.3); The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse (vol. 4) (Bernstein, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1990); *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity* (Bernstein, 1996); *Knowledge and Pedagogy: The Sociology of Basil Bernstein* (Sadovnik, 1995).

[20]Sadovnik notes that Bernstein in his final research endeavours was "applying code theory to the Internet and technology" (Sadovnik, 2001: 11)

relationship between the mode of cognitive expression and certain social classes" (Bernstein, 1971: 24). Bernstein maintains that between individual classes "perception is of a qualitatively different order" (ibid.). These findings were discussed in the article "Some sociological determinants of perception"[21]. Qualitative differences in perception, Bernstein found, were based based upon differences in linguistic usage. Bernstein posits an empirical distinction between "public" language and "formal" language to categorise such differences. The shared features of an instituted language (e.g. a national language) are, in fact, for Bernstein, as well as for Macherey and Balibar, internally differentiatied along class lines (cf. Macherey and Balibar, 1996; Bernstein, 1971). According to Bernstein: "an individual may have at his disposal two linguistic usages, a *public* language, and a *formal* language, or he may be limited to one... depending on his social group" (Bernstein, 1971: 43).

Linguistic behaviour is a key indicator of class structures, for Bernstein, because of the effects of "cognitive expression" on perception. "Language is considered one of the most important means of initiating, synthesizing and reinforcing ways of thinking, feeling and behaviour which are functionally related the social group" (ibid.: 43). Class relations are explained by Bernstein not only with recourse to the economic base of society — but also with regard to the modes of communication that serve as ideal forms of cognition. The codification of language into class variants is a communicative apparatus that imputes social positions within the relations of production In volume four of *Class, Codes and Control* Bernstein writes: "class relations generate, distribute, reproduce and legitimate distinctive forms of communication, which transmit dominant and dominated codes and...subjects are differentially positioned by these codes in the process of acquiring them" (Bernstein, 1990: 13) (q.v. §8.1). The acquisition of a class code which occurs during processes of socialization is effectively an interpellative mechanism where one's position in the relations of production is discursively *articulated*[22]. Linguistic form, as a structural "code", accounts for class effects in the domain of language. "In general...codes are culturally determined positioning devices. More specifically, class-regulated codes position subjects with respect to dominant and dominated forms of communication and to the relationships between them" (Bernstein, 1990: 13). Codes maintain relations of power and control

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[21]Originally published in the *British Journal of Sociology* (1958).

[22]As well as defining the differences between "public" language and "formal" language in terms of class conditions Bernstein also highlights the sociolinguistic basis of "restricted" and "elaborated" codes."As the child learns his speech or, in the terms used here, learns specific codes which regulate his verbal acts, he learns the requirements of his social structure...Individuals come to learn their roles through the process of communication" (Bernstein, 1971: 124).

between classes: the regulation of a given class position is the product of the "distribution of power" and "principles of control" within symbolic systems (ibid.: 13). Bernstein posits that the State fulfills the function of "maintaining the educational system in its essential role as a class distributor of the social relationships of production" (Bernstein, 1975: 186)[23]. "It is clear that education is regulated and limited by the State, which is a dominating centre of conflicting interests" (ibid.: 199). The State, then, according to Bernstein — in its regulatory capacity — maintains the linguistic forms of class codes within the education system, and furthermore, Bernstein evinces a direct correlation between "codes of education" and "codes of production". This leads Bernstein to consider "the nature of the relationship between the code regulating the form of education and the code regulating the form of production" (ibid.: 181). This relationship between codes (i.e., in production and education) is thus an example of sociolinguistic "positioning devices" — with differences in class position being attributed to differences in "cognitive expression". As Bernstein states: "[e]ducation is a class-allocatory device, socially creating, maintaining and reproducing non-specialized and specialized skills" (ibid.: 185). The socio-technical skills required for different roles in the relations of production are determined, Bernstein suggests, by differences in code. Arnold Danzig in "Applications and Distortions of Basil Bernstein's Code Theory" contends that "Bernstein's code theory is a structural theory of socialization" (Danzig, 1995: 149). Furthermore: "[c]ode is an underlying regulating principle that recognizes how language contributes to the shaping of an inner and social reality. . . Bernstein's code is suggestive of how much (or little) freedom we have to negotiate these interactions" (ibid.: 151). Codes function as contextual cues and — as Paul Henry maintains in "On Processing Message Referents in Contexts" — such structural conditions exert "three types of effect": social, discursive, and representational (q.v. §4.3). In Bernstein's analysis codes contextualise the social relations of production by means of the class-determined correlations between sociolinguistic forms. "*A code is a regulative principle, tacitly acquired, which integrates relevant meanings, the form of their realization and their evoking contexts*" (Bernstein,

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[23]Althusser outlines a similar hypothesis in his Ideological State Apparatuses essay: the "educational apparatus" is the "number one" ISA according to Althusser (q.v. §8.2).

1975: 180; emphasis in original)[24] . The discursive effect of the education code reinforces the representational effect within the production code and, in turn, these effects are interpellated as class relations.

In terms of structural causality Bernstein's "code" can be viewed as a concept which indicates the positioning effects of interpellation (q.v. §4.1). The social whole, to use Althusser's terminology, is instantiated by relations between discursive codes which regulate the relations of production to reproduce the social conditions of capitalism (cf. Althusser, 1971a; Bernstein, 1975). Codes operate, according to Bernstein, as positioning devices, however, this is only possible insofar as codes act as a linguistic index of class processes. Terry Eagleton in *Criticism and Ideology* (1976) makes use of the concept "literary mode of production" to explain how "literature" is socially determined. Defining the literary mode of production Eagleton writes: "A unity of certain forces and social relations of literary production in a particular social formation. In any literate society there will normally exist a number of distinct modes of literary production, one of which will normally be dominant" (Eagleton, 1976: 45). "Every LMP [literary mode of production]", according to Eagleton, "is constituted by structures of production, distribution, exchange and consumption" (ibid.: 47).

The literary mode of production effectively *encodes* distinct forms of literature: "the literary text bears the impress of its historical mode of production as surely as any product secretes in its form and materials the fashion of its making. . . every text intimates by its very conventions the way it is to be consumed, encodes within itself its own ideology of how, by whom and for whom it was produced" (ibid.: 48). The literal context of interpellation insofar as it is conditioned by social, discursive and representational codes requires the reproduction of textual systems to articulate class divisions. The theoretical status of "writing" and with it "literature" requires greater analysis to evaluate the extent to which *text* is a bearer of class relations (q.v. Table 3.1 and Table 4.1). Althusser speculates in *How to be a Marxist in Philosophy* on the "end of the dictatorship of writing, the end of the dictatorship of language" and looks to Derrida's work on the margins of philosophy as the *unwritten* context of this future (Althusser, 2017a: 88). "Everybody knows what a margin is: there is one of this very page, an empty space alongside a full

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[24]The Oxford English Dictionary provides the following definitions of "context": "The whole structure of a connected passage regarded in its bearing upon any of the parts which constitute it; the parts which immediately precede or follow any particular passage or 'text' and determine its meaning"; "The connection or coherence between the parts of a discourse"; "The connected structure of a writing or composition; a continuous text or composition with parts duly connected"; "The weaving together of words and sentences; construction of speech, literary composition" (OED Online, 2018c).

one...Derrida hasn't missed the mark in putting the question of the margin in the command post!" (ibid.: 88-89). Derrida's work in *Margins of Philosophy* outlines the radical exteriority of writing where context is displaced by what is not represented by the received understanding of textuality[25] . Althusser suggests that the undefined political space of Derrida's margins — the limits of a text — is a form of political intervention. "The interest of Derrida's research resides in the demonstration that philosophy and politics are, in a certain regard, the same thing" (ibid.: 9). Class is contextualised, for Bernstein, as a socio-linguistic code which implies the "understanding" of a dominant interpretation of social relations: for Althusser the activity of theoretical practice has the effect of redefining the conjunctural narrative of this encoded (i.e., interpellated) script[26].

8.4   The Interpellated Present

"Growing income and wealth inequality is recognised as the greatest social threat of our times" (Dorling, 2014: 1)[27]. This threat directly related to the relations of production and, concomitantly, class structures (cf. Piketty, 2014; Therborn, 2013; Harvey, 2010). Göran Therborn posits three institutions that perpetuate inequality: family, capitalism and nation-state. "Family, Capitalism and Nation are the three central institutions of contemporary inequality" (Therborn, 2013: 168). Each of these institutions is identified by Althusser in terms of its interpellative effects — each institution contributes to the field of interpellative efficacy from particular sites — the family unit[28], the workplace, and the state apparatus. The relations between these interpellative sites constitute a social structure of misrecognition that, extrapolating upon

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[25]Originally published in 1972 as *Marges de la philosophie* (Derrida, 1982). *Margins of Philosophy* — by way of deconstruction — questions the context of *closure* in philosophical literature, see, in particular, "The Pit and the Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel's Semiology", "The Supplement of Copula: Philosophy before Linguistics" and "Signature, Event, Context".

[26]For a discussion of codes and pedagogical practice refer to Bernstein's "Codes and Their Positioning: A Case Study in Misrecognition" in *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control, and Identity* (Bernstein, 1996).

[27]Danny Dorling is currently the Halford Mackinder Professor of Geography at the University of Oxford. He has recently published: *Injustice: Why Social Inequality Still Persists* (2015) *The Equality Effect: Improving Life for Everyone* (2017), and *Peak Inequality* (2018).

[28]The family is a structure of primary socialization (q.v. Frønes, 2016). Althusser mentions the "family ISA" as an interpellative mechanism in his "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" essay: similar themes are also developed in "Writings on Psychoanalysis", see, in particular "Letters to D" (cf. Althusser, 1971a, 1996).

Dorling's statement, forms part of the material framework determining income inequality (q.v. Table 4.1).

Table 8.3: Instituted Interpellation

Family	Familial Ideology (Primary Social- ization)
Capitalism	Appropriation of Surplus Value
Nation-state	State Apparatus (ISA & RSA)

Besides its theoretical usage as a means to articulate the structural conditions of social inequality the concept of interpellation has a number of other analytic ends which demonstrate its continuing conceptual relevance. For example:

1. The concept of interpellation can be used to track the genealogy of Althusser's problematic in social science and the extent to which others have followed his theory (q.v. §2.1);

2. to investigate Althusser's hypothesis regarding class struggle in "philosophy" (q.v. §2.3);

3. to further inquiry into the formal conditions of structural causality (q.v. §4.1);

4. to delineate the inscription of experience in the field of neuroscience in relation to class structures (q.v. §6.1);

5. to critically analyze the theoretical formation of "empirical" social research (q.v. §7.1).

The concept of interpellation is a theoretical high-point for Althusser's work in the social sciences — an achievement which is still strikingly relevant today for numerous domains of research (e.g.: cultural studies, history, and political economy, gender studies, media studies &c.). In terms of the research undertaken here the concept of interpellation has provided the theoretical wherewithal to outline a new field for sociological inquiry: *specular* sociology. Specular sociology derives its epistemic basis from Althusser's researches into the mirror structure of misrecognition (q.v. Table 1.2). The sociology of specular mis/recognition seeks to produce a robust, critical, analysis of what

Althusser refers to as the 'mirror-structure' of interpellated experience[29]. Specular sociology — in its function as the a-subjective logic of interpellation — is the activity of demonstrating how *social processes* are materially mis/recognized by epistemological obstacles. Absent causality cannot be revealed in the mirror-structure of misrecognition because, as a process, it is invisible to the eye and can only be conceptualised through abstraction (cf. Movebo, 2014; Godelier, 1977; Sohn-Rethel, 1978). Figuratively speaking, Althusser illustrates the conditions of social abstraction that interpellate individuals as subjects. The processes of social mis/recognition wherein the supersensible is the precondition for the sensible are real abstractions which determine the effects of interpellation. Such real abstractions include the institutions that perpetuate income inequality: family ideology[30], capitalism, and nation-state[31].

Without studying the effects of interpellation — as structural modes of socialization — social realities stand to be, following Althusser, misrecognised with respect to their *historical* conditions of existence[32]. What this amounts to is the normalization of particular social practices as "natural" or "self-evident" and consequently justifying what Dorling contends is the "greatest social threat of our times": income inequality. The conceptual precision of interpellation lies with Althusser's commitment to an objective account of social reality without recourse to (as best his theoretical conjuncture permitted) ideological explanations, i.e., "subject", "humanism", "truth" &c. The concept of interpellation allows Althusser to specify the range of practices, institutions, and ideologies which lead to the perpetuation of the relations of production and the coterminous structural inequalities of the capitalist mode of production. Having said this, however, the concept of interpellation is *dated* and Althusser himself was keenly aware of the need for

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[29]The field of neuroscience offers innovative ways to understand interpellation in light of the contemporary discoveries of plasticity and the MNS (Mirror Neuron System). "Mirror neuron system is a group of specialized neurons that 'mirrors' the actions and behaviour of others. The involvement of mirror neuron system (MNS) is implicated in neurocognitive functions (social cognition, language, empathy, theory of mind) and neuropsychiatric disorders. MNS discovery is considered to be the most important landmark in neuroscience research in the last decade" (Rajmohan and Mohandas, 2007: 1).

[30]Jon Bernades examines the concept of "family ideology" in the *Sociological Review* where he contrasts "family life" to the "family form" (Bernades, 1985).

[31]According to Ivar Frønes: "In sociological understanding, institutions are at the core of socialization processes...Legal frameworks and institutions that allow the enforcement of sanctions influence socialization both as formal rules and as signifiers of the existence of the social and society" (Frønes, 2016: 12).

[32]q.v. "The Conditions of Marx's Scientific Discovery" in *Theoretical Practice* (Althusser, 1973).

the ongoing revision and development of scientific practice (q.v. Table 3.2).
Thus the concept is further refined by indicating both its limitations and its
strengths: today this field of research can be called specular sociology.

Althusser evinces an overt debt Lacan to account for the psycho-social
conditions of interpellation (cf. Barrett, 1993; Althusser, 1996). This theo-
retical debt, however, does not bind Althusser to Lacan's problematic ex-
clusively: Althusser does not adopt Lacan's theory wholesale — Althusser
incorporates those elements of Lacan's work which provide the means to
understand the reproduction of the relations of production as class relations
of mis/recognition (q.v. Althusser, 1971a). Genealogically specular sociology
exhibits the characteristics of *historical* epistemology — drawing upon both
Althusser's researches and those who Althusser himself references — to pur-
sue new research objectives regarding the question of interpellation for the
historical present[33].

Today cultural mechanisms of interpellation are increasingly digitized. The
digitization of interpellation has been brought about by the global, quasi-total,
impact of digital technologies. "The commercial availability of of the Internet,
the explosion of digital satellite content platforms, innovations in mobile
communication technologies, and the increasing proliferation of media and
communication have become an essential aspect of life" (Servaes and Oyedemi,
2016: xxi). This colonization of digital communication is an integral part of
the capitalist mode of production and also acts as new way of accumulating
surplus value (i.e. digital accumulation). As Servaes and Oydemi state "[t]he
unequal distribution of economic, social, and cultural capitals has an impact on
every sector of human life" (ibid.). Such inequality is interposed by the digital
divide, i.e., the division between those who control digital production and those
who do not. "Who gets to use these technologies, and who is excluded?. . . Who
owns and controls these technologies and how does the control shape economic
and social participation of those outside the ownership class? In what ways
do capitalism and neoliberal ideologies determinate patterns of exclusion
and inclusion in the media?" (ibid.: xxii) These questions raised by Servaes
and Oydemi address the effects of interpellation in relation to the totalizing
reach of digital technologies. Servaes and Oydemi, citing the research of

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[33]The "genealogical" analysis of social practice finds early expression in the writings of
Foucault. David Garland states in "What is a 'history of the present'? On Foucault's
Genealogies and their Critical Preconceptions": "Foucault's use of the genealogical method
and his writing of 'histories of the present' demonstrate how historical research can be
brought to bear on contemporary institutions in ways that are powerfully critical and
revealing" (Garland, 2014: 379).

Manuel Castells[34], discuss the notion of "communication power" the capacity to "control the cultural industry and to shape culture. As a result culture is packaged for its market values, in this process cultures are represented and re-presented in ways that suit market dictates" (ibid.: xxx). The capitalist market by necessity, according to Marx, requires the sale and purchase of labour-power — and by way of interpellation — the "communication power" of digital media, selectively, imputes the corresponding ideology of "Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham" to *mirror* the exigencies of capitalist social relations (cf. Marx, 1976; Servaes and Oyedemi, 2016).

The use of technology in the various industries is "*digital by default* where services are digitized at an ever-faster pace in many sectors" (ibid.: xxxv). Digital products and applications (e.g. "apps") in finance, employment and education are now industry-standard and, as a result, critical questions are being voiced regarding the digitization of society and new forms of social exclusion (cf. Dimaggio et al., 2004; Landers, 2017; Servaes and Oyedemi, 2016). The omnipresence of web-based hypertext[35] far outmatches the reach of traditional print media to create previously unseen structures of mis/recognition. "The concepts of digital divide and digital inequalities have brought to global attention the patterns of inequalities regarding access to and use of digital technology tools. . . the historical trajectories of social inequalities in human societies tend to shape access to many resources and utilities, including technology" (ibid.: xxxiv). Sora Parks states in *Digital Capital*: "Digital exclusion is a new form of social inequality derived from an unequal distribution of digital resources and divergent uses. These inequalities have long-term consequences of widening the current social inequalities as well as creating a new type of rift between existing social groups" (Park, 2017: 36)

Under the increasingly digitized conditions of social existence new forms of theoretical practice become necessary to understand the specular structures

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[34]Manuel Castells is currently Professor of Sociology at the Open University of Catalonia. He has received a great number of accolades for his research: the C.Wright Mills Award from the American Society for the Study of Social Problems (1983); the National Prize of Sociology and Political Science from Spain; the Erasmus medal of Academia Europaea (2011); and many others (q.v. Castells, 2019). *The Rise of the Network Society* (1996), *Communication Power* (2009), and *Mobile Communication and Society* (2006) (co-author), by Castells, all provide multimodal resources for the study of digital interpellation.

[35]Etymologically the earliest recorded use of "hypertext" is attributed to T.H. Nelson from *Proc. 20th Nat. Conf. Assoc. Computing Machinery* in 1965. "Let me introduce the word 'hypertext' to mean a body of written or pictorial material interconnected in such a complex way that it could not conveniently be presented or represented on paper" (OED Online, 2018g).

of digital abstraction[36]. For example HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol) is the basic code used to "write" or program[37] the world-wide web and the socio-historical effects of this language require extensive analysis[38].

The methodological question that Althusser asks in *Reading Capital* is this: how should one *read* Marx's *Capital* epistemologically? Althusser did not answer this question definitively, however, his work does anticipate the next question: how does one read *hypertext* sociologically? Hypertext has a grammar — but not a subject — in the Lockean or Cartesian sense. Continuity of "consciousness" is not an assumed between instances of hypertextuality: a computer is not expected to have "property in oneself" as a person is (q.v. Table 7.1). Yet digital networks are, today, inextricably connected to systemic inequality. Unequal social structures sustain unequal digital structures and produce class relations using a-subjective systems of hypertext. In this way the class effects of interpellative mis/recognition are digitally installed within a process without a subject (i.e. hypertext) to reproduce the legal ideology of private ownership and capitalist social relations. Specular sociology, then, is a theoretical practice based on the *readability* of mis/recognition regarding the conditions of social exclusion, stratification, deprivation, and inequality. The ideological effects of class processes abstract from social relations to contextualise the historical contingency of interpellation in digital form. Using the framework that Althusser outlines in terms of structural causality specular sociology transcends to the assumptions of digital exclusion found in actual, existing, social systems (q.v. Table 6.1). Provisionally structural causality — as the model of causality integral to specular sociology — posits a tripartite form: "the very particular causality of a structure upon its elements, or of a structure upon another structure, or of the structure of the whole upon its structural levels" (Althusser, 2003: 201).

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[36]Michael Peters — Distinguished Professor at Beijing Normal University — proposes that history has entered the age of "digital reason" with many aspects of the capitalist mode of production being subsumed by digitized rationality. "Digital reason is... named here in the tradition of Kant and Foucault. It governs the historical emergence of a techno-epistemological epoch that is so recent but indicates a deep transformation of the knowledge economy or knowledge capitalism, society and knowledge institutions" (Peters, 2017). The implications of digital reason upon social practice are also discussed by Peters in a 2015 interview with Petar Jandrić entitled "Philosophy of Education in the Age of Digital Reason" (Peters and Jandrić, 2015).

[37]In *Of Grammatology* Derrida references the work of Leroi-Gourhan to outline a theory of writing 'programs' (Derrida, 1974: 84). According to Leroi-Gourhan: "Individually constructed memory and the recording of personal behavior programs are entirely channeled through knowledge, whose preservation and transmission in all ethnic communities is ensured by language" (Leroi-Gourhan, 1993: 228)

[38]This protocol was formally defined in 1999 in *Hypertext Transfer Protocol — HTTP/1.1* (Fielding et al., 1999).

The social practice of writing (i.e text and hypertext as the inscription of experience) and the *authority* of sociological discourse are structured and structuring modalities governing symbolic practices: to these social structures of signification obtain historically determinate possibilities of comprehension and 'reflection' (i.e. mirror structures of mis/recognition). Text, and derivatively the relatively recent invention of hypertext, institutionalize the anonymity of structural inequality at the level of the träger-function (support function) (q.v. Table 2.2). Operationally the anonymized structure of class is *personified* as an identity abstracted from the relations of production possessing freedom, equality, and property as attributes of "subjectivity" (q.v. Table 2.3 and Table 7.1). Specular sociology registers the attempt to conceptualise the invisible structure of interpellation in relation to the its actual and virtual articulation in social processes. Relatively autonomous of institutionalized interpellation the theoretical practice of transcendental empiricism traces new configurations for social relations that are not dependent on maintaining the properties of interpellation as a grammar of valorization that begins with the subject-form (q.v. Table 8.3)[39].

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[39]In *Language, Semantics, and Ideology* Pêcheux, referencing the work of Althusser and concept of the epistemological break states: "the historical break inaugurating a given science is necessarily accompanied by a challenge to the subject-form and the *evident character of meaning* which is part of it. In other words, what is specific to every break is, I believe, that it inaugurates in a particular epistemological field, a relationship between 'thought' and the real *in which what is thought is not as such supported by a subject"* . In this sense specular sociology is not supported by a subject (q.v. Table 2.1).

9

The Horizon of Specular Sociology

Figure 9.1: Leonardo Cremonini *Les refrains du Belvèdére* 1977-1978

9.1   Specular Genesis

Cremonini's painting *Les refrains du Belvèdére*[1] [English trans. *The refrains of Belvedere*] represents, visually, the horizon of specular sociology (Fig. 9.1). This horizon is a *vanishing point*[2] for the interpellative mirror structure of mis/recognition. A belvedere[3] is an architectural structure designed to command a view[4]. Cremonini's title *The refrains of Belvedere*, paradoxically, suggests both the limitations of a view (to be refrained by a certain perspective) and their formal repetition (a repeated line or phrase, such as that found in poetry). Transcendental empiricism delineates the epistemological basis of specular sociology as an active historical practice of sense genesis rather than the mirror-reflection of the status quo (q.v. §7.4). Specular sociology does not methodologically anticipate the preordained unity of subject and object — as if such a unity was *prescriptively* determined — specular sociology, rather, begins with the structural logic of social intentionality (q.v. §1.3). It is the historical plasticity of sense genesis that produces social differentiation in relation to classes of interpellation (q.v. §6.1 & §7.2). Specular sociology can, therefore, study the effects and conditions that are attributed to such class positions insofar as structural causality figures as the theoretical means to explain the relations between social contexts of mis/recognition (q.v. §7.3). These contextual conditions overdetermine the discursive basis of social relations as instances of interpellated experience.

 To further define the incipient field of specular sociology there is a need to engage with Derrida's research in *Of Grammatology* and other of his work to

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[1]The gesture of mis/recognition in this image is reminiscent of the work of another highly regarded Italian painter: Michelangelo. In *The Creation of Adam* Michaelango depicts the mutual recognition of God (Subject) and Adam (subject) on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (q.v. §1.2). By contrast in *Les refrains du Belvèdére* Cremonini alludes to an invisible structure of intersubjective absence (q.v. §1.1).

[2]J. Smith from *Panorama Sci. & Art* (1815) provides this usage: "Distance of a vanishing point, is the distance from the vanishing point on the picture to the eye of the spectator" (OED Online, 2018m).

[3]The Oxford English Dictionary defines a belvedere as: "An open-sided gallery or a raised structure such as a turret built at the top of a house or on a vantage point in a landscape in order to afford fine views of the surrounding scenery" (OED Online, 2018b)

[4]In *What does the Ruling Class Do When it Rules?* Therborn describes the "ruling-class problematic" as the conditions by which the "ruling class" commands its view: "We may begin our outline of the problematic of the exercise of class rule by listing its four basic components. These are: the ruling class itself, the state as a special institution intervening in the societal process, and the structures and processes to be reproduced, of which the ruling class is essentially the bearer...The state, particularly its commanding personnel, must *represent*, that is to say, promote and defend the ruling class and its mode of exploitation or supremacy" (Therborn, 1978: 180-181).

analyse the "Derrida-effect" in terms of its applicability to understanding the phenomena of mis/recognition: a thorough account of historical epistemology would, therefore, productively engage with a *textual* history of social science (q.v. §2.3).

Both grammatology and historical epistemology inform the horizon of specular sociology, however, this is only possible if interpellation is understood discursively (q.v. §8.3 & Table 2.1). Slavoj Žižek explains how a letter functions as a contextual device in the following paragraph from "Why Does a Letter Always Arrive at its Destination?". He writes: "[i]n a first approach, a letter which always arrive at its destination points at the logic of recognition/misrecognition (reconnaissance/méconnaissance) elaborated in detail by Louis Althusser and his followers (e.g. Michel Pêcheux): the logic by means of which one mis/recognizes oneself as the addressee of ideological interpellation" (Žižek, 1991: 1)[5].

<div align="center">Table 9.1: Discursive Refraction</div>

Mis/recognition	Interpellation
Addressor/Addressee	Specularity

It is this letter[6], as an interpellative mechanism, that permits the inscription of experience and acts as the precondition of contextualised literation (q.v. Table 8.2 and Table 6.1). The inscription of experience — or the trace of the letter — is determined by its material basis which is found in the lexical, phonemic, semantic, and graphic properties of any given discourse: these properties constitute the structure of formal "literacy"[7]. Grammatology

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[5]Žižek discusses the possibility of failed interpellation in reference to Derrida's work in "The Purveyor of Truth" (Le Facteur De La Vérité). "The Derridean reproach that a letter can also miss its addressee is, therefore beside the point: it makes sense only in so far as I presuppose that I can be its addressee before it reaches me" (Žižek, 1991).

[6]The Oxford English Dictionary lists no less than nine senses for "letter". A apposite selection of these include: "A character representing one or more of the elementary sounds used in speech and language; any of the symbols of an alphabet used in written language"; "a typeface, a font"; "A written communication addressed to a person, organization, or other body"; "An article or report describing the social, political, or cultural aspects of a particular situation or place; "In plural. Originally: the reading and study of written texts; knowledge or learning acquired through this"; "The precise words, terms, or strict verbal interpretation of an utterance, statement or document; the exact or literal meaning of something"; "Anything written; a document, text, or inscription; a warrant" (OED Online, 2018h)

[7]In *Reading Capital* Althusser states: "I venture to suggest that our age threatens to appear in the history of human culture as marked by the most dramatic and difficult trial of all, the discovery of and training in the meaning of the 'simplest' acts of existence: seeing, listening, speaking, reading" (Althusser, 1970: 15).

as the science of writing is then a field crucial to the development of specular sociology insofar as writing systems perform interpellative functions and have the capacity of normalizing social systems through the tacit and everyday acts of speech, description, and "comprehension". Historical epistemology is the corollary of grammatology in that the status of "knowledge" is secured, by and large, using textual systems or to use Bernsteinian language, "codes". The horizon of specular sociology can then be expanded by detailed studies of grammatology and historical epistemology to determine social structures of mis/recognition by their interpellative forms of textuality. Discursive refraction is the movement or — "communication" — of generalized writing between subjects (addressor/addressee) without an outside, that is, the conditions of interpellative discourse are constrained by a structure that *prescribes* the truth prior to its articulation and in terms of its own system of rules: the rules of grammar, for example. When the system of generalized writing is functioning properly the specular effects of interpellation work without incident: it is in this way that generalized writing has been *historically* comprehended.

Writing is generalized inasmuch as it is understood without breaches of self-evidence regarding its intersubjective use (cf. Pêcheux, 1982; Derrida, 1974). Due to this the semantic form of a subject's discourse is preconditioned by psycho-social structures, and therefore, communicative activity can be generalized on the proviso that it is sufficiently well understood throughout a given mode of production (cf. Saussure, 1960; Pêcheux, 1982). For Derrida generalized writing exists as a self-referential system with "new" writing only emerging by way of conforming to, or deconstructing, existing systems of text. The letter of interpellation, as Zizek points out, is a system of predetermination for systematized inscription, however, such discursive refraction is not absolutely determinant due to transformations of intelligibility or readability (cf. Sollers, 1983; Žižek, 1991).

Social history is thus a *historio-graphy*[8] whereby a given mode of communication is connected to existing social relations using linguistic means, for example, a subject is connected to a predicate. The copula "is", then, serves to structurally provide agency for the subject. Without the copula a given subject could not act or possess agency in respect of its actions, however,

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[8]According to the Oxford English dictionary "historiography" is defined as: "The writing of history; written history" (OED Online, 2018f). The graphic element of the historical writing is determined the grapheme: "The class of letters or other visual symbols that represent a phoneme or cluster of phonemes...so, in a given writing system of a given language, a feature of written expression that cannot be analysed into smaller meaningful units". In one example of usage R.H. Stetson (1937) states: "The unit of writing may be called the grapheme" (OED Online, 2018e).

such agency is only possible in terms of the structured possibilities of grammar. The agreement of subject and verb articulates the verbal expression of subjects to their discourse by the linguistic properties of *individualized* action. Interpellation is then a letter of mis/recognition that is received by an addressee from an addressor which reflects the social basis of grammar and identification (q.v. Table 1.2). This literal message (letter) safely arrives at its destination because the subject agrees with the action of the structure, i.e., its verbal (communicable) form[9]. In order to maintain the social structure of the capitalist mode of production individualized appropriation is paramount for the ideological mis/recognition of the relations of production, i.e., the private ownership of social labour[10].

To act one must use the subject-form of discourse: action outside of this form is impossible because "I" would not exist. "Language is possible only because each speaker sets himself up as a *subject* by referring to himself as *I* in his discourse" (Benveniste, 1971: 225; emphasis in original)[11]. Action must be capable of being attributed to a subject for the social order to be comprehensible *individually*. Generalized writing is not only textual interpretation — as an index of self-referential meaning — but also the expression of the subject-form as an interpellated structure (cf. Derrida, 1974; Pêcheux, 1982; Sollers, 1983). The activity of generalized writing (as an object of specular sociology) presupposes that parts of speech refer to existing things in the world (e.g. private property), however, such grammatical relations only exist insofar as they are performed and cannot preexist such performativity. Moreover, for interpellation to reach its structural destination, a subject needn't be present *in person*, the social structure of mis/recognition operates in the absence of somatic singularities and simply awaits their inevitable mis/recogntion by *verbal* agreement (i.e. grammatical convention). The very iterability of speech acts makes the necessity of the subject-form inevitable insofar as a subject's actions are its property (q.v. Table 7.1). Object

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[9]Derrida in "The Copula Supplement" remarking on the work of Friedrich Nietzsche writes: "Nietzsche for example determines freedom (or freedom of thought) as the movement by which one breaks away from the language and grammar which up until then had governed the philosophical order. Quite traditionally, he thus comes to define the law of language or signifiers as a 'slavery' which must be broken away from" (Derrida, 1975: 8).

[10]John Horgan from *Scientific American* states: "A report from the anti-poverty organization Oxfam provides a global, historical perspective on inequality...The number of billionaires has doubled over the past decade to 2,208. The collective wealth of the 26 richest people now equals that of the 3.8 billion poorest, whose total wealth fell last year by 11 percent"(Horgan, 2019).

[11]Emile Benveniste discusses these issues in *Problems in General Linguistics* (originally published in 1966 as *Problèms de linguistique générale*), see, in particular the chapters: "Relationships of Person in the Verb" and "Subjectivity in Language".

$= x$ or the empty square of generalized writing virtualises the axiological conditions of iterability, and hence readability, in terms of the value of writing (q.v. §7.3). This question, that of the economy of generalized writing, and its connection to interpellative practices is a core problematic for specular sociology. According to Althusser a social structure (e.g. capitalism) must be analysed as a conjuncture, i.e., as a combination of elements, where each element serves a discrete but connected function in relation to the others (i.e., money-capital, "free" labour-power, technological inventions) (q.v. Althusser, 2012). Discursive forms can also be included within such conjunctures[12] where parts of speech and iterability form necessary communicative networks for the social reproduction of contingent structural conditions. "In the case of the science of societies, if we follow Marx's thought, we cannot understand this or that economic effect by relating it to an isolated cause, but only by relating it to the <u>structure</u> of the economic (defined by the articulation of productive forces and relations of production) (Althusser, 2012: 2; underlining in original). The subject-form of discourse, quite literally, *articulates* the productive forces and relations of production as an interpellated social context (q.v. §8.3).

Discursive refraction, then, mirrors the social order by means of generalized writing which "represents" to its subjects the dominant form (i.e. hegemony) of interior and exterior historical experience. The theoretical practice of specular sociology specifies the process of abstracting from the "immediacy" of interpellative constructs to demonstrate their mechanisms and effects as performative social relations that have their conditions of possibility in the form of discursive modalities[13]. The difficulty with this particular methodology is the absent causality of the subject-form. Because the subject-form is perpetually being reintroduced by ideological state apparatuses its existence is often only visible in its effects, such as when "I" speak and announce the fact that "I" have done so — otherwise "I" is present only latently — when "I" need to appropriate an action to say something has been done, for example. Althusser, referencing the work of the linguist Emile Benveniste, discusses this issue. "This is a way of saying that language, especially verbs, cannot be

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[12]For an application by Althusser of this concept to historical materialism, see, "To My English Readers" in *For Marx*.

[13]Foucault's work in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is indispensable as a methodological starting-point to describe the *formation* of interpellative discourse. "By system of formation, then, I mean a complex group of relations that function as a rule: it lays down what must be related, in a particular discursive practice, for such and such an enunciation to be made, for such and such a concept to be used, for such and such a strategy to be organized. To define a system of formation in its specific individuality is therefore to characterize a discourse or a group of statements by the regularity of a practice" (Foucault, 1972: 74).

employed without identification, hence without the *identity of subjects*, which designate the one who speaks, and one of whom one speaks...Identification, identity: it is plainly I, it is plainly you...there can be no question of an error about who is who" (Althusser, 2017a: 91).

The theoretical problem here is the reintroduction of "subjectivity" and personal identity simply by speaking. The structure of ideology automatically assimilates whoever communicates (via speech acts) by virtue of the discursive structure that appropriates a subject's action: the structure of ideological discourse.   Althusser noted this methodological concern in his prospective (and incomplete) general theory of discourse (q.v. Table 2.1). This critical direction continues to be useful for the problematic of specular sociology where the elements/constraints of particular discourses can be studied with regard to social relations (e.g., scientific discourse, ideological discourse, aesthetic discourse, and unconscious discourse). Further to this a differential definition of discursivity, such as that outlined by Althusser, would provide an initial index of each discourse in terms of its functioning within the relations of production. Hence the need to engage, theoretically, with what Derrida calls "grammatology"[14]. As the science of writing grammatology[15] should consider the role of the subject-form within writing systems and the extent to which generalized writing is semantically self-referential through the "identity of subjects" to "their own" discourse. The addressor within an interpellative act performatively elicits the mis/recognition of the addressee using the grammatical structure of the subject-form, however, these objective conditions of address can only exist as social structures. Grammatology and what Althusser outlines as a general theory of discourse are therefore key theoretical resources to develop the incipient field of specular sociology for

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[14]Catherine Malabou (whose PhD was supervised by Derrida) addresses the apparent "impossibility" of Derrida's grammatological schema by affirming the plasticity of writing as a non-grammatological practice. "We are witnessing a decline or disinvestment of the graphic sign and graphism in general. Plastic images tend to substitute themselves for graphic images... Today, the concept of plasticity tends to become at once the dominant motif of interpretation and the most productive exegetic and heuristic tool of our time" (Malabou, 2007: 438-439). Malabou, however, still writes using graphic means (i.e. an alphabetic script) and this writing remains, as such, intelligible, if not grammatologically so.

[15]It is important to determine the similarities and differences between Derrida's understanding of grammatology and that first expressed by I.J. Gelb (whom Derrida references in *Of Grammatology*) from *A Study of Writing*: "The aim of this study is to lay foundation for a new science of writing which might be called grammatology" (Gelb, 1952: v). Derrida deems Gelb's research "remarkable" but limited in certain respects, see, "Of Grammatology as a Positive Science" (Derrida, 1974: 83).

the reason that text is a *social* product[16].

9.2   Grammatology and Logocentrism

Althusser, in his Ideological State Apparatuses essay, makes some brief remarks concerning the *logos* of Christian theology: the *logos*, the word, or writing more generally is, in effect, an interpellative device. "As St Paul[17] admirably put it, it is in the 'Logos', meaning in ideology that we 'live, move and have our being'. It follows that. . . the category of the subject is a primary 'obviousness'. . . Like all obviousnesses, including those that make a word 'name a thing' or 'have a meaning' (therefore including the obviousness of the 'transparency' of language)" (Althusser, 1971a: 172). This range of theoretical problems is taken up by Derrida in *Of Grammatology* where he uses the notion of "logocentrism" to describe the metaphysical assumptions of the logos (Derrida, 1974: 3). This account of "logocentrism" serves indicate how the performative relation between words and things (e.g.: signifier viz-a-viz signified) reveals a linguistic bias in favour of the contextual "obviousness" (i.e. the received truth) of dominant discursive formations — in the forms of writing and speech — insofar as these are textually mediated. Logocentrism as "the metaphysics of phonetic writing" is pre-scientific because the relations between words and things are only understood as an *essentially* theological protocol (i.e., as metaphysical truths) (Derrida, 1974: 3)[18].

The ideological referentiality of logocentrism is, for Derrida, an unac-

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[16]Robert de Beaugrande states in *Text Production*: "The foundation of useful research is to view texts and discourses as dynamic events... The text is thus not defined merely by its format and word-meanings, but its functions in human interaction" (de Beaugrande, 1984: xii).

[17]The ministry of the apostle Paul (The first epistle of Paul) is "revealed" in the *New Testament*: "And we continually thank God that in receiving the *word* of God from us, *you did not accept it as the word of men, but as the true word of God — the word now at work in you who believe*" (Thessalonians 2:13, 2019: emphasis added).

[18]Althusser discusses the "religious myth of reading" in *Reading Capital*: "Only from history in thought, the theory of history, was it possible to account for the historical religion of reading... religious myths of the voice (the Logos) speaking in the sequences of a discourse; of the Truth that inhabits its scripture; and of the ear that hears or the eye that reads this discourse, in order to discover in it (if they are pure) the speech of Truth which inhabits each of its Words in person" (Althusser, 1970: 17-18).

knowledged religious convention without grammatological standing[19]. Derrida presents many ways in which the science of grammatology could be approached theoretically and, subsequently, contends that the whole endeavour may be in vain because of a fundamental epistemological obstacle: the conditions of logocentric history (i.e., a logocentric epoch)[20]. Derrida suggests that logocentrism dominants conceptually to such a degree that research questions for a science of writing are almost invariably limited by metaphysical approaches to a theory of grammatology. "The idea of science and the idea of writing — therefore also of the science of writing — is meaningful for us only in terms of an origin and within a world to which a certain concept of the sign. . . and a certain concept of the relationships between speech and writing, have already been assigned" (ibid.: 5). The science of the writing (i.e. grammatology) is thus epistemologically limited by historically specific modes of written representation.

Despite the apparent limitations of grammatology that Derrida speculates upon this does not prevent him patiently considering the many-sided possibilities of a science of writing. In chapter three in *Of Grammatology* entitled "Of Grammatology as a Positive Science" Derrida writes: "On what conditions is a grammatology possible? Its fundamental condition is certainly the undoing [*sollicitation*] of logocentrism. But this condition of possibility turns into a condition of impossibility" (ibid.: 74). The "undoing of logocentrism" would, therefore, signal the end of the "metaphysics of phonetic writing" whereby the "obviousnesses" of attributed meanings are scientifically established by a new form of non-logocentric linguistic practice, and with this, the problematic of grammatology would have been theoretically surpassed.

Michel Pêcheux, in *Language, Semantics and Ideology*, takes as his epistemic starting-point, the "self-evident" (i.e. logocentric) dominance of meaning that Althusser discusses in his Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses essay — and remarks upon the need for a kind of grammatological investiga-

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[19]According to Derrida: "All the metaphysical determinations of truth...are more or less inseparable from the instance of the logos, or of a reason of thought within the lineage of the logos, in whatever sense it is understood: in the pre-Socratic or the philosophical sense, in the sense of God's infinite understanding...Between being and mind...there would be a relationship of translation or natural signification; between mind and logos, a relationship of conventional symbolization" (Derrida, 1974: 10-11).

[20]Hegel's philosophy of history is an example of logocentric history, see, "The Pit and the Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel's Semiology" in Derrida's *Margins of Philosophy* (Derrida, 1982).

tion — which Pêcheux calls a "materialist theory of discourse"[21]. Pêcheux's materialist theory of discourse operationalizes the effects of interpellation by articulating forms of semantic differentiation within the relations of production (q.v. §8.3). Advancing Althusser's hypotheses regarding the conditions of interpellation Pêcheux explicitly links the "constitution of meaning" and the "constitution of the subject" as an effect of social relations. "All my work finds its definition here, in this linking of the question of the *constitution of meaning* to that of the *constitution of the subject*... located inside the 'central thesis' itself, in the figure of interpellation" (Pêcheux, 1982: 105). This apparent *identity* between the constitution of the subject and "its" meaning Pêcheux refers to as the "Munchausen-effect" — an effect of "phantasy" — where the individual (interpellated as subject) is the cause of itself (q.v. §1.2). The "Munchausen-effect... in memory of that immortal baron who lifted himself into the air by his own hair" amounts to "positing the subject as the origin of the subject, i.e., in what concerns us, by positing the subject of discourse as the origin of the subject of discourse" (ibid.: 109). This "Munchausen-effect" that Pêcheux describes is an example of logocentric, metaphysical, "obviousness". Rather than taking into account the various discursive conditions by which a subject is interpellated the munchausen-effect refers to the belief that a subject's discourse is "its own" and that this is *self*-evident (q.v. Table 7.1).

The undoing of logocentrism (i.e., the self-evident semantic and syntactic structures of interpellation) meets with an epistemological obstacle[22]: the subject-form of discourse. Because the subject-form of interpellative discourse is repeatedly being reinstated by ideological state apparatuses the constitution of meaning recurs alongside the constitution of the subject and must do, unequivocally, for subjects to "work by themselves" (Althusser, 1971a: 181). This idealism of the subject-form (i.e., positing the subject as the cause of the subject) is an exemplary case of logocentrism. "Logocentrism is ...fundamentally, an idealism. It is the matrix of idealism. Idealism is its most direct representation, the most constantly dominant force. And the dismantling of logocentrism is simultaneously... a deconstitution of idealism

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[21]Pêcheux states: "Now, and it is, at this precise point that the necessity for a materialist theory of discourse begins, the evidentness of the spontaneous existence of the subject (as origin or cause in itself) is immediately compared by Althusser with another evidentness, all-pervasive, as we have seen, in the idealist philosophy of language, the evidentness of meaning" (Pêcheux, 1982: 104).

[22]Bachelard's concept of the epistemological obstacle is used by Althusser, Derrida, and Pêcheux to articulate the effects of theoretical ideologies (cf. Althusser, 1990; Derrida, 1981; Pêcheux, 1982). For Bachelard's original description of this concept, see, "The idea of the epistomological obstacle" in *The Formation of the Scientific Mind* (Bachelard, 2002).

or spiritualism in all their variants" (Derrida, 1981: 51). The purpose, then, of including grammatological methods for the theoretical development of specular sociology, is to deconstruct the ideality of interpellative mis/recognition. "*Of Grammatology* is the title of a question: a question about the necessity of a science of writing, about the conditions that would make it possible, about the critical work that would have to open its field and resolve the epistemological obstacles; but it is also a question about the limits of this science" (ibid.: 13). To be hailed — to be subjected to interpellation — is to be identified within a particular system of textuality, a particular set of semantic and syntactic coordinates within a system of "communication" (e.g: speech and writing), the materiality of which pre-exists any somatic singularity: this pre-existing meaning constitutes the inscription of interpellative practices[23]. Contrary to this vision the horizon of specular sociology, with reference to grammatology, can begin to study the interplay of textual systems and social relations. Althusser remarked upon the "Derrida-effect" where individual-subjects are structural effects of theoretical positions and specular sociology is an extrapolation of this notion in terms of demarcating the elements/constraints of an *a-subjective social science*, that is, a form social research that does not presuppose truth guarantees of pre-constructed, ideological, identity (q.v. §1.3 & §2.3).

The practice of writing is regulated from institutional sites and for this reason careful scrutiny must be given to what is represented by those organizations which oversee the objectivity of description (q.v. Table 8.2)[24]. Foucault discusses in *Power/Knowledge* "the gradual imposition of a whole system of values disguised as the teaching of literacy, reading and writing covering up the imposition of values" as being key strategy for social control (Foucault, 1980: 20). The "truth" of writing is represented by a given *dispositif* (q.v. Table 4.3). "Truth", Foucault maintains, "is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements...'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extends it" (Foucault, 1984: 74). Grammatology investigates this relationship between "truth" and written systems of signification. Written systems become "true" by means of their performative imposition: the "ordered procedures" by which systems of writing are produced, regulated, and distributed, are dependent on institutional sites to legitimate this

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[23]Althusser states: "The existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing" (Althusser, 1971a: 175).

[24]For Althusser this a core function of the educational ISA (Ideological State Apparatus).

discursive authority[25]. To be *authoritative* institutional sites determine the legitimacy of particular discursive modalities and, sometimes prescriptively, authorize select types of signification (e.g. a national language). Changes that occur within such frameworks of institutional authority are indicative of historical conditions of textual production[26]. Moreover, these epistemic changes that occur within systems of writing and signification, are possible insofar 'true' statements are historically validated. Thus the history of epistemology, in materialist terms, is the history of the ordered procedures by which truth is, textually, produced.

For Derrida the history of writing is the history of the *dissimulation* of writing where its authority is effaced as it is inscribed[27]. Systems of writing appear, *prima facie*, self-evident: as if these conditions of signification did not have a history. The historical conditions of the production of writing are not *immediately* visible in the words written on a given page of text — the "ordered procedures" of discursive production constitute the supersensible history of *comprehension*. Textual authority, or, the truth of writing, does not exist "within" writing, as if writing somehow had an interior, but exists in the social structures that support its transmission. These structures are unseen on the written surface — be it a sheet of paper or a digital screen — and can only be determined by abstracting from the immediacy of a textual experience to examine the mechanisms by which logocentrism exists. Logocentrism serves to indicate the extent to which the visibility of textuality has been erased by the absent causality of invisible networks of discursive production (cf. Godelier, 1977; Derrida, 1974; Althusser, 2003) . Specular sociology, then, takes for

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[25]The Oxford English Dictionary lists four definitions of authority that are pertinent here: "An authoritative piece of writing"; "Power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience; moral, legal, or political supremacy"; "Power derived from or conferred by another"; "The fact or state of possessing credible information; power to inspire belief in the truth of something; right to be believed; testimony, evidence" (OED Online, 2018a).

[26]Foucault presents a materialist account of an author's authority in "What is an Author?" where he summarizes four characteristics of the "author function": "(1) the author function is linked to the juridical and institutional system that encompasses, determines, and articulates the universe of discourses; (2) it does not affect all discourses in the same way at all times and in all types of civilization; (3) it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a discourse to its producer, but rather by a series of specific and complex operations; (4) it does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise simultaneously to several selves, to several subjects — positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals" (Foucault, 1984: 113).

[27]In *Of Grammatology* Derrida states: "The logos of being...is the first and last resource of the sign...The voice *is heard* (understood)...closest to the self as the absolute effacement of the signifier...This illusion is the history of truth and cannot be dissipated so quickly" (Derrida, 1974: 20).

its object the mechanisms of dissimulation that exist between social reality and textual representation. The relative autonomy of a "subject" is textually ordered by differential histories — and the economy of writing articulates these histories logocentrically — so as to make history *present* (cf. Derrida, 1974; Althusser, 2003; Pêcheux, 1982). Such presentification interpellates subjects in accordance the ordered procedures of textual authority[28]. Given that the writing of history, i.e., *historiography*, is an attempt to convey, via historically specific symbols, the nature of historical 'events', grammatology is the attempt to establish the objectivity of its transmission medium.

It is by interpellative means that an individual subject is made to recognize its social history as true. The specular mis/recognition of the social order is made transmissible using the institution of writing. "The writing I am currently executing and the reading you are currently performing are... rituals of ideological recognition, including the 'obviousness' with which the 'truth' or 'error' of my reflections may impose itself on you" (Althusser, 1971a: 173). Specular sociology, therefore, requires an epistemology that is historically grounded by a theory of how writing is socialized and for what reasons. When Derrida mentions the theoretical pre-assignment[29] (i.e. preinscription) of the sign (the signifier) within discursive systems this remark introduces the general problematic of historical epistemology. For signs to be pre-assigned assumes an epistemology that *dictates* the ideal form of inquiry rather than materially explaining how such epistemic objects are determined by historical processes (cf. Derrida, 1974; Gattinara, 2018). To exclude, for example, the extent to which writing systems are products of social relations is to ignore the historicity of discursive control[30]. By placing the epistemology of writing in historical context it is possible to *cite* the logocentrism of interpellation. The "undoing" of logocentrism, as Derrida describes the activity of textual deconstruction, reconfigures the existing norms of readability and hence the historical transmissibility of signification. This implies that the question of literacy or the status of being literate can never be decided once and

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[28]Benoit-Barné and Cooren discuss "presentification" as a management strategy in "The Accomplishment of Authority Through Presentification: How Authority is Distributed Among and Negotiated by Organizational Members" from *Management Communication Quarterly*: "authority is achieved through *presentification* — that is, by making sources of authority present in interaction" (Benoit-Barné and Cooren, 2009).

[29]The etymology of "assignment" derives from the word "sign" and thus affixs (assigns) the sign to its object (e.g.: designatum/designata). According to the Online Dictionary of Etymology: (from Latin *assignaure/adsignare* "to mark out, to allot by sign...from *signum* "identifying mark, sign". Original use was in legal transferences of personal property" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2018)

[30]The history of banned books by both the Church and the State directly exemplifies the social control of textual material.

for all but is constantly undergoing rearticulation in relation to norms of socially determined readability. In terms of discursive refraction the norms of readability actualize the logocentric closure of specular mis/recognition (q.v. Table 9.1). The erasure of the conditions of production from discourse (e.g: scientific, ideological, aesthetic &c.) that is refracted intersubjectively dissimulates the virtual histories that determine its cognition (q.v. Table 2.1, Table 6.2 & Table 8.3).

9.3   Historical Epistemology

Specular sociology must include a historical dimension insofar as it analyses structural causality as an interpellative system subject to the relative autonomy of multiple histories (q.v. §7.4) . Because of the positional logic of social structuration textual series are individuated in relation to the historical conditions of sense genesis (e.g.: class seriality)[31]. Therefore when analysing the elements of mis/recognition borne by social relations as instances of interpellation the study of historical epistemology can potentially offer detailed accounts of theoretical production in relation to socio-structural effects (q.v. Table 3.1).

Althusser's work, along with that of his precursors and descendents in theory[32], is today being studied under the rubric of "historical epistemology" (cf. Rheinberger, 2010; Méthot, 2012; Schmidgen, 2012; Chimisso, 2012). In *On Historicizing Epistemology* Rheinberger remarks upon the importance of Derrida's research to the field of historical epistemology. Rheinberger's exposition of Derrida's thought includes references to fundamental issues of semantics within the epistemic structures of generalized writing[33]. "In his Grammatology, Derrida coined the term *historiality* for this iterative-recursive production of meaning in the irrevocable exteriorization of a generalized writing" (Rheinberger, 2010: 76; emphasis in original). Rheinberger further states: "The concept of 'trace' is central to Derrida's thought about historiality. Writing has the character of a 'trace' " (ibid.: 76). In relation to the question of plurivocity (i.e. the overdetermination of différance) Rheinberger notes that for Derrida "the generator of meaning" is caused by "displacement itself"

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[31]For Marx's account of "sensuous" materialism viz-à-viz "contemplative" materialism refer to: *Theses on Feuerbach* (Marx, 1847).

[32]This includes Georges Canguilhem, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Gaston Bachelard (q.v. Rheinberger, 2010).

[33]The research of Philippe Sollers in *Writing and the Experience of Limits* can also usefully be read as an adjunct to Derrida's research in *Of Grammatology*. Sollers outlines a theory of "semantic materialism" that overlaps with Rheinberger's interests in historiality (cf. Sollers, 1983; Rheinberger, 2010).

— polysemically (ibid.: 77).

Table 9.2: Historiality

Iterative-recursive production of meaning	Generalized writing
Epistemic displacement	Historical epistemology

The field of historical epistemology is not *in toto* methodologically distinct from the project that has been outlined as specular sociology — for specular sociology and historical epistemology share the same horizon — the possibility of disclosing the "self-evident" structures of socially inscribed experience (q.v. Table 6.1). Dominique Lecourt in *Marxism and Epistemology: Bachelard, Canguilhem and Foucault* suggests Bachelard's major "discovery" is "precisely to have recognized and then theoretically reflected the fact that science has no object outside its own activity; that it is in itself, in its practice, productive of its own norms and of the criterion of its existence" (Lecourt, 1975: 26)[34]. Determining its own norms and criteria of existence (e.g.: using hypotheses, falsification, experimental conditions, laboratory settings &c.) scientific practice is, without question, historical, and it follows that, according to Lecourt, so too must be epistemology. "Let me leap straight to my conclusions: by adopting as its object scientific knowledge in its movement, epistemology is dealing with a *historical process*" (ibid.)[35].

The history of epistemology — as a discipline — does not mirror scientific practice but rather proceeds by way of explicating theoretical advances in knowledge historically (without recourse to the philosophy of history such as Hegel's): "in opening the field of historical epistemology, he [Bachelard] uncovers — lays bare and to the quick — what philosophy is eager to cover up: the real — historical — conditions of the production of scientific knowledges" (ibid.: 27). The "cover up" is to be found, Lecourt states, in the difference between philosophical and scientific modes of inquiry, "when a philosopher reads a word he tends to see in it a being; the scientists see in it a concept all of whose being is resolved in the system of relations in which it is inscribed. . . where there is really only a system of relations, words induce the idea there are entities. By which Philosophy allows itself to be seduced,

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[34]Althusser describes a similar account to this in "Remark on the Category: "Process without a Subject or Goal(s)" from *Essays in Self-Criticism* (q.v. Althusser, 1976).

[35]According to Gattinara from "The Relationship between History and Epistemology in Georges Canguilhem and Gaston Bachelard": "The revolutionary character of Bachelard's epistemology consisted precisely in the integration of the history of the sciences in the very heart of the epistemological argumentation... which constituted — history was there to prove it — the main feature of scientific knowledge" (Gattinara, 2018: 14-15).

taking them for hard currency" (ibid.: 37-39).   Historical epistemology, in the Bachelardian conception, is thus of a different order to that of the epistemology of "philosophers" (q.v. §5.1). The former studies the changing methods and objects that pertain to the historical and material relations that constitute a given phenomenon, while the latter, in Lecourt's analysis, make assertions about various states of "being"[36]. The "iterative-recursive production of meaning" in writing can be studied using Bachelardian epistemology whereby written discourse is objectified as a system of material relations rather than a pre-existing metaphysical "truth" that is "crammed with being"[37].

Interpellation takes effect through systems of textuality — the material foundation of which is class division and with it systemic inequality — to suppose that both speech and the subject are 'free' in the capitalist mode of production is to be subjected to 'bourgeois ideology' (cf. Althusser, 1976; Sollers, 1983; Pêcheux, 1982). The methods of historical epistemology form a distinctive part of Althusser's researches. Lecourt notes that Althusser's work is the site of an "unexpected encounter": "a theoretical encounter: the one which has brought together... dialectical materialism — Marxist philosophy — and a certain epistemological tradition inaugurated by Gaston Bachelard" (Lecourt, 1975: 7). Within bourgeois ideology language is hypostatized by State apparatuses which articulate the relations of production "legally" and the subject is subsequently interpellated and positioned within the prevailing class structure (q.v. §1.3)[38].

When Rheinberger, commenting upon Derridean-inspired historical epistemology, explains that the generator of meaning within generalized writing is epistemic displacement such semantic production is the result iterative-recursive activity. Hypostatized language precludes semantic displacement through the ontological assumptions of logocentrism. Derrida states in 'Politics and Friendship' from *The Althusserian Legacy*: "I critique of rather deconstruct logocentrism, that is, the hypostasis of language through the reduction of reality to language... it should not be forgotten than [sic] deconstruction starts with the deconstruction of logocentrism" (Derrida, 1993: 223). The genesis, then, of nothing less than "deconstruction" begins with the displacement of hypostatized language. In *Positions* he states: "Grammatology must deconstruct everything that ties the concept and norms of scientificity

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[36]Althusser's research *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists* presents many issues regarding so-called "scientific ideology" in the practice of scientists where scientific work is imbued with philosophical residues.

[37]Derrida refers to the ontological aims of philosophy as "ontotheology" and "ontotheological" thinking (cf. Derrida, 1981, 1974).

[38]The volume *Althusser and Law* contains various interpretations of Althusser's legal thinking (q.v. Sutter, 2013).

to ontotheology, logocentrism, phonologism. This is an an immense and interminable work that must ceaselessly avoid letting the transgression of the classic project of science fall back into a prescientific empiricism" (Derrida, 1981: 35) (q.v. §7.1).

Bachelard's criticism of "philosophy" is precisely that it is, in Derrida's terminology, logocentric. The philosopher's logocentrism confuses the "meaning" of a word with the relations which make semantic phenomena possible thus reducing reality to language. Bachelard's ideological "philosopher" makes various assertions regarding "truth" whereas the scientist tests the objectivity of a hypothesis (q.v. Lecourt, 1975). The philosopher reduces reality to language as the truth of the world while the scientist opens up new domains of objectivity for systematic investigation and testing. "What Bachelard is revealing here is the fact that when a scientist and a philosopher pronounce the word object, when they introduce it into their discourse, they are not discussing the same thing, or, rather: philosophy is discussing a thing and the scientist is discussing a result" (ibid.: 54). When Pêcheux finds the basis of his work "in this linking of the question of the constitution of meaning to that of the constitution of the subject" interpellation is taken to be the result of the subject-form of discourse rather than the "truth" of the subject as the self-evident logocentric guarantee of its discourse (Pêcheux, 1982: 82). Thinking "scientific knowledge as a process is to displace the traditional questions" of philosophy: "it is to refuse to think 'Knowledge' without specification; it is to refuse to admit that a knowledge might reach being itself, without mediation; in the last instance it is to affirm that the essential discursivity of scientific knowledge is the pledge of its objectivity" (Lecourt, 1975: 54). Lecourt maintains "Bachelard performed the work of an innovator in Philosophy because he took it as his motto 'to go to school with the scientists'; and that in so doing he was able to discern the 'truth' of Philosophy, which lies in its function as the spokesman of ideologies vis-à-vis the sciences" (ibid.: 110).

Ascertaining the ideological functioning of philosophy was an aim Althusser dedicated many years of research and it was a problematic to which he returned numerous times throughout his career (cf. Althusser, 1969, 1990, 1970, 1976). To be interpellated to a particular position in the class structure is to possess the appropriate 'reasons-of-a-subject' of that position (q.v. §8.3). These 'reasons-of-a-subject', and even the category of 'subject' itself, were for

Althusser, logocentrically determined[39]. Thus to "deconstruct" these logo-centric determinations is to undertake historical epistemology by attempting to analyse the theoretical conditions that determine the apparent "freedom" of subjects in the class-determined discourse of capitalism (cf. Althusser, 1976; Derrida, 1981; Lecourt, 1975). By including historical epistemology as a theoretical resource for the research of specular sociology the effects of the mirror structure of mis/recognition can be delineated using a non-logocentric mode of inquiry so that the extant philosophical subject is not confused with the subject as a referent.

For epistemology to be historically understood, in Althusser's terms, it is not a case of ascribing a philosophical history to the history of knowledge (q.v. §5.1). Rather an objective historical epistemology must examine the discontinuity of multiple histories as they are differentiated by material practices (q.v. §4.3). Historical epistemology must, therefore, determine the discontinuity of historical knowledge to compare one history to another (e.g. military history, economic history, literary history &c). One possible methodological option here is to dispense with the subject as unifying agent for the historical process, as Althusser does, insofar as history is a process without a subject or goals (q.v. Althusser, 1976). By excluding the subject as a cause of historicity research can then directed towards the material practices to which "subjectivity" is attributed[40]. Continuous history assumes the continuity of consciousness, however, the discontinuity of scientific research demonstrates that the history of knowledge is a-subjectively generated (cf. Foucault, 1972; Althusser, 1976). Interpellation relies on the assumptions of a continuous history in terms of the truth-guarantee between subject and object (q.v. Althusser, 1990). For example the meaning of a text is continuous until it is displaced by altered conditions of readability: it is no longer readable in the same terms because the structure of "comprehension" has been changed (q.v. Sollers, 1983).

The philosophical "cover up" that Lecourt remarks upon in the domain of epistemology is an effect of interpellation whereby a subject mis/recognizes itself as a certain kind of metaphysical entity in relation to the historical conditions of knowledge production (q.v. Lecourt, 1975). When a subject has

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[39]Althusser states: "It is for precise ideological ends that bourgeois philosophy has taken the legal-ideological notion of the *subject*, made it into a philosophical category... and posed the question of *the* Subject of knowledge (the *ego* of the cogito, the Kantian or Husserlian transcendental subject etc.), of morality, etc., and of the *the Subject of* history...History does not have a Subject, in the philosophical sense of the term, but a motor, that very class struggle" (Althusser, 1976: 95-99; emphasis in original).

[40]Mathieu Hilgers presents a suggestive example of this kind of research in "The historicity of the neoliberal state" from *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale* (Hilgers, 2012).

been effectively interpellated its language has been hypostatized to reflect the social order. It is evident that the reasons-of-a-subject vary in terms of historically specific enuciative structures and in this way a subject's capacity to reflect and mis/recognize these structures is also historically overdetermined. These reasons-of-a-subject are dependent upon discursive forms that allow or, indeed, legally necessitate (i.e. legislate), individuals to become subjects. It is such reasons-of-a-subject that produce the intelligibility of agency — a subject's agency is articulated by the discursive structures which make such agency possible — there can be no experience of subjectivity outside the communicative acts that make one an agent[41].

9.4 Interpellation to the Letter

The purpose of specular sociology is to know the mirror-structure of misrecognition, i.e., interpellation, to the letter. For this reason the text by Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe *The Title of the Letter* (1992)[42] is an applicable theoretical resource. Directly, as it concerns the concept of interpellation, the research in *The Title of the Letter*, considers the problem of agency and, therefore, has definitive sociological import[43]. Taken in its sociolinguistic sense the concept "letter" corresponds to the logic of the signifier (Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe, 1992). The extrapolation of this logic that Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe undertake, which is foundationally an exegesis on the work of Lacan, delineates the agency of the letter. The agency of the letter is derived from its authority: "The agency of the letter is thus the *authority* of the letter" (ibid.: 22; emphasis added). It is key to remark here that this authority is grounded in socio-historically specific processes of "literalization" (q.v. §8.3).

"Literalization" is the term used by Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe to demarcate two basic principles of the "science of the letter" where the "the

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[41]According to Althusser: "The agent-individuals always act in the subject-form, as subjects. But the fact that they are necessarily subjects does not make the agents of social-historical practices into the *subject* or *subjects* of history (in the philosophical sense of the term: *subject of*). The subject-agents are only active *in* history through the relations of production and reproduction, and in their forms (Althusser, 1976: 95; emphasis in original).

[42]Originally published in French as *Le titre de la lettre* (1973) Éditions Galilée.

[43]Anthony Giddens in his theory of structuration notes: "Human societies, or social systems, would plainly not exist without human agency" (Giddens, 1984: 171). For further details regarding his account of social agency see, in particular, "Elements of the Theory of Structuration", "Consciousness, Self and Social Encounters", and "Structure, System, Social Reproduction" from *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*.

letter designates *the structure of language insofar as the subject is implicated therein*" (ibid.: 27-28). The first principle is the notion that, following Lacan closely, the signifier (i.e, the letter) is antecedent to the discourse of the subject, and the second principle being that discourse requires a "material support" (ibid). These two principles taken together constitute the "preinscription of the subject in discourse" (ibid.: 30). The "materiality of the signifier" is the structural basis for such preinscription (ibid.: 28).

Table 9.3: Authority of the Letter

Agency	Enunciative Authority
Preinscription	Material Support (textuality)

Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe note the materiality of language allows for its "localization" whereupon the agency of the letter positions the subject according to its structural "implication" (ibid: 27–30). Thus when one is literalized — one is simultaneously localized — by the authority of the letter. Interpellation by the letter is founded upon its authority. Althusser's analysis of ISA's advances this "implication" of the subject beyond doubt. The social relations in which the subject finds itself are ideologically maintained by the subject-form of discourse, which does not, originate with any single individual, but is a discursive effect of the socio-symbolic order.

By breaking, epistemologically, with the philosophical subject-form Althusser simultaneously breaks with any explanations pertaining to the myth of a subject outside of its social conditions of existence, which includes: discourse, valorization, relations of production, family, state, and so on (q.v. §8.4). As much as Althusser dismisses the subject as an ideological category it is not possible to simply abandon its discursive form because: "individuals always-already subjects" (Althusser, 1971a: 176). The subject is implicated within the social structure as it is literalized; it is *literally* subjected to the specular authority of the letter where the mirror structure of mis/recognition is the foremost condition of agency. A subject's intentional agency is secured by the existence of ideological state apparatuses which supply the ideology necessary for interpellative practices. "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (Althusser, 1971a: 162). Here the materiality of sense genesis — as derived from ISAs — determines classes of interpellation (q.v. §8.2).

The structural basis of graphic symbols is a precondition for the subject-form of discourse in which the subject is ideologically preinscribed. Graphism is the term used by André Leroi-Gourhan in *Gesture and Speech* to denote "the capacity to express thought in material symbols" (Leroi-Gourhan, 1993: 187).

The letter, as a graphic sign, is a general technology of thought. "Through an increasingly precise process of analysis, human thought is capable of abstracting symbols from reality. These symbols constitute the world of language which parallels the real world and provides us with our means of coming to grips with reality" (ibid.: 195). The linear graphism of the letter is a particular moment in the historical development of abstracting symbols from reality[44]. The letter is linear in space and the voice is linear in time: to be literalized is to follow the trajectories of these lines. The movement of symbolic abstraction does not coincide, necessarily, with adequation to scientific method (hence the existence, for Althusser, of ideologies). For example 'thought' inasmuch as it conforms to linear graphism is limited by the socio-historical conditions of its linear form; hence the need for nonlinear experimental practices to objectify new modes of understanding for the process of thinking[45].

The material use made of the letter "I" symbolically is not equivalent to the philosophical explanation of the processes that it is intended to represent "subjectively" (e.g.: *cogito ergo sum*). "I" is one letter of twenty six others used to represent innumerable objects and relations in (and including) the w-o-r-l-d alphabetically (i.e. by means of the alphabet)[46] . Any representation of agency is therefore implicated within the symbolic efficacy of these graphic forms (cf. Leroi-Gourhan, 1993; Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe, 1992). "Language is so organized that it permits each speaker to *appropriate to himself* an entire language by designating himself as *I*" (Benveniste, 1971: 226). Moreover, given the particular way this system of linear graphism functions the history of the production of these signs is not legible in their use, i.e., discourse does not reveal how it was produced when it is used — it is simply "expressed". Thus the material history of sociolinguistic development is effaced when it is articulated and, in this way, exhibits an *invisible* agency (cf. Derrida, 1974; Pêcheux, 1982). A subject's agency is *understood* (i.e., made intelligible) by the materiality of the signifier and without these material structures (graphic, phonetic, semantic, lexical &c.) the subject's discourse would not be intelligible *ipso facto*. The materiality of the signifier, and the

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[44]The chapter "Language Symbols" from Leroi-Gourhan's *Gesture and Speech* provides an evolutionary history of symbolization, see the sub-sections, "The Birth of Graphism", "Writing and the Linearization of Symbols" and "Linear Graphism" for further extrapolation (Leroi-Gourhan, 1993).

[45]The work of Manuel De Landa in *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* foregrounds some potential avenues of inquiry for such research practice, see, in particular, Part III: "Memes and Norms" (De Landa, 2000).

[46]Gelb presents the history of the alphabet as an evolution of writing systems with its structural beginnings having roots in several ancient cultures. "The Alphabet" from *A Study of Writing* outlines this evolutionary development of alphabetic literacy (Gelb, 1952).

alphabet more specifically, does not, immediately, signify how it signifies, however, the subject of ideology is always held responsible for its actions, even if the meaning of signification is never self-evident (cf. Althusser, 1971a; Pêcheux, 1982).

For Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe, in *The Title of the Letter*, a subject's agency is preinscribed by the authority of the signifier. A structural condition of this agency is authority: this material support is found in institutional sites where graphic systems are valorized and made transmissible (q.v. §8.2). A subject's agency can only be authorized from these sites in the terms defined by the materiality of the signifier. The signifying structure provides literal authority to the subject in terms that are already predefined institutionally (q.v. Table 8.3). In the case of self-identification that is grammatically localized by the first-person — "I" — this agent is then implicated by the rest of the grammatical structure to which it "belongs" (cf. Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe, 1992; Benveniste, 1971). Thus by means of implied self-reference the subject then "reflects" the social order in relation to this "I": it is interpellated to the letter (q.v. Table 1.2). This "I" has the lead part in a play without an author (q.v. §2.3)[47]. The objective authority of the "I" is strictly absent from its articulation, that is, "I" does not necessarily refer to the material history of its linguistic formation. This is due to the fact that "I" provides a performative function of self-reference. "I" does not indicate how it functions in use — its conditions of historical emergence are absent — the play of the "I" in discourse does not have an single author — it is a structural effect which rests on the basis of an a-subjective grammar (cf. Sollers, 1983; Althusser, 2003).

Specular effects of mis/recognition occur when the preinscription and authority of interpellative practices literalize 'subjects' logocentrically (q.v. §9.3). In such cases the social reality of the state has been reduced to a linguistic form and its subjects are then preinscribed as the interpellated functionaries of its discourse, i.e., the process of symbolic abstraction has been obfucated by logocentric hypostatization (q.v. Table 1.2). Dominant forms of graphism are then the only legitimate way to make intelligible statements, however, these symbolic forms are actually imposed by virtual histories (q.v.

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[47]In his study entitled "The 'Piccolo Teatro': Bertolazzi and Brecht" Althusser formulates the idea of a materialist theory of theatre surpassing the conceptual form of classical theatre. The subject is no longer the centre of the play, rather, it is the *structure* of the play that takes centre stage. "What is the ideology of a society or a period if it is not that society's or period's consciousness of itself...?...I am content to be able to infer that a time without real self-criticism...should be inclined to represent itself and recognize itself in an uncritical theatre, that is, a theatre whose (ideological) material presupposed the formal conditions for an aesthetic of the consciousness of self" (Althusser, 1969: 144).

§5.4). Within the economic, political and ideological structures of class the subject-form derives its authority from state power which, in turn, serves the exigencies of valorization (q.v. Table 8.1 & Table 8.3). To be literalized to the letter of capitalism is to exist within the confines of pre-defined structures of signification that reproduce the relations of production by means of socially constructed abstractions (e.g. capital and legal ideology).

Lacan explains in *The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason Since Freud* that: "by 'letter' I designate the material medium [support] that concrete discourse borrows from language... language, with its structure, exists prior to each subject's entry into it at a certain moment in his mental development" (Lacan, 2006: 414). The capitalist mode of production has a specific signifying structure which preexists any given individual-subject and to "communicate" within this social system one must speak the language of state (q.v. §8.1). According to Althusser and Poulantzas this is a function of ISAs and the institutional materiality of the state. Given that a subject is inserted into the symbolic order of the state at birth it then has to learn the semantic and syntactical modes of signification that are *prescribed* by state power (cf. Althusser, 1971a; Poulantzas, 1980; Pêcheux, 1982). Because the dominant discursive modalities of state power do not signify that they signify (or how they signify) the letter dissimulates its social structure as it is articulated. What Leroi-Gourhan acknowledges, namely that symbols are abstracted from brute nature and are themselves an object of labour, is not apparent when symbols are used, because the production process of the symbolic form is not visible at the time of articulation. The visible form of symbols does not reveal the multitude of social processes that maintain their operative use: the conditions of production of the symbolic order are invisible to the subject's 'using' those symbols (q.v. Table 2.3).

Agency is then always contextually preinscribed by the authority of the letter insofar as the letter is the material support of state power and, in effect, the condition of generalized writing is logocentric because the production of signification is obfuscated by self-evident meanings that incorporate (i.e. embody) the interests of the capitalist state (cf. Pêcheux, 1982; Poulantzas, 1980). Ideologically a subject is subjected to the invisible structures that determine symbolic forms logocentrically and, subsequently, becomes the agent of valorization processes which precede its existence socio-historically (cf. Althusser, 1971a). The structures of class are positional in terms of the authority of the signifier, that is, the relations of production preinscribe the agency of its subjects by means of the materiality of generalized writing. "Good" subjects accept the letter of interpellation and the "absolute guarantee that everything really is so" by accepting the authority of capitalist social relations (q.v. §1.2). The work of historical epistemology and with it, specular

sociology, is to critically examine the preinscription of subjectivity within social structures. This necessitates a thorough theoretical engagement with what Lecourt calls "the real – historical – conditions of the production of scientific knowledges" so as to distinguish between scientific knowledge and "scientific ideologies" as well as other ideological forms (e.g. religious, moral and aesthetic) that "spontaneously" interpellate subjects (cf. Canguilhem, 1981; Lecourt, 1975; Althusser, 1990). Structures of interpellation have their discursive basis in the materiality of the signifier and — insofar as the subject is implicated by structures of logocentric knowledge — specular sociology can study the scientificity of these structures to disclose how such "knowledge-effects" are socially maintained (cf. Derrida, 1974; Althusser, 1971a; Badiou, 2009).

Postface

Is Althusser's research on interpellation, in fact, revolutionary science? Thomas S. Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* studies "scientific revolutions" vis-à-vis "normal science" (Kuhn, 1970)[1]. Scientific revolutions, according to Kuhn, produce paradigm shifts by calling into question, and subsequently departing from, the dominant methodologies and practices of a given science[2]. Normal science reproduces — theoretically and empirically — the established principles of a domain of knowledge using pre-determined epistemological means of validation. Kuhn maintains normal science cannot always resolve anomalous findings within the structure of an existing paradigm, and, in some cases will actively curb opposition to alternative interpretations of the phenomena under investigation. "Normal science, for example, often suppresses fundamental novelties because they are necessarily subversive of its basic commitments" (Kuhn, 1970: 5). A scientific revolution marks a paradigmatic break in the development of a science in such a way that formerly "normal" criteria are no longer sufficiently *objective*. Marx's "epistemological break" that Althusser describes is, then, a paradigm shift for the field of human history[3]. Althusser states in "The Conditions of Marx's Scientific Discovery": "Marx founded a new science: the science of History... I concluded that there was a radical difference between Marx's theory and previous conceptions, and I spoke of an 'epistemological break'

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[1]Thomas S. Kuhn (1922-1996) and Louis Althusser (1918-1990) were academic contemporaries on different continents: Althusser taught philosophy at the *École Normale Supérieure* in France while Kuhn taught the same discipline at the University of California, Princeton University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the United States (cf. Bird, 2018; Lewis, 2018)

[2]Kuhn cites the work of Issac Newton (physics), Nicolaus Copernicus (astronomy), Antoine Lavoisier (chemistry) and Albert Einstein (physics) as examples of revolutionary science (q.v. Kuhn, 1970).

[3]The theoretical similarities between Kuhn's account of scientific revolution and Althusser's epistemological break have been noted by John Urry in "Thomas S. Kuhn as Sociologist of Knowledge" (Urry, 1973); David W. Schwartzman in "Althusser, Dialectical Materialism and the Philosophy of Science" (Schwartzman, 1975); and Steven B. Smith in "Ideology and Interpretation: The Case of Althusser" (Smith, 1989).

and of a 'rupture' " (Althusser, 1973: 4-6). The paradigm shifts of Freud and Copernicus were also, Althusser contends, ruptures in the continuity of thought for the domains of psychology and astronomy (q.v. Table 1.1). In his researches Althusser defines mechanisms of interpellation to demonstrate the theoretical discontinuity brought about by the paradigm shift of historical materialism for the human sciences (q.v. Table 2.3. & §1.3). Marx's rupture is contained, and extended, in Althusser's concept of interpellation whereby interpellative effects are the symptoms of a continuing break with ideological explanations of subjective experience[4]. The revolutionary discoveries of historical materialism are thus furthered by Althusser's representation of the paradigm shift brought about by Marx. Althusser saw that Marx had made an unprecedented discovery and detailed how this occurred theoretically (q.v. Althusser, 1973, 1970)[5].

Kuhn finds that political revolutions and scientific revolutions reveal how the dominant interpretation of a domain of knowledge or form of social life has been found wanting. "Political revolutions are inaugurated by a growing sense...that existing institutions have ceased to adequately meet the problems posed by an environment...In much the same way, scientific revolutions are inaugurated by a growing sense... that an existing paradigm has ceased to function adequately" (Kuhn, 1970: 92). Political and scientific revolutions symptomatically announce that there is an epistemological gap between the received definition of events and the rupture of new discoveries — political — or scientific. The possibility of new knowledge has the potential to produce anomalous results. "In both political and scientific development the sense of malfunction that can lead to crisis is a prerequisite for revolution" (ibid.). Althusser's states that Marx founded two disciplines within a single break (i.e., paradigm shift): dialectical materialism and historical materialism. Marx's science of history (historical materialism) is theoretically elaborated in relation to the class struggle in theory (dialectical materialism). The effects of interpellation, for Althusser span these two domains: a subject can be interpellated both economically and ideologically. Althusser's concept of interpellation, then, endeavours to explains the psycho-social mechanisms that are underdeveloped in Marx's theory of capitalist society.

Althusser follows Marx's paradigm shift, and for this reason, his work on

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[4]For Althusser's presentation of symptomatic reading refer to *Reading Capital* (Althusser, 1970). Brewster maintains: "Only a symptomatic reading... is a reading of Marx's work that will allow us to establish the epistemological break that makes possible historical materialism as a science" (Brewster, 1970: 317).

[5]In *Reading Capital* Althusser chronologically divides Marx's theory into four periods: "Early Works (up to 1842); Works of the Break (*Oeuvres de la Coupure* – 1845); Transitional Works (1845-47); Mature Works (1857-83)" (Brewster, 1970: 323).

interpellation continues the break of Marx's revolutionary science. Because the rules of method have changed as a consequence of Marx's rupture within social science this necessitates considerable epistemological adaptation to the new theoretical conditions of the paradigm shift (q.v. Table 4.1). Kuhn states: "That is why a new theory... is seldom or never just an increment to what is already known. Its assimilation requires the reconstruction of prior theory and the re-evaluation of prior fact, an intrinsically revolutionary process that is seldom completed by a single man and never overnight" (Kuhn, 1970: 7). The re-evaluation, reconstruction, and deconstruction, of Marx's revolutionary discoveries has been undertaken by many of Althusser's colleagues and the "assimilation" of Marx's theory continues unabatted today (q.v. §2.2)[6]. Marx's discoveries, Althusser maintains, have produced a theoretical point of no return: "this event is irreversible" (Althusser, 1973: 4). The transformation Marx realised has rewritten the rules of method for social analysis by defining class effects in the production of knowledge (cf. Therborn, 1976; Althusser, 2014; Balibar, 2007; Sohn-Rethel, 1978; Godelier, 1986; Mepham and Ruben, 1979). When Marx articulates his vision of historical materialism he does so does with the understanding that knowledge production is political (q.v. Marx, 1976). Marx's revolutionary science paradigmatically breaks with the normal science of "bourgeois economics" by critically questioning the "normal" methods of valorization for surplus value.

Kuhn's distinction between normal science and scientific revolutions is used to examine the *structure* of paradigm shifts as a process of epistemological rupture that can be usefully applied to Marx's work. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) presents a structural analysis of theoretical change informed by socio-historical conditions (including pedagogical, technological, and philosophical practices) where the theoretical and empirical practice of a given science is reorganized in light new discoveries brought about by ruptures in paradigmatic ways of thinking. "The extraordinary episodes in which that shift of professional commitments occurs are... scientific revolutions. They are the tradition-shattering complements of the tradition-bound activity of normal science" (Kuhn, 1970: 6). Althusser gave a lecture at the ENS (École Normale Supérieure) in 1967 on the history of science and its relation to ideology entitled 'Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists" that discusses the interpellative limitations of

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[6]For example see the following journals: Capital & Class, Décalage, Dialectical Anthropology, Fast Capitalism, Historical Materialism, Mediations, Rethinking Marxism, Science & Society and Thesis Eleven.

what Kuhn addresses as "normal science"[7]. In this lecture series Althusser explicates how the social basis of theoretical practice is in an ongoing "struggle" with ideological and pre-scientific conceptions of knowledge production (q.v.§3.2). Althusser maintains that science "education" exists under the control of State apparatuses (c.f. Althusser, 1990, 1976). The State has a hold over, i.e. regulates, the "normal science" of capitalist society. "All science teaching, whether it wants to or not, conveys an ideology of science and of its findings, based on a certain idea of the place of science in society... therefore of the division between manual and intellectual labour" (Althusser, 1990: 94-95). Marx's paradigm shift is this very awareness of the social conditions of scientific development, i.e., a specific awareness of the *social structure of scientificity* (i.e. scientific practice) (q.v Althusser, 1990). Empirical knowledge insofar as it is "normal science" is administered within a social environment that is class-determined and as such is not independent of political influence. "There is no teaching of pure knowledge [*savoir*] that is not at the same time a *savoir-faire*... a know-how-to-act-in-relation-to-this-knowledge, and to its *theoretical and social function*. This know-how... implies a political attitude towards the object of knowledge...and towards its place in society" (ibid.: 94).

Pierre Bourdieu dedicated his final lectures at the Collège de France[8] to express the social consequences of scientific ideologies[9]. "I think that the world of science is threatened by a serious regression... That is why it seemed to me particularly necessary to submit science to a historical and sociological analysis... to better understand the social mechanisms which orient scientific practice" (Bourdieu, 2004: vii-viii). These lectures were published as *Science of Science and Reflexivity* (2004)[10]. According to Bourdieu "submission to economic interests", "the logic of peer competition", and "seductions of the media" all contribute to the regressive state of science (ibid.: vii). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is discussed by Bourdieu in *Science*

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[7]Althusser states: "This introduction to 'The Philosophy Course for Scientists' was delivered in October-November 1967... At that time I and a group of friends concerned with problems in the history of sciences, intrigued by ideological struggle and the forms it can take among the intellectuals of scientific practice, decided to address our colleagues in a series of public lectures" (Althusser, 1990: 71).

[8]The Collège de France has supported the activity of many great researchers in the humanities and social sciences: Roland Barthes, Emile Benveniste, Henri Bergson, Georges Dumézil, Michel Foucault, Lucien Febvre, Gilles Gaston Granger, Pierre Hadot, André Leroi-Gourhan, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Marcel Mauss, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Jules Vuillemin all received professorial appointments there (Collège de France, 2018).

[9]Pierre Bourdieu was Chair of Sociology (*Chair de Sociologie*) at the Collège de France from 1982-2001.

[10]Originally published as *Science de la Science et réflexivité* (2001).

of Science and Reflexivity where he notes the magnitude of Kuhn's work: "Thomas Kuhn radically changed the space of theoretical possibilities in the sociology of science. His main contribution was to show that the development of science... is marked by a series of breaks and by the alternation of periods of 'normal science' and 'revolutions' " (ibid.: 14). Kuhn's theory of discontinuous scientific development offers a way to critically assess the epistemological assumptions of a given science reflexively without misrecognizing the socio-historical basis of paradigm shifts. Bourdieu refers to this reflexive process as a form of "epistemological vigilance". "Understood as the effort whereby social science, taking itself for its object, uses its own weapons to understand and check itself... exercising a specific form of epistemological vigilance, the very form this vigilance must take in area where the epistemological obstacles are first and foremost social obstacles" (ibid.: 89). Social obstacles (for example, class structures) produce epistemological obstacles (for example, ideologies). Furthermore, as Althusser does, Bourdieu maintains that the subject of scientific practice must be understood as a social construction. "Objectivating the subject of objectivation" is the phrase Bourdieu uses to describe this process of scientific reflexivity (ibid.: 88). Here Bourdieu intends to represent how the societal conditions of scientific practice are mis/recognized as somehow extra-social (i.e. outside of social determination).

The consequences of interpellation require "epistemological vigilance" and much of Althusser's work was directed to this end. Marx's "revolutionary science" founded an understanding of social objectivity in relation to economic overdetermination (cf. Engels, 1996; Althusser, 1969). Scientific practice is not independent of class structures in capitalist society and Althusser's concept of interpellation addresses how the practice of science exists within a matrix of economic, ideological, and political presuppositions. For Bourdieu the social position of those persons undertaking scientific research should be *reflexively* understood. "One cannot talk about such an object without exposing oneself to a permanent mirror-effect... Far from fearing this mirror...in taking science as the object of my analysis I am deliberately aiming to expose myself, and all those who write about the social world, to a generalized reflexivity" (Bourdieu, 2004: 4). Althusser's mirror-structure of mis/recognition that is the source of interpellative effects is apprehended by Bourdieu as a question of scientific reflexivity. "One of my aims is to provide cognitive tools that can be turned back on the subject of the cognition, not in order to discredit scientific knowledge, but rather to check and strengthen it" (ibid.). This "turning back", to capture the reflection of social knowledge, is a gesture of epistemological vigilance for the objective basis of social science and one that continues in the form of *specular* sociology.

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