

Reviewing Rancière

Or, the persistence of discrepancies

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In the nearly four decades since its original publication, *Althusser's Lesson* has acquired a certain mythical aura as the dark precursor of things to come. Even with the wealth of translations of Jacques Rancière's work that have been published at an increasingly feverish pace over the past few years in the wake of the author's worldwide success as a bestselling thinker of politics and aesthetics, this book – in my eyes inexplicably – had so far been forgotten by translators and publishers alike, or at least it had remained at the bottom of their to-do lists for a very long time indeed. And yet, though unavailable to English-language readers (except for Chapter 6, 'On the Theory of Ideology', translated in *Radical Philosophy* 7, 1974), this book was always famed for containing a ruthless settling of accounts with Rancière's one-time mentor, the philosopher who precisely was not an 'ignorant schoolmaster' but a 'knowing schoolmaster', the very epitome of the master-thinker supposed to know the difference between ignorance and knowledge, or between ideology and science. Now, at long last, thanks to the careful labour of Emiliano Battista, we can read *Althusser's Lesson* in English, more or less in its entirety. (Rancière has chosen to remove the self-critical notes added in 1973 to the 1969 'On the Theory of Ideology'. These remain available in English only in the *Radical Philosophy* translation.)

Does this mean that the book will soon lose its aura as the theoretical equivalent of a Molotov cocktail, one that perhaps, paradoxically, was all the more appealing the more it remained unknown and enigmatic? Will this book – Rancière's first single-authored publication, several years after his contribution to the collective *Reading Capital* with a text on the different concepts of 'critique' in Marx's *1844 Manuscripts* and *Capital*, an orthodox Althusserian text that would be excised from subsequent editions for being 'too structuralist' – enable the retrospective establishment of a single uninterrupted trajectory, or a steady forward march leading up to later books such as *The Ignorant*

Schoolmaster and *The Emancipated Spectator*? Or will *Althusser's Lesson* retain the razor-sharp edge of its polemic as a stylistic oddity unlike anything else in Rancière's œuvre? I mean a book that at times can be exceedingly sarcastic – 'Althusser has as many chances of catching up to the revolution as Achilles has of catching up to the turtle' (AL 178) – but also at times poignantly self-critical: 'assuming, of course, that all of this is something more than a scholarly pastime tailor-made to swell the existing ranks of Marxist and para-Marxist literature' (AL 123).

We can easily predict the two most obvious paths that the reception of this particular work might take. Rancière's growing army of followers and admirers – it is hard not to like him – can either dive into the pages of this book in pursuit of early anticipations of notions such as the equality of intelligences, the distribution of the sensible, the order of the police, or the logic of political disagreements and paradoxical litigations; or else they can highlight the prior necessity, in order for these notions to come into being in the first place, of a radical break with the whole legacy and pedagogical machinery of Althusserianism. The two options thus would consist in either reaffirming the sharp discontinuity with regard to Althusser's work or else establishing a hidden continuity within Rancière's own œuvre.

Rancière himself, in the Foreword to the English edition, prefers to downplay the polemical discontinuity: 'The critique I develop in the pages that follow, consequently, should by no means be treated as a personal settling of scores' (AL xv); instead, he gently yet also unapologetically steers the reader in the direction of an underlying continuity with his own later work: 'It is clear that I would not subscribe to some of its claims and analyses today. Still, I have not changed when it comes to the principle which guided them, namely, that only the presupposition of a capacity common to all can found both the power of thought and the dynamics of emancipation' (AL xvii).

My personal take, on the other hand, diagonally cuts across these two readings. That is to say, in the end I would like to draw attention to the profound fidelity to a certain Althusser that enables Rancière subsequently to propose his logic of emancipation in the seductive and ironic manner that we have come to recognize as his trademark. Of course, I am not so blind as to ignore the importance of Rancière's break with his mentor, but a one-sided insistence on the specific reasons for this break may also cause us to lose sight of the larger picture surrounding the contemporary fate of that strange conceptual machine known as Althusserianism.

Or, as a different point of entry, consider the following paradox. Two of Althusser's most famous disciples, Jacques Rancière and Alain Badiou, both start out with a polemical break away from, and dramatic rebellion against, their theoretical father figure. Both do so, moreover, with an implacable critique of the theory of ideology 'in general': the first especially in 'On the Theory of Ideology,' and the second in *Of Ideology*, a small booklet co-authored with the late François Balmès that can usefully be considered an expansion of the arguments in the Appendix to *Althusser's Lesson*.¹ Finally, inspired as they are by Maoism and by the events not just of May 1968 but also of the Cultural Revolution writ large, for both of these disciples their mentor's discourse is fundamentally a discourse of order and revisionism dressed up for good measure in the language of revolutionary subversion. As Rancière explains in the Foreword: 'Above and beyond the

theses specific to Althusser, the book has its sights trained on the much broader logic by which subversive thoughts are recuperated for the service of order. The principle of this process of recuperation is the idea of domination propagated by the very discourses that pretend to critique it' (*AL* xvi). And yet, at the same time, both Rancière and Badiou, even aside from their mutual differences, which also should not be overstated for marketing or other purposes, not only are unanimously seen today as major thinkers of emancipatory practices, they are also frequently lumped together as prime examples of post-Althusserianism, comparable to the place of Étienne Balibar, who, for his part, never felt the need to distance himself as violently as they did from the knowing schoolmaster of rue d'Ulm.² Should we then conclude that, in the case of Rancière and Badiou, the attribute *post-Althusserian* actually means *ex-Althusserian*, pure and simple? Or, on the contrary, is there something in the works by the author of *For Marx* that simultaneously functions among his disciples as the condition of emergence for such a radical and emancipatory thought-practice, which therefore is not just *post-* or *ex-Althusserian* but is also justifiably named *post-Althusserian*?

Put differently, and to use the words of Karl Marx in his Postface to *Capital*: is the entire system of thought of Althusser's structural Marxism to be jettisoned wholesale as a purely 'mystified' exercise of speculation, a 'glorified transfiguration' of the status quo after the storm of May 1968? Or is there a



‘rational kernel’ to be retrieved even from the ‘mystical shell’ of this canonical Althusserianism (the system of thought assembled between Althusser’s 1965 texts *For Marx* and *Reading Capital* and his 1973 *Reply to John Lewis*), without the need to resort to the later and mostly posthumous texts (such as the manuscripts on ‘aleatory materialism’ or the philosophy of the ‘encounter’, which Rancière in the Foreword feels the need to insist he obviously could not have taken into account in 1974 at the time of completing *Althusser’s Lesson*)?³

From essays such as ‘Contradiction and Overdetermination’ in Althusser’s *For Marx*, of course, many readers learned by rote all the reasons why we ought to reject the metaphors of ‘extraction’ (of the kernel from the shell) and ‘inversion’ (of the head and feet) as false inroads in the treatment of the relation between Hegel’s and Marx’s dialectic. In so far as these metaphors leave intact both the terms and their articulation in Hegel’s idealist dialectic, they would fail to capture the specific difference of Marx’s materialist one. But now, what if the alternative to Hegel’s expressive idealism so rigorously put into place by Althusser – that is, Marx’s greatest ‘discovery’ of structural causality – nonetheless continues to undergird the logic of emancipatory practices developed in the writings of Rancière and Badiou? Finally, what if the seemingly irresistible appeal of these writings (even when expressed negatively as in the case of Badiou – with the capacity to provoke sheer hatred and vitriol, as in Mehdi Belhaj Kacem’s *Après Badiou* (2011) or François Laruelle’s *Anti-Badiou* (2011), still being a symptomatic form of appeal, albeit a form that is unlikely to befall the universally likeable Rancière) is tied to the gaps and discrepancies in the structure that, though already discovered and practised in the analysis of history and capital by Marx, are supposedly theorized only in what is known as Althusserianism? This is what I would like to propose as my working hypothesis for reading or rereading *Althusser’s Lesson*.

Academic ideology

We can begin by recalling the more obvious reasons for Rancière’s break with Althusser, before addressing the question of whether these reasons indeed affect all of Althusserianism, or even its core principles. As Rancière already explains in his text from 1969 ‘On the Theory of Ideology,’ more than anything else this break concerns the line of demarcation that Althusser proposes to draw between science and ideology, with the first being defined as a true form of knowledge (*savoir*) or cognition (*connaissance*) and the second

as a form of necessary illusion or misrecognition (*méconnaissance*). For Althusser, only philosophy as the theory of the scientificity of science is capable of drawing this line of demarcation, while the common lot of individuals is to be caught in the ideological and imaginary misrecognition of their real conditions of existence. Far from occupying himself with the function of ideology in concrete struggles, as a Marxist analysis is supposed to do (‘The soul of Marxism is the concrete analysis of a concrete situation’, Rancière also states, reciting the Lenin of textbooks [AL 143]), Althusser replaces the class struggle with a metaphysical opposition modelled upon the oppositions of truth and error, insight and blindness: ‘The ideology/science opposition presupposes the re-establishment of a space homologous to the space the metaphysical tradition as a whole conceives so as to be able to pit science against its other and thus posit the closure of a discursive universe that it has split into the realms of true and false, into the world of science and its other (opinion, error, illusion, etc.)’ (AL 136). For Rancière, the heart of the matter is precisely this obliteration of the class struggle, which ends up being both masked and displaced, in the name of an ahistorical and metaphysical dualism.

Althusser’s general theory of ideology is furthermore revisionist because, far from tackling the struggle between the ideologies of two antagonistic groups or classes – for example, within the space of the university, between professors and students, or, within the factory, between skilled labourers and special or manual labourers – this struggle is abstracted and transposed into the terms of an epistemological break between ideology and science as such. In his text from 1969 Rancière is still willing to rescue even the opposition bourgeois science/proletarian science as potentially being better equipped, after all is said and done, to name the different practical and strategic uses made out of scientific discourse within concrete institutional apparatuses and power relations. Finally, far from being attuned to the storm of the revolt of May ’68, the theory of the science/ideology break merely confirms the existing hierarchies and inequalities, to which Althusser’s Marxism then lends the supplementary credentials of a metaphysical difference, not in use but in nature, between knowledge and illusion, or between the real and the imaginary. ‘The core of Althusserianism’, concludes Rancière, ‘lies without a doubt in the articulation of the spontaneous discourse of metaphysics to revisionist ideology’ (AL 139). Again, referring specifically to the university system and to the role of the sciences at the service of

the dominant classes and not, as Althusser is wont to believe, at the service of revolutionary truth, Rancière insists: 'The struggle of science against ideology actually benefits bourgeois ideology because it strengthens two of its crucial bastions: the system of knowledge and revisionist ideology' (AL 142).

In effect, the other great thesis of Althusser's argument, according to Rancière, concerns the inequality between knowledge and lack of knowledge, which sustains the whole pedagogical situation: 'The concept of science now appears in its true colours: the whole function of the science/ideology distinction, it turns out, was to justify the pure being of knowledge (*savoir*) – or, more precisely, to justify the eminent dignity of the possessors of knowledge' (AL 144). It is for this reason that the very core of Althusserianism represents the betrayal of everything that the revolt of May '68 and the Cultural Revolution stood for with their attempts at reshuffling the hierarchies between students and workers, between manual and intellectual labour, or between militants and cadres: 'All that is needed, to seal the operation, is one more mediation, supplied by Althusser's *academic ideology*, which entrusts to the spontaneous discourse of metaphysics the task of justifying the instructors, the possessors and the dispensers of bourgeois knowledge (to which academic Marxism also belongs)' (AL 147). When seen in this light, we better understand not only why Althusser did not see anything of the nature of an event or encounter in May '68, but also how certain intellectuals in the early 1970s could still use elements of this same Althusserianism to give the politics of leftism, which had already died a first time in practice with the return to order in June 1968, a proper burial in theory.

Althusser's subsequent 'self-criticism' of the so-called 'theoreticism' of his 1965 publications does not fundamentally change the nature of his philosophy as a discourse of order and orthodoxy disguised in the discourse of disorder and subversion. Rather, with the notion of philosophy as 'the class struggle in theory' introduced in February 1968 in *Lenin and Philosophy*, we still remain within a pedagogical hierarchy:

Many people nowadays pretend to see in class struggle in theory a major leftward turn for Althusserianism, an indication that philosophy, at long last, has recognized the class struggle. But what they recognize in it, actually, is nothing other than their own academic views, which assign class positions based on the correct or incorrect use of words, which treat as revolutionary those who know how to say 'it is the masses which make history' and as reactionary those distracted students who write 'man' where they should write 'the masses'. (AL 68).

Actual political struggles, including the struggle about the place of intellectual work, continue to be evaded and disguised as if Marxist theory were the combat of lone theorists against ideological deviations, while the French Communist Party can continue to flatter itself for having such a subversive philosopher in its ranks: 'The fact is that Althusser is perfectly free to propose all the theses he wants. All his 'subversive' theses, however, share the following interesting peculiarity: they never entail any disruptive practices' (AL 112). In the end, even when he rectifies his earlier deviations, Althusser still consistently fails to put into question the privileged place from which he is able to proffer his discourse.

Foucault's lesson

Now, to satisfy those readers who are hungry for continuity, let us look at some of the later arguments that are already anticipated in Rancière's analysis of Althusserianism. These anticipations are of two kinds. First, and perhaps most surprisingly for English-language readers brought up on 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', first published in 1970, as Althusser's most frequently taught and anthologized text, it is Rancière who announces the key concept of this text in 'On the Theory of Ideology', and, in the special introductory note for the English translation of this Appendix, he even goes so far as to suggest that his old mentor actually might have taken said concept from him. Thus, while criticizing Althusser's reductive view of ideology as a system of ideas or representations, Rancière not only seems to have coined the phrase 'ideological state apparatuses' but, what is more, in 1969 this phrase was actually intended as a forceful indictment of the blind spots in Althusser's pedagogy:

The only way to give objective status to ideologies is to think them through the class struggle. This means that ideology does not exist only in discourse or only in systems, images, signs, and so on. In the analysis of the university, we saw that the ideology of a class exists primarily in institutions, in what we might call *ideological apparatuses*, to echo the way Marxist theory speaks about state apparatuses. (AL 151)

This question of the paternity of concepts is not limited to 'ideological state apparatuses', since a similar turf war raged over the paternity of 'metonymical causality' between Rancière and Althusser, on the one hand, and Jacques-Alain Miller on the other.

Second, as I mentioned earlier, *Althusser's Lesson* also contains anticipations of some of the more famous notions in Rancière's own later work. Consider, for

example, the use of the opposition between police and politics, which will become central to *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, in the criticism of Althusser's idea that

Marx announces ... a 'new philosophical practice'. And this new practice, as we can see in the *Reply to John Lewis*, is thoroughly committed to the general *policing* of theoretical statements. But that is not what Marx has in mind. In the 'Theses on Feuerbach', he proposes a departure from philosophy, one that establishes a *politics* of theoretical statements that is essentially at odds with Althusser's. (AL 12)

Or consider how, in Rancière's explication of the thesis 'the masses make history' as a Maoist thesis that is radically new compared to orthodox Marxism–Leninism, we can find an early formulation of the principle of the equality of intelligences that would receive a more systematic treatment in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*. 'Mao's thesis is this: it is the oppressed who are intelligent, and the weapons of their liberation will emerge from their intelligence', writes Rancière. 'It is a political thesis that goes hand in hand with a new conception of the development of productive forces and the methods of communist leadership: the intelligence of the class struggle, much like the intelligence of production, does not belong to specialists' (AL 14–15). No longer the special property of cadres, scientists or philosophers, intelligence belongs equally to all, beginning with the intelligence of the poor, who in the eyes of their philosopher count for nothing.

I could continue along these same lines, referring to expressions such as 'the politics of philosophers', which will become the focus of *The Philosopher and His Poor* and, more systematically, in *Disagreement*, or even the 'sharing' or 'partitioning' of the sensible that is nowadays Rancière's main focus in his work on art and aesthetics. It would mean doing this book an injustice, though, by reducing its arguments to being little more than tentative anticipations of future developments. The true originality of *Althusser's Lesson* lies elsewhere: neither in the future that it already promises nor in the past with which it first must break, but in the present that is brought to life on its pages; that is, on the one hand, in the detailed conjunctural analysis of the shifts and displacements within a certain tradition of post-1968 leftist political practices and theories, and, on the other, in the methodological suggestiveness of this very analysis.

So far as the analysis of the conjuncture is concerned, Rancière gives us fascinating first-hand insights into the inner workings of Maoist student circles in and around the ENS, as well as document-

ing the uses and ruses to which Althusserianism quite willingly lent itself within the PCF. He is especially deft at unravelling the authoritarian justifications of the status quo that are hidden behind clamorous appeals to daring acts of theoretical invention: 'He wants to be the wolf in the flock, but the Party turns to him when it needs to scare its black sheep. He pretends to raise embarrassing questions, but the Party shows him that it understands his words for what they are: a discourse of order' (AL 113). Althusserianism, in sum, allowed the annexation and simultaneous deactivation of leftist and Maoist discourse within the official communist party apparatus, all the while chastising the youthful rebels themselves as being petty-bourgeois ideologues in dire need of the science of Marxist orthodoxy.

Methodologically, Rancière also follows a number of interesting principles, which he claims are influenced above all by the work of Michel Foucault at the Collège de France. A first principle, which we could ascribe to Foucault's nominalism, consists in the pluralization of ways of conceiving of discursive practices. Rancière will thus repeatedly insist on the fact that there is no such thing as *the* science, *the* ideology or *the* Marxism, with an emphatically used definite article, but only a multiplicity of discourses within specific institutional settings. Rancière writes:

These brief indications are intended simply to suggest that maybe there isn't *a* Marxist conceptuality which must be saved from ideological doom and bourgeois invasions. There is not one logic in *Capital*, but many logics: it contains different discursive strategies, each of which corresponds to different problems and each of which echoes, in many different ways, the discourses through which classes think themselves or confront an opposing discourse... The plurality of these conceptualities is also a manifestation, not of 'class struggle in theory', but of the effects that class struggle and its discursive forms have had on the discourse of theoreticians. (AL 81)

But, then, in a second methodological principle, this plurality of discursive practices must also be situated within a specific system of power relations. Thus, for example, 'the bourgeoisie's ideological domination was not the result of a social imaginary wherein individuals spontaneously reflected their relations to the conditions of their existence. It was, instead, the result of the system of material power relations reproduced by different apparatuses', which Rancière sums up in another Foucauldian-inspired combination: 'The question of ideology was not the question of the subject's relationship to truth, but of the masses' relationship to power and knowledge (*savoir*)' (AL 74).

To analyse and overcome his own debts to Althusser's pedagogical lesson, debts which in any case are never worked through in the first person at the level of the author's own psychic economy, Rancière thus seems to find much inspiration, if not solace, in the methodology and playfully self-reflexive personality of the author of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* or *The Order of Discourse*, who, contrary to the schoolmaster from rue d'Ulm, constantly questions the place from where he speaks.

Décalages

And yet, does this methodological flight forward not omit certain key principles of Althusser's so-called structuralist Marxism? Are certain of these principles not also still at work in Rancière's later work? And, besides, does not the move from Althusser to Foucault, as a kind of rite of passage without which Rancière apparently could not come into his own, hide the extent to which *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is actually written under the influence of Althusserianism – its playful introduction and conclusion after all being a fictionalized self-interview that reworks the author's response to a questionnaire from the Cercle d'Épistémologie at rue d'Ulm, first published in the school's organon *Cahiers pour l'analyse*?⁴

One principle, especially, seems to me to be a crucial component of Althusser's version of structuralism, which thereby at once becomes a version of poststructuralism as well. I am referring to the principle of the uneven development of any given structure, which consequently appears as though decentred or dislocated from within, due to a series of gaps and discrepancies that are never the effect of purely external contingencies but instead signal the structure's own immanent deadlock. Althusser's favourite term for such gaps is *décalages*, typically translated in English as 'dislocations' or as 'discrepancies'.⁵ Now, I would argue that much of Rancière's later work in fact continues to rely on the presence of such discrepancies within the social orders, political phenomena and art objects that he is famous for analysing. He may not label them *décalages*, except for one time in *Althusser's Lesson*, where Rancière speaks hypothetically of humanism as the ideology of communication that results from the 'discrepancies' between an 'overdeveloped' philosophy and a politically 'underdeveloped' country. Instead he may prefer to speak of the effects of an *écart*, a 'gap,' or an 'internal distance'. But, if we ignore for a moment the battles over science and ideology and the class struggle in theory, the analysis of a structure's internal excess that separates it from itself nonetheless can be

said to express Rancière's lasting debt to Althusser's legacy.

We could say that what the post-Althusserians Badiou, Rancière and Balibar add to this legacy in the analysis of the structure's inner excess is that they name 'subject', 'subjectivization' or 'subjectification' what in the classical texts from *For Marx* or *Reading Capital* still appears as a purely formal effect of the structure itself. But then, of course, this is never just a matter of nomination. Rather, post-Althusserians argue that the discrepancies within a given structure become apparent only as the retroactive effect of a subjective intervention, without which the analysis falls back in the traps of a positivist glorification of the status quo. Yet the fact remains that the 'rational kernel' for this transformative interpretation of the subject is already at work in the 'mystical shell' of Althusser's analysis of the structure.

In *Disagreement*, Rancière will thus describe the process of all political subjectification in terms of the gap that separates a given social identity or police order from itself. 'Any subjectification is a disidentification, removal from the naturalness of a place, the opening up of a subject space where anyone can be counted since it is the space where those of no account are counted', but this is possible only if the policing of identities is interrupted in the act of political subjectification, which Rancière furthermore compares to the act of literature as the opening up of a rupture, or an interval, in the order between things and words:

The modern political animal is first a literary animal, caught in the circuit of a literariness that undoes the relationships between the order of words and the order of bodies that determine the place of each. A political subjectification is the product of these multiple fracture lines by which the individuals and networks of individuals subjectify the gap [*l'écart*] between their condition as animals endowed with a voice and the violent encounter with the equality of the logos.⁶

Similarly, in the preface to a recently translated collection of texts from *Les Révoltes logiques*, Rancière justifies the continued use of seemingly 'vulgar' or 'awkward' words on the basis of the political efficacy of a certain gap that introduces an internal difference within them:

I simply want to explain the role that words today seen as awkward – people, poor, revolution, factory, workers, proletarians – and wielded by outmoded characters play in this process. To insist on the overly broad words of people, worker, and proletarian is to insist on their inherent difference, on the space of dissenting invention that this difference offers.⁷

What Rancière labels political philosophy, or the politics of the philosophers, on the contrary, systematically tries to cover over this gap so as to establish the stable essence of politics, or of the political. This is not a solution so much as a dissolution and elimination of the constitutive impropriety of politics: 'The solution, in a word, is to achieve the essence of politics by eliminating this difference from itself that politics consists of, to achieve politics by eliminating politics, by achieving philosophy "in place" of politics'.⁸ Rancière's thought, which rarely accepts the label of philosophy, political or otherwise, is a thinking of the essential discrepancy and impropriety at the heart of every identity, property and propriety.

Now, in a last irony, the fact that the focus for such an analysis of the subjectification of discrepancies in Rancière's work has gradually shifted from politics to aesthetics could also have been anticipated by Althusser. Indeed, in his 'Letter on Art in Reply to André Daspre', Rancière's mentor already tried to define the specific rapport between art, science and ideology, with a recourse to the concepts of an 'internal distantiating', *une prise de distance intérieure*, and a 'retreat', *recul* in French:

What art makes us *see*, and therefore gives us in the form of '*seeing*', '*perceiving*' and '*feeling*' (which is not the form of *knowing*), is the *ideology* from which it is born, in which it bathes, from which it detaches itself as art, and to which it alludes. Macherey has shown this very clearly in the case of Tolstoy, by extending Lenin's analyses. Balzac and Solzhenitsyn give us a 'view' of the ideology to which their work alludes and with which it is constantly fed, a view which presupposes a *retreat*, an *internal distantiating* from the very ideology from which their novels emerged. They make us 'perceive' (but not know) in some sense *from the inside*, by an *internal distance*, the very ideology in which they are held.⁹

Rancière, in a certain sense, generalizes this notion of the internal difference so as to place its effects of dissensus, first, in politics and then, once again, in art.

This leads me to a final question, which is also an expression of scepticism. Using Rancière's own words from *Althusser's Lesson*, could we not raise the question whether this minimal gap that separates art from ideology, without for this reason making it identical to scientific knowledge, is perhaps the prime locus not for the detachment but for the unconscious inscription of a subject in ideology – above all, the ideology of freedom itself? As Rancière suggests with regard to the margin of freedom allowed to the master-thinker from rue d'Ulm:

This is a well-known kind of freedom, the very kind the bourgeoisie reserves for intellectuals: the freedom to say anything and everything at the university, where intellectuals can be Marxists, Leninists, even Maoists, provided they perpetuate its functioning: the freedom to wax ironic about the power that channels the intellectual's attachment to order. (AL 112)

Notes

1. See Alain Badiou and François Balmès, *De l'idéologie*, François Maspero, Paris, 1976, esp. pp. 21–37. While Rancière in *Althusser's Lesson* begins by targeting his mentor's *Reply to John Lewis*, Badiou, on the other hand, tackles the general theory of ideology contained in Althusser's later 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' and *Essays in Self-Criticism*, which in many ways already pick up on Rancière's criticisms and suggestions. For Badiou, though, even these later texts continue to propose a theory of ideology that is neither dialectical nor materialist but rather revisionist.
2. For Étienne Balibar's measured fidelity, see his *Écrits pour Althusser*, La Découverte, Paris, 1991, and Étienne Balibar, 'Althusser and the rue d'Ulm,' trans. David Fernbach, *New Left Review* 58, July–August 2009, pp. 91–107.
3. See Karl Marx, Postface to the Second Edition, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume 1, trans. Ben Fowkes, intro. Ernest Mandel, Penguin, London, 1976, p. 103. For Althusser's analysis, see 'Contradiction and Overdetermination: Notes for an Investigation', in Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster, Verso, London, 1990, pp. 89–90.
4. See Michel Foucault, 'Réponse au Cercle d'épistémologie', *Cahiers pour l'analyse* 9, 1968, pp. 9–40. Translated as 'On the Archaeology of the Human Sciences: Response to the Epistemology Circle', in *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, volume 2 of *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion, New Press, New York, 1998, pp. 279–96.
5. See, for example, Louis Althusser, 'Sur le Contrat social', in *Cahiers pour l'Analyse* 8, October 1967, <http://cahiers.kingston.ac.uk/vol08/cpa8.1.althusser.html>; 'Rousseau: The Social Contract', in *Politics and History: Montesquieu, Rousseau, Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster, Verso, London, 2007, pp. 111–60. In a translator's note, Brewster also quotes Lenin's reminder 'that there will always be such a 'discrepancy' and that it always exists in the development of nature as well as in the developments of society' (p. 114, n2). For an excellent analysis of why this principle of dislocation means that all good structuralism is already poststructuralism, see Étienne Balibar, 'Structuralism: A Destitution of the Subject?', *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2003, pp. 1–21.
6. Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. Julie Rose, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1999, pp. 36–7.
7. Jacques Rancière, *Staging the People: The Proletarian and His Double*, trans. David Fernbach, Verso, London, 2011, p. 18.
8. Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 63.
9. Louis Althusser, 'Letter on Art in Reply to André Daspre', in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster, New Left Books, London, 1971, pp. 222–3.