Practices of Equality and Freedom

Rancière and Foucault

Stuart John Blaney
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Abstract

This thesis is an offering of an auto-emancipation from practices of the normative self in the innovative form of a synergy of Jacques Rancière's practices of equality and Michel Foucault's practices of freedom. It brings together Rancière's understanding of 'dissensus' as a transgression of the hierarchal distribution of social space and time–*le partage du sensible* (the distribution of the sensible)–and Foucault's offering of *parrhesia* (frank speech/truth speaking) as a transgression of normative discourses in an exploration of the connection between subjectivity and truth: a truth speaking in the written and spoken word and the courage to live the truth in actions and non-actions. In bringing together dissensus and *parrhesia*, it also brings together these thinkers' respective offerings of an aesthetics of the self made manifest in the simultaneity of transgression and transformation illustrated by Rancière's politics and aesthetics and Foucault's *parrhesia* and ethics of the self.

In combining practices of equality and freedom, this thesis traces a way of life as an autodidactic emancipation via a self-tutelage (an authority over and instruction of oneself). As such, it is not a descriptive ontology incorporating an understanding of a teleological essence to the human form that must be freed, but a creative ontology that is autotelic. Therefore, rather than following the lines of a politics of destination in a didactic and dialectic deferral of an equality and freedom to come, it traces an immanent and aesthetic revolution for the individual that is lived in everyday lives where practices of equality and freedom happen now. Thus, it offers Rancière's and Foucault's quotidian practices as an immanent and agonistic middle path in-between conformity and political revolution. As acts of individual emancipation expand communally into worlds within worlds within the manifestation of other social spaces–heterotopias–and other forms of social time–heterochronies, and thus form a togetherness, this synergy also strikes a middle path in-between liberal individualism and social atomism and communitarian positions and their stress on collective identities. To help bring practices of equality and freedom together, this thesis also incorporates Rancière's archival research on the emancipatory life of the nineteenth-century worker-poet/philosopher Louis-Gabriel Gauny and offers a novel interpretation of Gauny as having lived both equality and freedom as everyday practices.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

Introduction

Forms of emancipation carried out in the name of equality and freedom as ideals, tend to be prescriptive. Furthermore, as ideals, equality and freedom are deferred to justify or highlight their absence. Whilst prescriptive forms of emancipation have their place as a means of organised civil resistance, there is a need for alternative forms of emancipation that do not impose a deferral of ideals but facilitate an auto-emancipation of self-prescriptive, everyday practices of equality and freedom, practices that focus on transforming the socially constructed 'self' and transgressing the unequal distribution of socio-space and time. The aim of this thesis is to argue that one such alternative lies in the innovative form of a synergy of Jacques Rancière's practices of equality and Michel Foucault's practices of freedom. In offering this synergy, this thesis is not only relevant due to its nascent bringing together of equality and freedom as practices amidst the ubiquitous need for peaceful forms of emancipation, but in offering new perspectives on the work of Rancière and Foucault. These perspectives are revealed by the connections made between their respective practices in a synergy that enables them to reinforce each other and thus strengthen their efficacy as forms of emancipation whilst keeping their relationship, as the Greek etymological root of the term 'synergy' has it, as one of *sunergos* (working-together),[1] rather than diminishing their individual applicability in an act of sublation.

Background and Context

Now that the aim and relevance of this thesis have been set, before plotting the structural outline, this introductory chapter will provide the background and context of this synergy, followed by the research objective, questions, limitations, and contribution it makes. However, there is no background regarding a substantial synergy of Rancière's practices of equality and Foucault's practices of freedom *per se*, only the context of the history of prior forms of emancipation and their outcomes, as well as the prescriptive political philosophies that acted as an impetus for the alternatives that these practices offer. Nevertheless, there have been texts that combine 'aspects' of Rancière's and Foucault's work that form a background of sorts for a synergy. For example, Azucena G. Blanco brings aspects of Rancière's understanding of literature and fiction to her book *Literature and Politics in the Later Foucault* (Blanco 2020). There have also been several essays that combine certain features of their work: Gert Biesta uses mostly Foucault with some Rancière in a very short text that addresses the aim to move away from the Enlightenment's understanding of

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[1] *Sunergos* can literally be translated as fellow-worker, co-labourer, etc.

emancipation and create a "new "logic" of emancipation" whilst exploring "how and why this might matter for education" (Biesta 2008: 169); John McSweeney "examines the prospects for a contemporary performative politics emerging between what might be termed Rancière's 'pure politics' and Foucault's 'biopolitics'" (McSweeney 2010: 181); Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons use Foucault to describe the "governmentalisation of democracy" and use Rancière to express democracy as "political subjectivation" as a means "to introduce the concept of 'pedagogic subjectivation' [. . .] as a way of thinking of the school as a public place" (Masschelein and Simons 2010: 588); Bartłomiej Błesznowski uses Rancière and Foucault to sketch "the genealogy of contemporary liberal democracy" (Błesznowski 2012: 331); and Todd May puts forward Rancière's presupposition of equality as a means of emancipatory "subjectification," which this thesis shall translate as 'subjectivation',[2] in relation to Foucault's understanding that we are produced by power (May 2015). As can be seen, none of the above texts offer a substantial synergy of Rancière's and Foucault's respective practices of equality and freedom. Therefore, the obvious question to ask is why has such a synergy remained mostly unexplored? This seems to be for three reasons.

Firstly, Rancière's and Foucault's practices are seen as representing two distinctly different approaches to emancipation with different foci. Rancière's focus radiates from a presupposition of equality that counters the unequal sharing out and partitioning of social space and time that he names the *le partage du sensible* (the distribution of the sensible). This inequality of 'distribution' in the formation of socio-reality also affects us internally in our

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[2] May uses the translation 'subjectification' for Rancière's *la subjectivation*, as does Julie Rose in her translation of *La Mésentente: Politique et philosophie* (1995) (*Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (1999)). However, this thesis will translate *la subjectivation* as subjectivation and as such, in quotes in this thesis from Rose's translation, subjectification has been replaced with subjectivation. This is because, as Samuel Chambers points out, 'subjectification' is a translation of *assujetissement*, which is a term that Rancière does not use but Foucault did, and *assujetissement* is translated in Foucault's work as subjectification and therefore, has a different meaning to the term *la subjectivation* that Foucault later used (Chambers 2013: 100). May does point out that Rancière's subjectification has a different meaning to Foucault's subjectification (May 2015: 38), but this does not take into account that Foucault himself later used the term *la subjectivation*. As Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg inform us, and as Chamber's partially quotes (Chambers 2013: 99): "[A]round 1980, in discussing how we constitute ourselves as ethical subjects, Foucault very deliberately introduces a new term: *subjectivation*. While *assujettissement* pertains to how one is produced as a subject through the exercise of power/knowledge, including the modalities of resistance through which that exercise can be modified or attenuated, *subjectivation* pertains to the relation of the individual to him/herself; to the multiple ways in which a self can be constructed on the basis of what one takes to be the truth" (Milchman and Rosenberg 2007: 99). Therefore, it is important to translate Rancière's *la subjectivation* as subjectivation and not subjectification, especially as Foucault's and Rancière's respective understandings of *la subjectivation* are quite similar but differ in their impetus: one is animated by a presupposition of freedom and the other by a presupposition of equality.

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ways of being, thinking, and perceiving the world in the normative order that Rancière ironically, yet quite aptly, names the consensus because it aims to univocally show that only one reality exists, and we must consent to it. Against the consensus, Rancière offers political 'dissensus', the latter word being his neologistic term for a disruption of the order of the consensus that governs our everyday lives. For Rancière, dissensus is the nexus of his particular understanding of aesthetics and politics, where the latter is a form of dissensus against politics in its standard definition as representative democracy, government, legislation, etc. Rancière names politics within its standard definition as a police logic of the consensus order that dissensus opposes. For Rancière, aesthetics as transformation and his bi-univocal understanding of politics as the dissensus of the *demos*, the *sans-part* (those 'without part' in the distribution of the sensible), occur by the simultaneity he calls *la subjectivation* (subjectivation): the aesthetic transformation of the subject into a political being by the transgression of dissensus. The focus of Foucault's practices of freedom, however, is on the transgression and transformation of subjectivities produced by the normative manifestation of knowledge, truth, and power within the discursive and non-discursive practices that his earlier work interrogated. With practices of freedom, Foucault turns to the ancient Greek mode of 'frank speech/truth speaking' known as *parrhesia* as a form of transgression in an engagement with the connection between subjectivity and truth and *souci de soi* (care of the self), that the ancient Greeks named *epimeleia heautou*, as a means of transformation within an ethics of the self based on an aesthetics of existence rather than a morality.[3] Regardless of these differences, this thesis will show that Foucault's and Rancière's practices are more similar than they initially appear. This is due to the commonality of their practices being aesthetic, non-violent, and simultaneous acts of, as this thesis terms them, 'transgression' and 'transformation'–to transgress the normative is to transform one's 'self', and to transform one's 'self' is to transgress the normative–where a transformation of the self takes a priority over a transformation of governmental politics. In the context of Rancière's work, this simultaneity manifests itself as politics and aesthetics, in Foucault's, as *parrhesia* and ethics. However, in many ways, these separate terms, within the meanings Rancière and Foucault give them, are more closely linked than we might expect, as they blend into the simultaneity of transgression and transformation in an ongoing and thus agonistic emancipation with no terminus.

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[3] Foucault's ethics is "transformative," as Colin Koopman puts it in his *Genealogy of Critique: Foucault and the Problems of Modernity*, "rather than adjudicative" (Koopman 2013: 191). However, it is also transgressive, just as *parrhesia* is also transformative.

Secondly, as both the work of Rancière and Foucault offer rich areas of research in their own right, a synergy might be deemed unnecessary. However, this thesis puts forward that these practices not only complement each other in their many connections but help fill any lack that the other may possess, as highlighted below. In doing so, as stated above, these practices strengthen each other by *sunergos*.

Lastly, equality and freedom are generically seen as non-compatible ideals in economic and political forms, where too much of one detracts from the other. We can see an example of this in today's so called democratic states, where neoliberal capitalism exists in a free market that detracts from economic equality because the deregulated economy is set up to the advantage of the corporate few. Another example would be the ideology of communist states that purportedly offers equality yet denies freedom: freedom of speech, freedom of movement to leave the state, etc. Even in emancipatory projects like anarchism there is a split between "individualist anarchism" that focusses on freedom ("libertarianism") and "collective anarchism" that focusses on "equality" (May 2012b: 124).[4] This is a reminder that as ideals, equality and freedom are unattainable together and only exist in the abstract form of theoretical mechanisms such as Karl Marx's dialectical materialism or hegemonic deferrals that aim to justify the absence of these ideals with the promise of a freedom and equality to come.[5]

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[4] In a different text, May states that "communist anarchism" appeals "to equality alongside liberty" (May 2008: 83). However, unlike the synergy that this thesis offers, "communist anarchism subsumes liberty into equality, ensuring both its place and its limits by reference to equality" (91).

[5] The proposition of Étienne Balibar's neologistic portmanteau *égaliberté* (*equaliberty*) in *Equaliberty: Political Essays* (Balibar 2014 [2010]) would state otherwise (N.B., when this thesis uses or cites an English translation, all dates in square brackets refer to the first publication of the text in the original language). For Balibar, equality and freedom can only be fully realised in union–"Each is the measure of the other" (46)–and they are only seen to not work together due to three mistaken beliefs: equality is mostly social and economic, and freedom is mostly political, institutional, and juridical; equality can only come about by intervention from the state such as material (re)distribution, and freedom's preservation occurs by the limitation of state intervention; equality is a collective aim and freedom an individual one (38). Unlike this thesis' synergy of practices of equality and freedom, however, Balibar's proposition of *égaliberté* is a politics of human rights that he traces from the 1789 document from the French Revolution *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* and offers as a demand for and by the disenfranchised in their exclusion and oppression. Again, unlike this thesis' synergy, equality and freedom, according to Balibar, can only work if they become institutionalised and can thus transform the conditions for oppression. As such, Balibar's *égaliberté* calls for a 'civilising' of revolutionary politics as a means to institutionalise it and thus transform these conditions via the perspective of an anti-violence in that which he terms in *Equaliberty: Political Essays*, *Politics and the Other Scene* (2002 [1997]), and *Violence and Civility: On the Limits of Political Philosophy* (2015 [2015]), a politics of civility. For Balibar, for there to be emancipation, this transformation must take place just as emancipation must exist to give transformation its focus. As the English translator of the original French text into *Equaliberty: Political Essays* James D. Ingram states in an essay that

Seeing equality and freedom as ideals to be reached, also ties into an understanding of emancipation as the transcendence of an existing order by political revolution. In the work of Rancière and Foucault, however, equality and freedom respectively exist as practices and not ideals and thus we find a Nietzschean shift beyond the polarity of good and evil and the transcendence of the latter by the former through revolutionary acts. This is because, as history has shown us, violent revolutions often cause a power cycle where power shifts from one order of hierarchy to another and accordingly, equality and freedom are deferred as ideals within a dialectic of transcendence whilst other imperatives are pursued. Like Plato and Aristotle before them, Rancière and Foucault clearly understand the violence that this cycle involves,[6] a cycle which was further drummed home for them by the 1970's revelation of the Soviet gulags that turned many thinkers to a means of emancipation other than violent revolutions (see Chapter 4).[7] Thus, with Rancière's and Foucault's practices, we turn to a

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gives a clear overview of Balibar's work: "To be effective, equalibertarian politics must transform its background conditions – and with them, the nature of the "political" itself" (Ingram 2015: 221). Whilst this has a slight similarity to the simultaneity of transgression and transformation that this thesis' synergy offers, in practices of equality and freedom the focus is on transforming the 'self' and thus it is a non-institutional transformation that will always be valid regardless of any transformations of socio and economic conditions of oppression.

[6] Plato believed that forms of governments were cyclical and describes this *kyklos* (cycle) in his *Republic* (Plato 2003) in Book VIII and Book IX as leading to violence and offers the philosopher king as means to end this cycle. Aristotle also wrote of the violence of governmental cycles in Book V of his *Politics* (Aristotle 1992) and suggested various ways to stop them such as education for all citizens on matters such as the constitution. The Greek historian Polybius expanded on this in Book VI of his *Histories* (Polybius 2002) and in turn, influenced the Roman stateman Cicero who wrote of it in his *On the Republic* (*De Republica*) (Cicero 2014). Machiavelli also wrote of this cycle in Book I Chapter II of his *Discourses on Livy* (Machiavelli 1996). As such, there is a long history of an understanding of the revolutionary cycle of governmental forms and the violence that this cycle can bring.

[7] This does not mean that Foucault or Rancière are 'totally' against mass civil resistance–their support of May '68 shows otherwise. Foucault's support of and political journalism on the 1979 Iranian Revolution (also known as the Islamic Revolution) also shows his support of political revolution (see Afary and Anderson 2005, Beukes 2020, Gharmari-Tabrizi 2016, and Lazreg 2017: 122-158). However, as Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan argue in their study that shows "nonviolent resistance" is almost "twice as likely to achieve full or partial success compared to violent resistance" (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011: 7) as well as greatly increase the chance of a democratic state if it is successful, it was only when "the primary method of resistance was nonviolent" in Iran, that the ruling regime's vulnerabilities were able to be exploited (93). What Foucault was against therefore, much like Rancière, was not only the violence of the state but, following the violence of certain twentieth-century revolutions and their totalitarian outcome, violent revolutions. As examples, we can think of the Russian Revolution (1917), the Chinese Revolution (1946-50), the Algerian Revolution (1954-62), the Cuban Revolution (1953-1959), and the Vietnamese Revolution (1959-1975). All of which, installed "new regimes" where a "lack of respect for human rights and minority rights [were] the norm" (60) (Ironically, following the non-violent campaign of the Iranian revolution, an autocratic regime also came into power in Iran under the Ayatollah Khomeini. In a 1979 statement, Foucault addressed whether this discredited his support or the support of others for those who

redefinition of emancipation as an opening of the immanent and non-violent middle ground in-between conformity and violent revolution, where equality and freedom happen now as everyday practices rather than being deferred as a destination to be reached. This is not quietism, however, in a form of a political centrism, as these practices are engineered by a dissensual and radical, ontological equality and freedom enacted by the individual via the self-prescriptive acts of an auto-emancipation that distances itself from both political centrism and a violent, prescriptive transcendence from one order to another. Thus, this form of emancipation is, much like Foucault wrote in a 1963 essay regarding 'transgression', "neither violence in a divided world (in an ethical world) nor a victory over limits (in a dialectical or revolutionary world) [. . .]" (Foucault 1977: 74) because it does not adhere to an understanding of emancipation as the good transcending evil within the dialectic of ideals and the violence of political revolutions. Therefore, it is a non-violent, ongoing, and immanent emancipation where, to paraphrase Mischa Suter regarding his description of Rancière's understanding of subjectivation, an emancipatory individual is neither entirely autonomous nor entirely a subject of normativity, but someone in-between in the abandonment of their "existing identity" (Suter 2012: 83). Thus, this form of emancipation is a revolution of sorts, one that resists the metaphysics of transcendence and exteriority in the understanding that there is no outside to determinations that form our social being. Therefore, it is not a political or economic revolution based on ideals, but an ontological revolution that we shall call, following Rancière, an aesthetic revolution. In other words, it is a revolution lived by an ontological freedom and equality based on presuppositions and practices that transform the self and transgress the consensus in the clarity that there will always be a need for emancipation in one form or another. As such, it is a way of life.[8]

Research Objective, Questions, Limitations, and Contribution

Due to practices of equality and freedom being self-prescriptive rather than prescriptive and thus offering no instruction and telos to a new democratic order, thinkers such as Slavoj

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revolted: "One does not dictate to those who risk their life facing a power. Is it right to revolt, or not? Let us leave the question open" (Foucault 1997a: 452)). As such, both thinkers wanted to explore other means of emancipation whilst remaining in favour of non-violent civil resistance and leaving the question of revolution open. However, as a parenthetic aside, as Chenoweth and Stephan point out, "there are some difficulties with labelling one campaign as violent and another as nonviolent. In many cases, both nonviolent and violent campaigns exist simultaneously among competing groups [. . .] Characterizing a campaign as violent or nonviolent simplifies a complex constellation of resistance methods" (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011: 12). May '68 can be seen as an example of this.

[8] "Resistance," as Judith Revel states regarding Foucault's work, "is a creative development of life" (Revel 2008: 38). It is to "make one's life the ground of one's own resistance [. . .] Resistance is an ontology" (38).

Žižek have criticised Rancière's practices as being merely determinate negations that lead nowhere (Žižek 2000, 2008), and thinkers such as Terry Eagleton believe that Foucault's practices possess no understanding of how individual emancipation can connect communally (Eagleton 2004: 393). In engaging with critiques such as these, this thesis presents its synergy as an aesthetic revolution of the individual, where aesthetic practices of transformation are simultaneously acts of dissensus and *parrhesia* that intertwine in a transgression that expands communally. As such, these are immanent practices of the self in, as Rancière puts it regarding practices of equality, a "Political being-together" (Rancière 1999: 137) as democratic existents that create worlds within worlds rather than a new social order: "Political being-together is a being-between: between identities, between worlds" (137). The use of the word democratic here refers to Rancière's bi-univocal definition of democracy as political 'dissensus'. As such, democracy (*demokratia*: *demos* (people), *kraiten* (rule)) in this thesis does not refer to a form of government within the consensual offering of the minimalist, procedural democracy of universal suffrage that it exists as today. Instead, it refers to a life of dissensus that opens emancipatory spaces for practices of equality and freedom to ontologically unfold in creating other lives and other worlds within existing social realities. However, individual practices that are intransitive and thus offer no external telos but are their own ends in their actual day to day practice, are somewhat of an alien concept to an occidental modernity that still revolves on the axis of the Enlightenment's ideal of progress via prescriptive and promissory ends. As such, the objective of this synergy is to critically engage with three factors of practices of equality and freedom to address this: the necessity of autotelism in creating an 'other life', the value of what this thesis describes as 'self-tutelage' (an authority over and instruction of oneself) within an auto-emancipation and autodidacticism, and the ability to expand individual practices communally within 'other worlds'. All of these factors will be used to break with the deferral incorporated in a prescriptive rationale of progress by offering an immanent manifestation of life as art in the emancipatory formation of an 'other life' and 'other worlds' that happen now rather than being deferred to the *atopos* (non-place) of ideals. These three factors raise the following questions: How does an individual create an 'other life' of emancipation via autotelic practices rather than the external telos of ideals? Why is self-tutelage a necessity for this form of emancipation? And how are communities formed by individual practices into 'other worlds' within an existing world? All of which, lead to the question, how does one live practices of equality and freedom as a way of life? In addressing this question, however, there will be more of a focus on the individual than community.[9] This is partially because this

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[9] This is why this thesis will not be engaging with prominent texts on community such as Jean-Luc Nancy's *The Inoperative Community* (1991 [1986]) and *The Disavowed Community* 2016 [2014]), or Maurice Blanchot's *The*

is where the focus lies for Rancière and Foucault, and partially because of space limitations. Therefore, community as a creative ontology itself within practices of equality and freedom and the tension between the emancipatory individual and this ontology, is something that will be expanded upon in future research.

In answering the above questions, this research will contribute to the existing understanding of Rancière's and Foucault's respective practices by opening new perspectives on their work and highlighting connections made within the joint manifestation of these practices that facilitate acts of emancipation. However, as mentioned above, as this thesis is constrained by both a word limit and the lack of any prior research on a synergy of Rancière's and Foucault's practices to draw from (although the latter could also be seen as a lack of constraint), it represents an open-ended beginning in this inchoate research area rather than a conclusionary end. In fact, as it also involves the application of these practices as 'lived' experiences of an auto-emancipation as a way of life, this synergy cannot be anything but open-ended in the always ongoing process of an *auto* (self) *telēs* (end). Therefore, the matrix of possibilities revealed by the perspectives and connections that this research unfolds, will hopefully lead to further questions and future interest and research by others on a synergy of practices of equality and freedom beyond the finitude of this thesis.

Structure

So far, in this introductory chapter, the aim and relevance of this thesis have been set, the background, context, research objective, and key questions have been introduced, the value of this thesis has been argued, and the limitations have been stated as has the contribution. The rest of this chapter will outline the structure of this thesis which is in three parts: 'Rancière and Practices of Equality', 'Foucault and Practices of Freedom', and 'Practices of Equality and Freedom'. Part 1 consists of four chapters and, as the title states, addresses Rancière's practices of equality. Chapter 1 uses Rancière's first four books to offer an understanding and give the derivation of his notion of a presupposition of equality. Rancière derives a presupposition of equality from a supposition of an equality of intelligence put forward by the nineteenth-century pedagogue Joseph Jacotot in his autodidactic method of learning that Rancière engages with in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (1991 [1987]). By highlighting Jacotot's method as not trying to prove an equality of intelligence but acting as if this supposition is true, Rancière presents us

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Unavowable Community (1988 [1983]), and the cognate responses to these texts such as Giorgio Agamben's *The Coming Community* (2007 [1990]) or Roberto Esposito's *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community* (2010 [1998]) or his later *Terms of the Political: Community, Immunity, Biopolitics* (2013 [2008]), for example.

with a situation in which one presupposes equality and acts accordingly. Even though this text was published six years after Rancière's archival work *The Nights of Labor: The Worker's Dream in Nineteenth-century France* (1989 [1981]),[10] this chapter connects it to the lives of the nineteenth-century workers that the latter explores, as they practiced autodidactism in lives that presupposed the equality to be both workers and writers. In tying these two texts together, Chapter 1 demonstrates how they are used by Rancière in his fight against political philosophy and its didactic and dialectic approach to emancipation. Rancière initially turned against political philosophy in his first book *Althusser's Lesson* 2011 [1974] and continued this attack in his third book, amongst others, *The Philosopher and His Poor* 2004b [1983]. This chapter utilises both texts as supplements to the key text of this chapter, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, and as a backdrop for Chapter 2, which engages with Rancière's continued attack against political philosophy. Lastly, this chapter introduces one of the key characters of Rancière's archival work, the nineteenth-century worker-poet and self-proclaimed plebeian philosopher Louis-Gabriel Gauny (1806 - 1889), whom Rancière exemplifies as having lived a life of practices of equality. Gauny also plays a key part in this thesis, as explained below, as he occupies every chapter, to one degree or another, acting as a thread suturing practices of equality and freedom together.

Chapter 2 mostly draws from Rancière's *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* 1999 [1995] and elucidates and stresses the importance of his bi-univocal definitions of politics, police, disagreement (*mésentente*), and democracy in his continued attack against political philosophy. It also contests Žižek's critique (Žižek 2008, 2000) of Rancière's form of emancipation and May's appropriation (May 2008) of Rancière's understanding of a democratic politics in their pursuit of a transcendent emancipation from the current social order. Chapter 3 expands upon this contestation by stressing the immanence in Rancière's redefinition of emancipation via the thematic of the simultaneity of politics as aesthetics and aesthetics as politics that Rancière names subjectivation. To engage with Rancière's understanding of politics and aesthetics and how they are linked by dissensus, this chapter largely draws from Rancière's 'The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics' (2003) and *Aesthetics and its Discontents* (2009c [2004]). The chapter answers the question that the former text asks–"What does it mean to think politics and aesthetics under the concept of dissensus?" (Rancière 2003: 1)–by turning to the latter text in an engagement with Rancière's regimes of art and the focus on the last regime, the aesthetic regime, and how

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[10] This thesis adheres to the American English spelling of 'labour' when citing the American publication, *The Nights of Labor*. This text was republished in 2012 with a new preface and a more exact translation of the French title *La nuit des prolétaires:Archives du rêve ouvrier*, *Proletarian Nights: The Worker's Dream in Nineteenth-century France*.

Rancière connects that to the aesthetic revolution of the workers in his archival work. In this engagement, this chapter also contests Joseph Tanke's critique (Tanke 2011) that Rancière's aesthetico-political emancipation is somehow lacking due to the absence of a full engagement with the imagination as a creative form. Lastly, Chapter 3 lays the ground for the synergy in Part 3 where the actuality of living practices of freedom and equality is addressed. It does so, by engaging with the poetics of Rancière's aesthetico-political form of emancipation, highlighting that Rancière uses the term poetic to distance himself from the didactics of political philosophy. As Chapter 8 represents Gauny's life as an example of lived practices of equality and freedom, Chapter 4 will prepare for this by providing both the background of Gauny's life and times and Rancière's archival work by drawing from *The Nights of Labor* and the second edition of Gauny's *Le Philosophe plébéien* (edited by Rancière) (2017).

From the brief synopsis above, it can be seen, that whilst Rancière's practices offer the non-identity of an aesthetico-political act by subjectivation–the transformation of the subject into a political being, unlike Foucault's ethics of the self, they offer no means to form 'new' subjectivities. As such, in this synergy, Foucault's ethics offers ontological signposts on the path of emancipation that Rancière traces in his understanding of subjectivation. Rancière's notion of dissensus also lacks a framework, depending instead on the exemplification of lived realities of emancipation. Whilst these archival exemplifications are invaluable, as this thesis denotes itself by utilsing Rancière's research on Gauny to fill the lack of this dynamic in Foucault's work, this thesis also offers an understanding of *parrhesia* in all its facets–the spoken and the written word, action and non-action–as a dissensual aid along Rancière's emancipatory path. This gives individuals a loose structure of sorts to work with in their individual acts of emancipation, thus complementing Rancière's illustration of acts of dissensus by the examples of Gauny's emancipatory life, just as these examples complement Foucault's understanding of *parrhesia*. In other words, in this thesis, Rancière's archival examples of lived realities of emancipation are aided by and aid Foucault's ethics and *parrhesia*.

Part 2 of this thesis is made up of three chapters and addresses Foucault's practices of freedom. Chapter 5 starts with an elucidation of the archaeology and genealogy of Foucault's early work and his understanding of how we are historically constituted as normative subjects by discursive and non-discursive practices. This is carried out as a foundation to understand his offering of aesthetic practices and draws from *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (2002 [1966]), *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (2010a [1969]), *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979a [1975]),

and *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: The Will to Knowledge* (1978 [1976]). In examining this offering, Chapter 5 answers the question of how subjects produced by knowledge and Foucault's understanding of power as productive can break out of a cycle of perpetuation caused by the belief that social classifications define who they are and thus should be adopted to oppose the lack of freedom that they impose. It strives to show that an ethics of freedom offers a valid form of emancipation to break out of this cycle of perpetuation rather than being merely a way to avoid the dialectic of transcendence as Žižek's critique (Žižek 2000) states it is. In doing so, it links Foucault's understanding of a subject's ability to create new subjectivities, whilst retaining aspects of normative subjectivities, with Rancière's offering of Gauny as a double existing as both a worker and a poet. This ability to live in two modes at the same time, accentuates the space of living practices of equality and freedom in-between conformity and political revolution whilst existing in a life of dissensus in the solidity of an aesthetic revolution, rather than the abstraction of ideals and deferral. It is in this coexistence of living a life of consensus focussed on the needs of *zôion* (a biological life) enmeshed in the social control of that which Foucault named bio-politics, and a life of aesthetic revolution focussed on *parrhesia* and *bíos* (a way of life) as *bíos kai praxis* (life and practice), that emancipation is always ongoing within the constant tension between practices of equality and freedom contra discursive and non-discursive practices that produce us as subjects and distribute the social space and time in which we live. As such, this way of life means living in two worlds on 'both' (*amphí*) sides of 'life' (*bios*), which leads us to the question addressed in Part 3: What does it mean to live life as *amphíbios*, as a double?

Chapter 6 interweaves the second and third volumes of the *History of Sexuality–The Use of Pleasure* (1990a [1984]) and *The Care of the Self* (1986a [1984]) respectively–between its key texts: Foucault's 1980-1981 lecture course *Subjectivity and Truth* (2017 [2014]) and his 1981-1982 lecture course *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* (2005 [2001]). This chapter focuses on a care of the self, and initially utilises Foucault's *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* to examine his unearthing of how a care of the self was subsumed by a hermeneutics of the self. It then turns to *Subjectivity and Truth* as a means to address his work on the connection between truth and subjectivity within an aesthetics of existence and its possible use as a means for constituting one's 'self' to resist a normative subjectivity. In critically engaging with Foucault's use of Stoicism, this chapter points out how Foucault's exploration of a care of the self only addresses the care for the self when used by those with the luxury of time, whilst not questioning the prerequisite of privilege that this imposes. However, Foucault's failure to question this prerequisite is not a major transgression, as he is not offering Stoicism in his practices of freedom and his understanding of how anyone can practice freedom is implicit in his ethics. Nevertheless, this lack is answered within the synergy this thesis offers via

Rancière's archival work which affirmatively and indirectly answers the question, can those without the luxury of time, take care of the self? This then leads this chapter to Foucault's shift from Stoicism to Cynicism, addressing the latter in the next chapter.

Chapter 7 examines *parrhesia* and Cynicism, largely drawing from Foucault's 1983 lecture series at Berkeley, unofficially known as *Fearless Speech*, and his last two lecture series at the Collège de France: *The Government of the Self and Others* Volumes 1 and 2. In this last chapter before Part 3, which explores a synergy of practices of equality and freedom, *parrhesia* and Cynicism are utilised as a means to connect these practices by linking *parrhesia* with Rancière's understanding of dissensus, democracy, and politics, and by supplementing this connection with comments on Gauny, whose life of practices of freedom and equality was partially influenced by the Cynic Diogenes. In taking this particular reading, this chapter stresses *parrhesia* as a means to rupture both a subject's connection with their normative self and with consensual reality, by both the courage to speak out against normative 'truths' and to live emancipatory practices as a way of life. In defining *parrhesia* not just as a form of emancipation by the spoken and written word but also by action and non-action, thus linking *parrhesia* to a way of life, this chapter engages with Foucault's genealogy of *parrhesia* and its manifestations in the sphere of the *polis*, *psuchê* (soul), and *êthos* and his linkage of these spheres to knowledge/truth, power, and ethics respectively. To engage with *parrhesia* in use, this thesis turns to Part 3.

Part 3 presents a synergy of practices of equality and freedom that in Chapter 8 aims to answer, via Gauny's way of life, the aforementioned question: What does it mean to live life as *amphíbios*, as a double? Whilst Rancière has engaged with Gauny's way of life as an exemplification of lived practices of equality, this thesis expands on this exemplification by offering an interpretation of his life as an example of lived practices of equality *and* freedom in Gauny's use of a care of the self and *parrhesia*. As such, Gauny acts as a kind of imperfect exemplar binding these practices together as a way of life, which in turn, opens up questions of how *parrhesia* itself can act as a nexus between practices of equality and freedom. Whilst certain commentaries have stressed Gauny's influence on Rancière (Davis 2010, Rockhill 2014, Tanke 2011), there is little contemporary, in-depth work on this worker-poet apart from Rancière's.[11] Therefore, the detail with which Gauny's life is addressed and

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[11] Laura Quintana's essay 'Jacque Rancière and the emancipation of bodies' (2018) uses Rancière's interpretation of Gauny to support her assertion that Rancière's understanding of aesthetics and corporality is key to his understanding of intellectual emancipation: "Rancière's aesthetic understanding can be viewed as a torsion of a body that affects its vital arrangements, which thereby open paths for political emancipation" (Quintana 2018: 1). This evaluation indirectly ties into this thesis' focus on the corporality of Gauny's metaphoric

the innovative interpretation of him as a *parrhesiastes* (speaker of *parrhesia*) living practices of equality and freedom, add a unique supplement to the novel thematic of this thesis. However, offering Gauny's life as an exemplar is not to give a definitive answer of how to live as a double, but is instead, a thinking through of how practices of equality and freedom can (e)merge. Accordingly, it is, as the title of Chapter 8 illustrates, the following of 'The Traces of a Path' of a life of emancipation lived as a double by practices of equality and freedom. The life of *amphíbios* that Gauny the worker-poet exemplifies, aids an illustration of the autodidactic and communal aspect of emancipation, doing so via his autobiographical texts, correspondence, and poetry that expand communally. These writings feed from and into his everyday life as he navigates nineteenth-century Paris in an ambulatory reverie of gazes and words in a dissensus and *parrhesia* that transgress both the distribution of the sensible and his consensual identity as an artisan.

In the second chapter of Part 3, Chapter 9, which is also the last chapter of this thesis, Rancière's and Foucault's respective understandings of fiction are presented as symbiotic counter-fictions that oppose the lack of ontological freedom and equality within a normative production of truth. This chapter also addresses how the experiment of living emancipatory lives can lead to new ways of experiencing truth, the 'self', others, and the world, and can thus enable a distancing of one's 'self' from the imposition of the fictions of the consensus proffered as univocal truths. In doing so, it revisits Gauny's reveries of dissensus and *parrhesia* as experimental forms of emancipation that can be offered as ways to break with the quotidian practices of the consensus and to create a double not only of the self but of reality. This then ties into bi-univocal terms acting as a variant of the dominant discourse and therefore, as a means of 'dis-identification' from the consensus and its taxonomy of identities and distribution of social space and time.

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somnambulism outside of the consensual limits of socio-space and time imposed upon him as an artisan. Gauny's emancipatory way of life is also detailed in Chapter 4 of Edward Hughes' book *Egalitarian Strangeness*: *On Class Disturbance and Levelling in Modern and Contemporary French Narrative* (2021) which takes a different tack to this thesis by focusing purely on Rancière's exegesis of Gauny.

Part 1 - **Rancière and Practices of Equality**

Chapter 1 - A Presupposition of Equality

Were we to attempt to qualify Rancière's work, we could perhaps describe it with the feeling emanating from the letters written in 1890 by Jeanne Désirée quoted towards the end of Rancière's second book *The Nights of Labor* (Rancière 1989: 423-30) and mentioned by the historian Donald Reid in his introduction to this English translation (Reid 1989: xxxv). These letters from Désirée, an old militant worker, to her ex-lover, Victor Considérant, a socialist who became the leader of the Fourierist movement of self-sufficient cooperatives, inform him that she never once forgot how he introduced her to the possibility of another life.[1] This, in a kernel, is arguably the central offering of Rancière's work: the possibility of *une vie autre* (another life) created and lived through the aesthetico-political union of the self-tutelage of autodidactism and the rupture offered by dissensus aimed at opening new worlds. This is perhaps why Rancière offers these particular letters towards the end of his text on certain exceptional proletarian autodidacts of nineteenth-century France, as an indication of an open-ended offering of possibilities for us to unfold within our individual lives and the milieu from which they stem. As Rancière states in an interview: "That's what interests me–the possibilities for reconfiguring a field of possibilities" (Rancière 2016a: 64).

We shall return to *The Nights of Labor* at the end of this chapter where we briefly explore the offering of the autodidactic existence that it pertains to, returning to autodidactism again later in Part 1. Before that, however, we shall turn to the book that unearths the rhizomic roots of Rancière's presupposition of equality and autodidactism and is the key focus of this chapter, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*. This multifaceted book addresses the pedagogue Joseph Jacotot and his experimental method to enable learning. This text, in turn, will lead us in this chapter to Rancière's first book *Althusser's Lesson* and his third book *The Philosopher and His Poor*, both of which, in the context of this thesis, act only as a supplement to our engagement with his fourth book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*. This chapter uses Rancière's first four books as a foundation to understand Rancière's presupposition of equality and his struggle, like Foucault's, against inequality

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[1] Part of a letter from Désirée reads: "Does Victor Considérant remember Jeanne Désirée? If he does, let him write her a word. She has forgotten nothing, neither Fourier nor the youthful sentiments of 1832. And she lives calmly in voluntary solitude, her heart filled with memories of her whole impassioned life" (Rancière 1989: 423). Fourierism was a system created by the French socialist François Marie Charles Fourier (1772-1837) as a means to reorganise society into autonomous cooperatives. We revisit Fourierism in Chapter 4.

epitomised in the hierarchy of knowledge.[2] It ends by touching lightly on Rancière's later text *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009b [2008]) as a precursor to following chapters.

1.1 The Ignorant Schoolmaster

For Jacotot, in his role as a tutor, equality lies in the supposition of an equality of intelligence. The form of learning that Jacotot puts forward with this supposition, is quasi-autodidactic and purportedly leads (as Rancière's book title informs us) to intellectual emancipation, unlike traditional tutelage that leads to knowledge gained through explication.[3] For Jacotot, to explain is to oppress by placing students in the hierarchy of the teacher's intelligence over theirs: emancipation only comes "when one teaches oneself" (Jacotot in Rancière 1991: 99), as Jacotot's method, known as "Universal Teaching," is something that "can only be directed to individuals, never to societies" (Rancière 1991: 105). This is because, according to Jacotot and Rancière, when it is directed to societies, it falls back into the very explicatory and institutional method that it stands against: "the integral pedagogicisation of society–the general infantilisation of the individuals that make it up" (133).[4] In this sense, we can see that explication can be a practice of hierarchy. Tutelage means both an authority over and an instruction of someone. This is why this thesis uses the term self-tutelage, as it is both an authority over and instruction of oneself that autodidactism offers as a form of emancipation from a hierarchy of knowledge for the individual rather than society as a whole: "[I]ndividuals are real beings, and society a fiction. It's for real beings that equality has value, not for a fiction" (133). However, before going further, we should understand that before Rancière,

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[2] Some readers might initially see similarities between the philosopher educator Paulo Freire and his theory of education centred on emancipation (Freire 1985, 2005 [1970]) and Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*. However, unlike Rancière, Freire remained firmly in the camp of offering ways to change education in the aim of a postrevolutionary state of material isonomy. For an essay that compares Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* with Freire's work, see Sarah Galloway (2012) who lists how Rancière indirectly avoids certain aspects of Freire's theory that have been criticised (183).

[3] While we shall be exploring this emancipatory method, we shall not be breaking it down into 'five lessons' (as the subtitle of the book states) because these five lessons are not part of the method *per se* but are representative of the five chapters of the book: 'Intellectual Adventure', 'Ignorant One's Lesson', 'Reason between Equals', 'Society of Contempt', and 'Emancipator and his Monkey'.

[4] "Jacotot's approach is," as Oliver Davis states, "anti-institutional and addressed not to society as a whole but to individuals who want and need to learn. Indeed the conception of radical equality demonstrated in Jacotot's singular pedagogy is, almost by definition, incapable of ever becoming the 'policy' of any institution, party or government" (Davis 2010: 31). Indirectly in line with this, Kant raises an interesting point in his essay 'Lectures on Pedagogy' (2007 [1803]): "One of the biggest problems of education is how one can unite submission under lawful constraint with the capacity to use one's freedom. For constraint is necessary. How do I cultivate freedom under constraint?" (Kant 2007: 447).

Jacotot's method was not particularly seen as a radical and emancipatory path to social equality. The British social historian Carolyn Steedman informs us in the commentary reader *Rancière Now* (2013), that we can read about Jacotot's method outside of the focus given to it by Rancière as a radical pedagogy (Steedman 2013: 80-4). Steedman grounds this pedagogy as a method for the 'poor' rather than an emancipatory method towards equality. In other words, if Jacotot's method means that one can teach without knowledge of what one teaches, then parents who could not afford to send their children to school (before the period when free primary education emerged) could use Jacotot's method to 'teach' their children to read and write. In fact, Steedman informs us that in Britain Jacotot's method, "which he did not claim to be innovative, was the mainstream of eighteenth-century experimentation with syllabification as literacy instruction" (80-1). Therefore, we should be aware that Rancière does not merely redeploy Jacotot's method but appropriates it for his own means. *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* is, as Alain Badiou puts it, "a fictional reconstruction of this figure [(Jacotot)] aimed at facilitating a discussion on the equality of intellects" (Badiou 2006: 108). However, so that we do not wander off the path that we have set, we must prioritise our focus on Rancière's appropriation of Jacotot's method, rather than the method itself.

Rancière's understanding of a presupposition of equality lies in congruence with Jacotot's type of autodidactic learning in that it is "not a passively received equality, but an equality in act [. . .]" (Rancière 1991: 72). Therefore, in *The Political Thought of Jacques Rancière: Creating Equality* (May 2010), May states that Rancière's philosophy espouses an "active equality" where one assumes rather than receives a passive equality, such as that given by governmental institutions (3). In other words, according to May, whilst a passive equality is about receiving, an active equality is about, as Rancière states above, how you act (4). In order to understand this, we can turn to the example of active equality that May gives of the American civil rights movement. During this movement, African Americans sat at white only restaurants and utilised a presupposition of equality in waiting to be served: "They presupposed their own equality to whites and acted out that presupposition" (50). Therefore, we can see that a practice of equality is not about what you should receive but how you should act, regardless (to a degree) of the reaction (the acts of the American civil rights activists were met with violence and arrest).[5] These acts were acts of a presupposition of

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[5] The violence that dissensus can attract, as it did in the American civil rights movement, is not something that Rancière seems to address. As Davis puts it: "When the process of political subjectivation is successful, from the point of view of the *sans-part*, why exactly does the police order suddenly accept their logical theatrical demonstration of equality?" (Davis 2010: 96). In the study by Chenoweth and Stephan cited in the introduction to this thesis, they state, in an indirect reply, that "nonviolent campaigns can impose costly sanctions on their opponents, resulting in strategic gains" (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011: 18). For examples of this, we can look to

equality manifested as a dissensus that ruptured the inequality of the consensus–'white only' establishments–and eventually led to the end of this segregation. Acts like these create what Rancière names a 'scene'. This does not mean, however, that scenes created by acts of equality presuppose an identity politics, since for Rancière the aim is to break down the normative boundaries that come with identity. As May puts it: "Identity politics does not declassify; it reclassifies" (70).[6] Thus, as May states in an essay on Foucault and Rancière, mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, what a "presupposition of equality does, and what identity politics did not do, is to offer a common political ground on the basis of which to build a political struggle" (May 2015: 39). Therefore, a presupposition of equality aims to avoid the division that identity politics can cause. We shall be revisiting 'dissensus' in Chapter 2. For now, let us return to Jacotot.

Having served in the Republican army during the war and as a deputy after the war, Jacotot had to flee France because of the return of a monarchy (albeit a constitutional one) in the period named the Bourbon Restoration (1815-1830) (Rancière 1991: 1). He went to the Netherlands and had to teach students who only spoke Flemish. As a French/Flemish bilingual edition of François Fénelon's 1699 book *Les aventures de Télémaque* had just been published in Brussels, Jacotot decided to use this text to as a means for students to learn the French language (2),[7] and with the aid of an interpreter, asked his students to learn French by using the Flemish in *Les aventures de Télémaque*. This experiment exceeded any of Jacotot's expectations. The students not only learnt to read French, but also learnt to write French by studying the grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and so on, of the French text with the aid of the accompanying Flemish (2). Thus began Jacotot's pedagogical experiment that led to his understanding of a supposition of an equality of intelligence and a new method of

the boycott of certain establishments in the American civil rights movement (and the refusal of African Americans to take the bus) and the fight against Apartheid in South Africa where white owned shops were boycotted. The fight in India against British colonial rule also carried out a similar strategy.

[6] And this is a major difference between Rancière's bi-univocal terms explored in the next chapter and identity politics' appropriation of terms such as 'queer' for example, as identity politics seeks a reclassification and Rancière, a declassification.

[7] The tutor/mentor of Télémaque, the latter being the protagonist of Fénelon's book, reveals themself at the end of the story to be Minerva the goddess of wisdom–this was Fénelon's nod to the Ancient Greeks against the French aristocracy of his time. Telemachus was the son of Ulysses. As Ulysses refers to an odyssey, the use of *Les aventures de Télémaque* refers to an odyssey too–a return to the Greeks' way of politics: democracy. All of which, ties into the unrest of Jacotot's era. As Simon During states in his essay 'Book Shelves, Day by Day', *Les aventures de Télémaque* was, apart from the Bible, the eighteenth century's "most popular French book (and Rousseau's favourite) [. . .]" (During 2022: 1). For an essay on Rousseau's reception of Fénelon, see Matthew D. Mendham's essay in the reader *Fénelon in the Enlightenment: Traditions, Adaptions, and Variations* (eds Ahn, Schmitt-Maab, Stockhorst 2014).

'teaching'. This was a method that enabled students to learn without the use of didactic instruction and teachers to 'teach' without prior knowledge of the subject at hand. However, as Jacotot knew, regardless of the autonomy offered to students via this method, a student must want to learn, and many do not want to, as Jacotot found out by his constant questioning of students to see if they had applied themselves or not. This was answered by Jacotot's understanding of the will: "The method of equality was above all a method of the will. One could learn by oneself and without a master explicator when one wanted to, propelled by one's own desire or by the constraint of the situation" (12). When people need a 'master' because their will is too weak, there is a "subjection [. . .] of will over will" (13). However, when this subjection becomes one intelligence over another intelligence rather than one will over another will, stultification takes place (13). Therefore, this new learning route was freer as it was a route towards liberty and emancipation by using one's own intelligence rather than being led to the stultification that a traditional, didactic method gave (14): "[E]ducation is like liberty: it isn't given; it's taken" (107). So, initially, it seems that this emancipation is about an inequality of will rather than an equality of intelligence, which would make it some sort of quasi-Nietzschean *Wille zur Macht* (will to power).[8] However, a stress on will was more of a means to show that it was not a lack of equality of intelligence that different students showed, but a lack of effort. As Rancière informs us, for Jacotot, the only valid statement was "The equality of intelligence" (56). This is because, for Jacotot (and perhaps Rancière too–it is not always easy to tell as both voices merge and blur into one at times in his book (Ross 1991b: 69))–no one is born more intelligent than another person; it is the tenaciousness of the will that makes one person appear more intelligent than another (Rancière 1991: 71). Thus, Jacotot's area of focus was intelligence, not will. As Samuel Chambers puts it in his book *The Lessons of Rancière*: "Radical pedagogy does not mean verifying what the student has learned; it means verifying equality, and nothing more" (Chambers 2013: 157). Because equality is something that needs to be constantly verified and not reached like an ideal, acts of equality (as we shall explore in the next section of this chapter) are perpetually inaugural–they are a practice that can open up new worlds rather than being a means to an end: "Equality is not given, nor is it claimed; it is practiced, it is verified" (Rancière 1991: 137). However, as the whole premise of this method is a supposition, the obvious criticism that we need to address is that this supposition is incorrect because we are not all equally intelligent. This is one of the three criticisms of a presupposition of equality that May disputes in his book on Rancière:

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[8] "*[M]an is a will served by an intelligence. Perhaps* saying that wills are unequally demanding suffices to explain the differences in attention that would perhaps suffice to explain the inequality of intellectual performances" (Rancière 1991: 51-2, Rancière's stress).

> [P]eople are not equally intelligent [. . .] by invoking the presupposition of equality, Rancière returns us to an essentialism [. . .] by ascribing a politics of equality retrospectively to earlier political movements, especially those that do not arise consciously in the name of equality, Rancière's approach to a democratic politics is a-historical. (May 2010: 62)

We can counter these criticisms fairly easily whilst only touching lightly on May's retorts (see May 2010: 62-9). The second criticism is important to address because essentialism is the tool of a normative power used to create hierarchies–this is something we shall explore more fully in the first chapter on Foucault. However, this criticism is easily dismissed as a non sequitur and a paralogism. This is because Rancière does not emphatically state that an equality of intelligence exists. Instead, he asks what the world would be like if we acted under that presupposition: "[W]e can never say: all intelligence is equal [. . .] our problem isn't proving that all intelligence is equal. It's seeing what can be done under that supposition. And for this, it's enough for us that the opinion be possible-that is, that no opposing truth be proved" (Rancière 1991: 46).[9] This retort to the first criticism answers the second criticism: Rancière does not emphatically state that an equality of intelligence exists and therefore, he does not impose an essentialism on the human form. What Rancière does emphatically state, in a later text, is that a presupposition of equality is not ontological: "Equality is what I have called a presupposition. It is not, let it be understood, a founding ontological principal but a condition that only functions when it is put into action [. . .]" (Rancière 2004a: 52). A lack of descriptive ontologies, or, as Rancière names them, "ontologies of identity" (Rancière 2016a: 24), stresses the lack of an essentialism–Ranciere is not examining being or imposing equality, be it of intelligence or otherwise, as an essence. As Rancière states in an interview: "If you mean by ontology a theory of being as a being, or a theory of the being of being, I've obviously never concerned myself with that [. . .]" (Rancière 2016: 62). However, this does not mean as Chambers states, that "Rancière rejects all ontology" (Chambers 2013: 17), as he encourages, much like Foucault, a creative ontology, within a conjoining of politics and aesthetics. As Rancière writes in *A Few Remarks on Jacques Rancière*: "Politics can certainly be described as an ontological conflict: it is a question of constructing a real in opposition to another" (Rancière 2009a: 119). Thus, Rancière's work, much like Foucault's, is a fight against essentialism, against humanism. As

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[9] Rancière also states further on: "It is true that we don't know that men are equal. We are saying that they *might* be. This is our opinion, and we are trying, along with those who think as we do, to verify it. But we know that this *might* is the very thing that makes a society of humans possible" (Rancière 1991: 73, Rancière's stress).

May states: "Equality of intelligence allows a refusal of imposed identities and therefore, is not an essentialism, but its very opposite" (May 2010: 64). As for the third critique, Rancière's work is very much about equality in alterity. Therefore, he does not flatten out historical differences in his analysis. What he does, as May succinctly puts it, is to use the concept of equality "as a marker of sameness in a history of differences" (68) where there are both similarities and differences to how we see equality now (69). For it is by practices of equality that we can, according to Rancière, unfold a creative ontology: "[E]ach one of us is an artist [. . .] The artist needs equality as the explicator needs inequality" (Ranciere 1991: 70-1). However, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* is not just a book on Jacotot's pedagogy; it is also representative of inequality in society at large and its practices of hierarchy.

The explicator of knowledge, the pedagogue, the schoolmaster, is representative of the voice of the police, as Rancière names authority, and the students are a metaphor of the *demos* who are the unheard voice–those without a part (*le sans part*) in the formation of the oxymoron Rancière names the consensus:

> We know, in fact, that explication is not only the stultifying weapon of pedagogues but the very bond of the social order. Whoever says order says distribution into ranks. Putting into ranks presupposes explication, the distributory, justificatory fiction of an inequality that has no other reason for being. (Rancière 1991: 117)

As Yves Citton states in an essay on Ranciere's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*:

> His close reading of Jacotot revealed that "the ignorant person" is never defined as such by a mere lack of knowledge, but by an oppressive structure that transforms a perfectly able intellectual agent into a powerless recipient (supposed passively to absorb forms of knowledge produced for him, but never by him)–an oppressive structure that is perverse enough to masquerade its very production of "the ignorant person" as a remedy against ignorance! (Citton 2010: 30)

"What stultifies the common people," Citton cites and Ranciere writes, "is not the lack of instruction, but the belief in the inferiority of their intelligence" (Ranciere in Citton 2010: 30), (Ranciere 1991: 39). Thus, the educational setting is like politics and other forms of knowledge in that they are shown to be something that the general public cannot understand without the aid of so-called experts' explanations–or in the case of politics, the politician's explanation: "The day-to-day work of explication is only the small change of the dominant explication that characterises a society" (117). Rancière names this, in regard to education,

the "circle of powerlessness that ties the student to the explicator [. . .]" (15). This circle of powerlessness, Rancière writes, "is the very workings of the social world, hidden in the evident difference between ignorance and science" (15). Thus: "To explain something to someone is first of all to show him that he cannot understand it by himself" (6). This is why those who are "excluded from the world of intelligence" (16) can end up agreeing with that exclusion because they believe they cannot understand by themselves. Therefore, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* accepts the picture that Jacotot's pedagogy reveals. Namely, that most of us are stultified into silence by a didactic authority and the hierarchy of explication of 'how things are' (consensual reality). However, there is a layer to this book that is not overtly cited by Rancière within its pages. This layer refers to the paradox of us being silenced by the very theories that wish to emancipate us from authority. To address this, we need to return to the very beginning of the book.

When Rancière begins *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, he appears to be creating an allegory for the contemporary situation from which he was writing. In other words, it 'seems' like the Bourbon Restoration that Jacotot fled from, mentioned on the very first page of Rancière's book, is an allegory for the restoration of normality in France after the uprisings of May 1968.[10] This was an enormously personal event for Rancière because it revealed how his prior teacher and post-Marxist Louis Althusser was so entrenched in theory and equality as a telos that he (along with the *Parti communiste français* (PCF) (French Communist party)) was against the spontaneity of the uprisings and strikes of May 68, seeing them as a petit-bourgeois movement. In this sense, the Bourbon Restoration now becomes an allegory of Althusser's attempt to restore his standing as the leading star of left discourse after May 68 showed that he was not needed and after his badly received stance against the uprisings.[11] As Rancière puts it in *Althusser's Lesson*: "Althusserianism had died on the barricades of May 68, along with many other ideas from the past" (Rancière 2011: xx). This highlights Rancière's prioritising of acts of equality over the theory of academics. Thus, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* can be seen as a satire of Rancière's polemic against Althusser and the

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[10] Kristin Ross, the translator of *Le maître ignorant*, states in the introduction to the English version: "Jacotot's relation to post-Revolutionary France (his experiments, in a sense, prolong the revolutionary energies of 1789 into the France of the 1820s and 1830s) is doubled by Rancière's relation to 1968. The two are united by something like a shared lived relation to cycles of hope, then, to cycles of discouragement, and on to the displacement of hope - a sequence that marks the experience of periods of revolutionary ferment and their aftermath" (Ross 1991b: 69).

[11] "The patching up of Althusserianism, after it had been blown up during the storm, took place in this context of a return to order" (Rancière 2011: xv).

prior's use of spontaneous practices of equality rather than equality as a theoretical ideal.[12] Equality as an ideal is telos-bound and is therefore, a deferred equality used to justify any contemporary inequalities.[13] Practices of equality, however, are not deferred but happen now: "Equality was not an end to attain, but a point of departure, a *supposition* to maintain in every circumstance" (Rancière 1991: 138, Rancière's emphasis). For Rancière, equality should not be postponed by lulling us into silence through the promise of emancipatory projects: "[T]here is no such thing as *possible* society. There is only the society that exists" (75, Rancière's emphasis).

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1.2 Althusser's Lesson and The Philosopher and his Poor

In *Althusser's Lesson*, Rancière informs us that Althusser's theory of subversion consisted of an always ongoing didactic experience. Even though this text was written before *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, one can see that for Rancière, Althusser bears all the traits of a traditional pedagogue who disallows people to think for themselves and in doing so, perpetuates hierarchy: "[T]here is no theory of subversion that cannot also serve the cause of oppression" (Rancière 2011: xvii).[14] Thus, Althusser is "*le maître savant*" (the master who knows) as Alain Badiou put it regarding Rancière's perspective (Badiou in Davis 2010: 8). Whereas, as the further sections of this chapter reveal, Rancière has adopted the part of the ignorant schoolmaster with his offering of an autodidactic existence and his rejection of philosophy's accustomed and didactic role of dominating a taxonomic interpretation of the sensible via a descriptive ontology. Rancière, as Tanke informs us, bases his particular type of philosophy on the premise that "people are not lacking in knowledge or the ability to think; what they require is confidence in their capacities for change" (Tanke 2011: 10). In other words, for Rancière, we do not need a Marx or an Althusser to tell the *demos* how they are suppressed and exploited. If we follow an autodidactic path through a presupposition of equality, we can gain the confidence and capacity for change ourselves. Thus, for Rancière, there is a "theory of the inequality of intelligences at the heart of supposed critiques of domination" (Rancière 2011: xvi) where academics arrogate to themselves the task to make the *demos* aware of exactly how they are being dominated. Rancière reverses this in his belief "that all revolutionary thought must be founded on the inverse presupposition, that of

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[12] Alternatively, Ross states that she believes the text is a satire of Rancière's polemic against Pierre Bourdieu (Ross 1991a: xxiii). See Chapter 3 of this thesis for details of this polemic.

[13] As Ross puts it, it is "a reward situated firmly in some distant future so as to all the better explain its present infeasibility" (Ross 1991a: xix).

[14] As such, as May words it in a 2007 essay on Rancière, for Rancière "Althusser's thought is one of inequality rather than equality" (May 2007: 23).

the capacity of the dominated" (xvi). Furthermore, Rancière, like all of us, is ignorant of knowing how to create a world of equality. Therefore, he truly 'is' *le maître ignorant* who expects us to learn for ourselves within the landscape of the possible. Whereas, Althusser's oeuvre, for Rancière, possesses no equality of intelligence or equality as practice. Instead, there is only the theory of equality as an ideal that we can only reach if we follow Althusser's instructions whilst bearing the inequalities of the now on our path towards the telos of an ideal that does not exist: "From the beginning, I have confronted the philosophies of the end of history with the topography of the possible; indeed, we can see the contours of this project appearing in the framework, and the limits, of the book's [(*Althusser's Lesson*)] polemic" (xvi). Rancière's critique of Althusser's particular Marxist philosophy led him to the contours of his polemic against occidental philosophy in his *The Philosopher and his Poor*.

In *The Philosopher and his Poor*, Rancière embarks on a critique of Plato, Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre, and the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, amidst a critique of philosophy in general. As the title of the book denotes, for Rancière, philosophy depended on the *poor*, the underprivileged, for its very existence within a hierarchy of knowledge and its self-appointment as saviour: if we recall Plato's cave allegory at the beginning of Book VII of *The Republic* (Plato 2003), we can see how it makes the escaped slave representative of a philosopher enlightening the masses who turn him away. As Rancière states, Plato's concern is: "To free people chained from birth with their backs to the light" (Rancière 2004b: 33). However, Plato's complaint is that people do not want to be freed and led to philosophy (33). This complaint is a means to show, Rancière tells us, that Plato believed that there are only some that are suited to philosophy, as the metaphor of the solitary, fugitive slave denotes (34). As those who have read *The Republic* know, in his iteration of the division of labour in Book III via three metals–iron/brass (farmers and skilled workers), silver (auxiliaries), and gold (rulers) (415a)–it is the philosopher that Plato chose to rule as king; everyone else remains metaphorically chained to a cave wall. For Plato, this social stratification is not an intrinsic truth but how things should be–this is why he calls it a "grand [(or noble)] lie" (414c) because he believed that it would benefit society. In *The Republic*, as Plato tells us in Book IV, everybody should know their place and carry out their own business. No one should emancipate themselves from a sector of social stratification. To do so, Plato believed, was a form of injustice, but to keep in one's place was justice (434c)–the question of the latter (what is justice?) being the key thematic of *The Republic*.[15] However,

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[15] There are other aspects to *The Republic*: "The Republic considers many of the central preoccupations of Western thought: justice, happiness and the good life; truth and the distinction between knowledge and opinion; the relation between physical and metaphysical realms; human psychology; the nature and purpose of education;

as Rancière points out, this was not a justification of inequality, but a means for philosophy to protect itself and its appearance (Rancière 2004b: 52). It was a means to keep the Other as a representation that denotes the philosopher as philosopher and the poor as the poor, much like the binary of teacher and student within a hierarchy of knowledge that impedes emancipation rather than aiding it as philosophy states it does. Therefore, we can see how *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, *Althusser's Lesson*, and *The Philosopher and his Poor*, all reinforce each other in their critique of the didactic imparting of knowledge as part of the consensus' practices of hierarchy. However, as Plato is overt in his belief in hierarchy, one does not need to be a master exegete to see this. Thus, readers of *The Republic* will not be particularly surprised at Rancière's exegesis. So, what is the significance of this obvious critique? As Oliver Davis points out: "[W]hat is significant is where he [(Rancière)] repeatedly places the emphasis on the fact that there is absolutely no rational basis for Plato's elaborate, autocratic, hierarchy" (Davis 2010: 19). Thus, for Rancière, Plato's lie is not noble at all. It is not justice. It is a fictional justification of an ideal, as are all justifications of ideals be they the ideal of the *atopos* of Plato's republic or Marx's communist state–recall the earlier quote from *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* regarding explication: "Putting into ranks presupposes explication, the distributory, justificatory fiction of an inequality that has no other reason for being" (Rancière 1991: 117). Plato's lie is an early example of philosophy's hierarchical practices and exclusionary stance towards the poor that helps Rancière trace this tendency in philosophy as a whole from Plato to Marx, Sartre, and Bourdieu.

Those who have read Marx know that he deferred equality to the eschatology of a telos (the communist state) within the trajectory of his dialectical materialism. At first glance, working towards an ideal of equality seems perfectly reasonable. However, the ideal of a deferred equality was quite readily adopted by totalitarian communist states such as the USSR and the PRC to be used as a hegemonic tool in the aim to justify the hardships of Communism. In fact, ideals have often been used to justify their complete opposite. Western hegemony has illustrated this with their battle cries of freedom, equality, and democracy as justifications, as Žižek puts it: "to intervene politically, economically, culturally and militarily in the Third World countries of their choice, in the name of defending human rights" (Žižek 2006 11). In representing the occidental Other as undemocratic, certain western hegemons hope to use them as an antonymic Other to represent themselves as democratic, free, and equal in their aim to hide the imperialist and neo-colonial nature of their activities (cf. Said 1978). For Rancière, however, as we shall see in the next section of this chapter, equality is

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the ideal form of government and the value of democracy; the place of philosophy in society; the definition and value of art, and so on" (Sheppard 2009: 1-2).

a *practice* that happens now, rather than a deferred and metaphysical *ideal* to be misappropriated under the hegemonic legerdemain of transcending inequality, be it local, geopolitical, or otherwise. Thus, Rancière, like Foucault, is a philosopher of immanence. Marx, however, whilst being a philosopher of immanence in a focus on change via economic materialism, was also a philosopher of transcendence who famously asked the 'workers of the world' to unite under the banner of the proletariat and the auspice of an emancipatory transcendence of capitalism. However, this emancipation was offered not only by the destruction of capitalism but also by a production that gave the proletariat even more labour– in the deferred equality of Marx's historical materialism–than they had under the very exploitation that Marx sought to emancipate them from: "The Marxism-horizon is preeminently the imperious decor of production [. . .] Severe as the labour of pistons and the effort of their servants" (Rancière 2004b: 128). "[W]orkers for Marx must leave behind in the "archaic" distance the divine life of leisure in order to recover that life through the sacrifice of machine, science, and combat" (69).[16] Even though Rancière points out that for Marx labour is the "disappropriation that forms the proletarian" (80), their lot was a fulfilment of Marxist theory by labour with no independent thought on their part. Accordingly, the proletariat were reduced to the objects of an experiment of the so-called science named Marxism in their exodus from one cave to another. As Žižek reminds us, Marx set himself up as the enlightened critic amidst what he saw as the false consciousness of the working class detailed within his second volume of *Capital* (Žižek 1989: 27-30). For Rancière, Marx, like Althusser after him, denies proletariats any autonomy or ability to think regarding emancipation, believing that only his theory can save the poor–thus aiming to justify his philosophy. According to Rancière, in his *The Philosopher and his Poor*, Sartre and Bourdieu do likewise by not seeing how the poor have practices of emancipation themselves that need to be encouraged rather than ignored by overarching theories. As Tanke puts it: "In order to maintain its preserve, sociology, like philosophy, requires the meaning of the sensible to be straightforward, transparent, and univocal" (Tanke 2011: 33). Therefore, the poor are objectified and kept in their stratification to benefit the very theorists who are there apparently to help emancipate them–now we can understand even more clearly why Althusser was against the autonomous revolts of May 68. Unlike the thinkers that he critiques, however, Rancière describes situations of inequality without offering any answers of how to end these situations. As *le maître ignorant* rather than *le maître savant*, Rancière

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[16] As Jean Baudrillard put it in his book devoted to the critique of Marx and aptly named *The Mirror of Production* (1975 [1973]), Marx not only left the "*principal* of production" untouched but used it within the teleology of a communist state (Baudrillard 1975: 17, Baudrillard's stress).

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encourages 'the poor'[17] to be autodidactic, thus allowing them to engage in emancipation themselves by practices of equality, should they wish to. In this sense, Rancière does not want to free the inhabitants of Plato's cave. Instead, he describes lived realities and leaves the choice of what is to be done about these realities to the reader (Rancière 2016: 90). As Rancière writes in Th*e Ignorant Schoolmaster*: "Whoever teaches without emancipating stultifies. And whoever emancipates doesn't have to worry about what the emancipated person learns. He will learn what he wants, nothing maybe" (Rancière 1991: 8).

Rancière illustrates autodidactic, emancipatory practices in *The Nights of Labor* and *The Emancipated Spectator*. In doing so, he is attacking "ontologies of identity" (Rancière 2016: 24) as he puts it, by aiming to show that the sphere of the sensible of the 'poor' is not *straightforward, transparent, and univocal* as the thinkers he critiqued denoted it within their use of 'the poor' as an antonymic Other to represent themselves against.[18] However, before moving on to the aforementioned texts by Rancière, we must address the critical question that the editor's 'Introduction' to *The Philosopher and his Poor* raises: if Rancière is critiquing philosophy as exclusionary, how can he offer his work as a philosophy (Parker 2004: xiv)? This is a valid question that is easily answered, if indeed Rancière is emphatically offering his work as philosophy. Rancière does not see philosophy as a pure subject in the way that Plato did, for example. For Rancière, philosophy can become a hybrid tool as it mixes with other subjects–Rancière's use of history in his oeuvre is a prime example of this.[19] Therefore, the kind of philosophy that Rancière works from is hybrid and favours autodidactism within that hybridity. Rancière's polemics and dissensual politics as well as his philosophy are thus a movement against an authoritative voice and practices of explication, be it that of the police order, pedagogy, or philosophy itself when expressed through an imperious ontology imposing itself on the oppressed.

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[17] 'The poor' is a term which Rancière uses ironically and literally to denote constructed terms such as the masses, proletariat etc., by theorists who believe that people cannot think for themselves regarding emancipation (Davis 2010: 20).

[18] Ontologies of identity are something that we shall return to in the first chapter on Foucault. In that chapter we shall expand upon the use of descriptive ontologies as the means of a normative hierarchy, a hierarchy which partially stems from the binary logic of the transcendent ideal forms and immanent appearances of Rancière's philosophical nemesis, Plato.

[19] In fact, Rancière tells us in an interview that he too is an autodidact when it comes to writing and studying history in, for example, his *The Nights of Labor* (Rancière 2016: 26, 85). Furthermore, he spent 1969 to 1972 away from philosophy as he focussed on militant activities, after which he focussed on history through his archival work (20).

1.3 The Nights of Labor and The Emancipated Spectator

The Nights of Labor was originally Rancière's PhD thesis and was published the year following his PhD (Jeanpierre 2016: viii),[20] and the title of the thesis gives us a much better understanding of this publication: *La Formation de la pensée ouvrière en France: le Prolétaire et son double* (*The Formation of Working-class Thought in France: The Proletarian and His Double*). *The Nights of Labor* is a study of archives that show the lives of workers in nineteenth-century France who refused the identity of worker through their night-time activities of reading and writing poetry and literature. In this text, Rancière attempts to illustrate that it was not just workers who took pride in their work who took part in the worker's movement, but also workers who saw the hegemony of a work ethic.[21] In doing so, Rancière is trying to show that there was no 'pure' working class. Therefore, he is attempting to rupture the taxonomic immurement imposed by theorists on the 'poor'.[22] To aid this rupture, Rancière also wishes to illustrate the early movements of socialism where the yearning of some of the working class was for a bourgeois rather than socialist life. Rancière wants to show over and above Plato's *Republic* that it is possible to be a worker and a poet/philosopher at the same time and to not necessarily want what emancipatory theorists say their objects of study want.

Rancière sets out to show the misrepresentation of the 'working class' by certain theorists by illustrating how autodidacts in nineteenth-century France were atypical in choosing a different way of life whilst remaining immured in the working class.[23] Rancière describes the way of life created by the artisan, autodidact, poet, and self-titled plebeian philosopher (*le*

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[20] Prior to this, along with the historian Alain Faure, Rancière edited the book *La Parole ouvrière 1830/1851* (Faure and Rancière 1976), a collection of poems, letters, newspaper articles, posters, and brochures created by protesting workers. However, as Bettina Lerner points out, whereas the artisans in *The Nights of Labor* resisted their identity as artisans by adopting the identity of "ouvriers-poètes," the writers in *La Parole ouvrière* "called attention to how artisans appropriated dominant discourses about labor as part of the "effort put forth by a class to name itself" [. . .]" (Lerner 2017: 38).

[21] : "[T]he men who are loudest in singing the glory of Work are those who have most intensely experienced the degeneration of that ideal"" (Rancière in Reid 1989: xxv).

[22] Or as Baudrillard termed it in his *The Mirror of Production*, the "*repressive simulation*" (Baudrillard 1975: 48).

[23] In an interview that took place in Athens in 2017, Rancière stated: "What I think, what I tried to say in the Nights, is that notions like the proletariat, the working class, workers, working class don't designate real sociological groups. Instead they are the result of modes of symbolisation of a form of being-in-common. So I always try to make a clear distinction between the proletariat as a sociological reality and the proletariat as the result of a kind of symbolical invention of the collective. My point is that, in the Marxist tradition, there was a kind of identification between the two, between the symbolic construction and the sociological reality" (Rancière 2018: 5-6).

philosophe plébéien) Louis-Gabriel Gauny, who enabled his way of life through the self-created and self-named "science" of a "cenobitic economy" (*économie cenobitique*) (Rancière 1989: 84). This is an economy of extreme frugality where one aims not to possess objects but to "possess oneself" (85). In other words, Gauny ceases to partake in the activity of "producing to consume and consuming to produce" (228). Rancière:

> [I]t is necessary to break the circle linking claims to the chances of consumption, to turn around the game of a political economy that preaches the virtues of saving to the poor but subjugates them by means of consumption. (Rancière 1989: 84)

If, as a self-employed joiner (*menuisier),* Gauny found no work, he scheduled his search for the next day and enjoyed a walk within the "nonchalance of liberty" (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 83) whilst perhaps finding and possessing himself along the way as a Parisian Diogenes. Gauny cited Diogenes the Cynic, as Rancière paraphrases, as "[a]n exemplary figure for the modern cenobite who individually breaks away from the reign of exploitation by restraining the consumption of the senses [. . .]" (Rancière 1989: 120). Diogenes's way of life, for Gauny, was not something that he wished to adopt in some kind of quixotic act that demanded living in a barrel and public onanism. Instead, it was a symbol that denoted the possibility "of possessing everything without having anything, by attacking ownership with renunciation" (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 120). Gauny's use of Diogenes in the context of this thesis is interesting because Diogenes's Cynicism is something that Foucault explored in his last lectures at the Collège du France as the: "*alethes bios* (true life) [. . .] the unconcealed life which hides no part of itself, and which does so because it does not commit any shameful, dishonest, or reprehensible action [. . .]" (Foucault 2011: 251). The first critique that comes to mind regarding this is that Foucault was exploring the use of a philosophy that denoted poverty as a virtue–something that most people who are poor by chance rather than choice would find unhelpful.[24] However, this critique appears rash when we consider how Gauny uses Diogenes as a metaphor for the austerity of a cenobite economy by which he emancipated himself, within the joy of momentary unemployment, from the economic need for constant work. That being said, Gauny did cite Cynic philosophy as "incapable of glimpsing different futures for human liberty [. . .]" (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 120), and this returns us to our initial critique of the offering of poverty as a virtue. Nevertheless, regardless of Diogenes's myopia, a way of life through autodidactism and a mentality of an ascetic

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[24] Diogenes was a banker's son who fled his home city for debasing its coinage, and one of his students Crates was also from an extremely rich family. According to Diogenes Laertius, however, the ancient biographer of philosophers who gives us most of what we know of Diogenes of Sinope, there are two stories. One story states Diogenes' father "restamped the coinage," another that Diogenes admits that he did so (Laertius 1925: 23).

within a cenobitic economy utilised to possess oneself, is something that this thesis will explore in Chapter 8 within the context of a synergy of practices of equality and freedom exemplified in Gauny's life. This acts as a means of mutual support by linking a cenobite economy of *askēsis* with an *askēsis* of a care of the self. Through this dynamic, we can explore practices of equality as a medium for a creative ontology that thus far, only utilises practices of freedom. Within this engagement we can attempt to unfold an *askētēs* that can emerge via *la vie autre* (another (the other) life) offered by both the Diogenes of Gauny within a cenobite economy and the Diogenes of Foucault within a "militancy which aspires to change the world" (Foucault 2011: 285). This ascetic will be an artisan, as was Gauny. However, they will not be an artisan of base materials but an artisan of themselves, an amphibian as Sartre names artisans as Rancière informs us in *The Philosopher and his Poor* (Rancière 2004b: 155). They will not be an amphibian in Sartre's sense though, as both "manual worker" and admirer of "the ruling bourgeoisie" (Sartre 1963: 27), but as *amphíbios*, someone who adopts 'both' (*amphi*) kinds of an emancipatory way of an other 'life' (*bios*): practices of equality and practices of freedom.

Rancière informs us that Plato was against the artisan because their hybridity tested the links of iron, silver, and gold by not fitting neatly into the social stratification of *The Republic* (Rancière 2004b: 24). Being neither free nor a slave, neither excluded nor included (24), the artisan is an amphibian, a hybrid that does not conform to socio-taxonomy.[25] In *The Emancipated Spectator*, Rancière returns to Plato through a thinly disguised nod to the cave allegory. He writes that we need a drama that involves spectators as "active participants as opposed to passive voyeurs" where participants "learn from as opposed to being seduced by images" (Rancière 2009b: 4).[26] Be it in Plato's cave or a theatre, the passivity of an audience that watches the active creation of an observed drama is the same passivity that embodies "allegories of inequality" (12) in our everyday life amidst consensual reality, as it is not consensual at all. "Emancipation begins," Rancière tells us, "when we challenge the opposition between viewing and acting [whilst seeing this opposition as part of] the structure of domination and subjection" (13). Therefore, according to Rancière, "[s]ocial emancipation was simultaneously an aesthetic emancipation, a break with the ways of feeling, seeing and

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[25] "[T]he parvenu par excellence, the man whose activity encapsulates all the features of counter-nature, the servile worker who inflates himself to the point of claiming the freedom of the born philosopher" (Rancière 2004b: 31).

[26] In fact, this particular text has a few nods towards Plato who, as Davis points out, becomes the target that Rancière defines his philosophy of dissensus against (Davis 2010: 17-18). Or as Peter Hallward puts it: "Rancière's work, is the inversion of a Platonic position" (Hallward 2006: 112).

saying that characterised working-class identity in the old hierarchical order" (35). This, for Rancière, is the operation of art and the togetherness of community as dissensus.

"*Séparés, on est ensemble*" (Apart, we are together) (Mallarmé 2006: 116) is the beginning of a line from the Stéphane Mallarmé poem *Le Nénuphar blanc* (The White Water Lily) which Rancière quotes on the first page of Chapter 3 of *The Emancipated Spectator* (Rancière 2009b: 51). Rancière states that it is a good allegory for the separateness of "artwork and the human community" (55). We are apart as individuals but together as a community through the term Rancière utilises (and uses many times in his work) of a "distribution of the sensible" (*le partage du sensible*) (56).[27] It is this distribution of the sensible (socio-reality) that defines our very way as a community of "being together" (56). It is a: "system of relations between ways of being, doing, seeing and thinking that determine at once the common world and the ways in which everyone takes part within it" (Rancière 2015: 7). It is through a dissensual politics, within Rancière's bi-univocal understanding of politics, that we can, according to him, transform how we are together. Therefore, it seems that whilst Foucault explored a means to create oneself as a work of art (as we examine in Part 2), Rancière proffers community as a work of art where we are all artists of the community through "the idea that art has to provide us with more than a spectacle, more than something devoted to the delight of passive spectators, because it has to work for a society where everybody should be active" (Rancière 2009b: 63). Rancière exemplifies how art can "unite people" with his citation of the story of the Cuban artist Rene Francisco who was given a grant to explore the poverty of suburban slums in Havana and ended up, with fellow artists, refurbishing an old woman's home: the artists worked "as masons, plumbers or painters" (77). For Rancière, by emancipating ourselves as spectators we can become active in the community and the distribution of reality: we can become hybrid as both house painter and artist. This is the crux of Rancière's work, an aesthetico-political dissensus of a reality that is consensual only in name for those without a part in its distribution.

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[27] Because *le partage du sensible* has at times been translated as partition of the sensible in translations of Rancière, the editor's 'Preface' to the English edition of Rancière's the *Le philosopher et ses pauvres* notes that *partage* should be translated as "division" and "sharing," to denote the double meaning of *partage* (Parker 2004: viii). However, *le partage du sensible* tends to now be translated as the 'distribution' of the sensible because 'distribution' captures the double meaning of the word *partage* as both a sharing out and a division (Jeanpierre 2016: viii Note 3). As such, this thesis will always use 'distribution' as the translation of *partage* in *le partage du sensible* regardless of the translation of the English text it draws from.

Chapter 2 - Disagreement

This chapter focuses on Rancière's *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (*La Mésentente: Politique et philosophie*) (1999 [1995]). This text represents, along with *On the Shores of Politics* (2007 [1992]) and 'Ten Theses' (2010a [1996]), Rancière's shift in his later work to a focus on, as Davis puts it, a "radical alternative vision of politics" (Davis 2010: 74). *Disagreement* encompasses the bi-univocal terms–politics, police, disagreement (*mésentente*), democracy– that Rancière's work utilises in its emancipatory attack against political philosophy, furthering the critique of occidental philosophy in *The Philosopher and his Poor* examined in the prior chapter. This chapter enables a continuation of understanding that will aid the aim, in chapters 8 and 9, to extract a synergetic, creative, ontology from practices of equality and freedom conducive to a democratic existence. The beginning of this chapter engages with Rancière's understanding of the terms 'politics' and 'police'. After which, it turns to Rancière's qualification of his understanding of disagreement by his contrast of *mésentente* with Jürgen Habermas' understanding of communication within an ideal agreement and with François Lyotard's *différend* (differend). Lastly, an engagement with *Disagreement* enables this chapter to dispute Žižek's critique (2000, 2008) and May's appropriation (2008) of Rancière's understanding of a democratic politics. This allows us to critically distance a democratic existence from the transcendent deferral of a new order of socio-reality that Žižek and May appear to impose upon it and instead, extend it towards immanent practices of equality within Rancière's offering of emancipation, which Chapter 3 engages with through the thematic of politics as aesthetics and aesthetics as politics.

2.1 Politics and Police

Chapter 4 of *Disagreement* is an attack against political philosophy via the medium of a synopsis of its history. This assault aims to show the lack of equality and democracy within the fictional, according to Rancière, definitions of politics by occidental philosophy–"the politics of philosophers," as Alain Badiou puts it regarding Rancière's attack (Badiou 2006: 114)–within its entrenchment in a police logic. To aid this synopsis, Rancière introduces three terms to describe archetypes of political philosophy: archipolitics, parapolitics, and metapolitics. Rancière introduces the term archipolitics as the politics that Plato offered in *The Republic*, as discussed in Chapter 1: archipolitics involves everybody knowing and accepting their place within the 'justice' ('noble lie') of the hierarchy of social stratification through the absence of a presupposition of equality and, as Plato himself proclaims, democracy.

31

The next term that Rancière introduces in his history of political philosophy is parapolitics, which he attributes to Aristotle, citing it as a somewhat less anti-democratic politics than Plato's but nevertheless, one of a passive rather than active equality because it wishes to discard the dissensus of the *demos* by, as Gabriel Rockhill puts it, "integrating the egalitarian anarchy of the demos into the constitutional order of the police" (Rockhill 2004: 88).[1] In other words, forms of equality can be given to the *demos* in parapolitics expressed by the state, but equality cannot be presupposed by the *demos* by dissensual acts of equality: "The social thus remains the utopia of politics policed [. . .]" (Rancière 1999: 74). Put another way, by appearing to act for the benefit of the people, oligarchy stays in power: "[P]olitics is a question of aesthetics, a matter of appearances. The good regime is one that takes on the appearances of an oligarchy for oligarchs and democracy for the demos" (74). Rancière also notes that Thomas Hobbes continues in the vein of parapolitics: Aristotle saw society as an association (Aristotle 1992: 1252a1-6), Hobbes as an alliance (Hobbes 2003: 24). However, Hobbes places the onus for a tranquil regime on the individuals of the state rather than on its oligarchs, for it is the former who must, according to Hobbes, give up some of their individual rights in exchange for the sovereignty of a central government in order to maintain a well-ordered state. As May puts it: "Any theory that seeks to recognise equality within a more general order of policing is a form of parapolitics" (May 2008: 44).[2]

The last term Rancière gives us is metapolitics, "according to which politics is founded on a social truth, one that its actors are unable to think on their own" (Rancière 2017i: 74). Rancière cites Marx's political philosophy as an exemplification of this type of understanding of politics that emerges through Marx's critique of politics as something that hides, through ideology, that which makes society function–economic exploitation: "Metapolitics is the discourse on the falseness of politics [. . .]" (Rancière 1999: 82).[3] Thus, it is similar to archipolitics, in that the latter also rejected, according to Plato, a counterfeit politics: democracy (81). To counter

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[1] Or, as Martin Plot synonymously words it, parapolitics intertwines "the egalitarian disruptive logic of freedom with the establishment of police orders" (Plot 2014: 100).

[2] For a reading of Hobbes that disputes Rancière's definition of his work as parapolitics and aligns Hobbes with the radical democracy of Rancière, see Craig 2015. For a reading of Aristotle that disputes Rancière's definition of his *Politics* as parapolitics and aligns Aristotle with Rancière's concern for perpetuating politics, see Trott 2012.

[3] "In the modern "political philosophy" apparatus, the truth of politics is no longer located above politics as its essence or idea. It is located beneath or behind it, in what it conceals and exists only to conceal" (Rancière 1999: 82). "Political "participation" is then just the mask of the allocation of lots. Politics is the lie about a reality that is called society" (83).

economic exploitation, Marx turned to economics himself within a metapolitics of a historical material dialectic. This incorporates a deferred ideal of equality where the proletariat are merely "performers of revolutionary acts" (84) under the same forces of production that they were under with capitalism but goaded by the aim to realise equality. Marx, like the capitalism he fought against, prioritised economy over and above politics and in doing so, was, as Albert Camus put it, the "prophet of production" (Camus 2000: 153). Rancière also cites neoliberalism as a type of metapolitics, insofar as economy is posited over, above, and beyond politics, as the term 'meta' (after/beyond)-politics suggests.

Without becoming too deeply enmeshed in Rancière's thirty-two-page attack against political philosophy, it can be clearly seen, in the ways cited above, how these archetypes aid and abet a police order and thus justify the type of existence of those who do not exist: the *sans-part* (those who have no part). Thus, Rancière's definition of politics falls under none of the above terms. This does not mean, however, as one of Rancière's distinct definitions, *politics* homonymously joins the three archetypes of political philosophy as a fourth archetype. Rancière does not fight against univocality with homonymy. This is because Rancière releases his definition from being homonymic to the generic understanding of politics as a form of representative democracy, government, etc., by naming the latter the police. By doing so, Rancière opposes univocity by using antonymy and bi-univocity rather than homonymy and multivocity. He does so, in an aim to stress, throughout Chapter 5 of *Disagreement*, that politics is only ever dissensus and never consensus, be it a consensus of police logic or a so called "idyllic state of politics" (Rancière 1999: 95). Were he to create homonyms, he would not only align with the consensus, but by leaning towards the use of multivocity against univocity, he would, in the arena of subject identity, be perpetuating the taxonomy of the descriptive ontology of the consensus. This would be the opposite of what Rancière's form of emancipation aims for: the declassification of the subject in a release from the hierarchy of taxonomy. On the other hand, were he to use neologistic terms rather than antonymic substantives, it might seem that he was trying to create a new world rather than help an already existing one appear so that it might create its own new worlds. One such bi-univocal term, briefly mentioned above, is the police, and Rancière defines government as the police in *Disagreement* as a system of distribution and legalisation:

> the set of procedures whereby the aggregation and consent of collectives is achieved, the organisation of powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for

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> legitimising this distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimising this distribution. (Rancière 1999: 28)

Therefore, we can think of the police in the traditional definition of politics as a form of government and Rancière's bi-univocal definition of politics as a politics of the *demos*, the *sans-part*. Thus, in Rancière's lexicon, the term politics semantically and polemically shifts from a term of the consensus to a term of dissensus. In other words, as Rancière succinctly puts it in the very first sentence of his 'Ten Theses': "Politics is not the exercise of power" (Rancière 2010a: 27). The exercise of power emanates from the police, which is a term that comes from Rancière's referencing of Foucault's citation of the policing of populations (Rancière 1999: 28). In fact, the indented quote above could very easily be read as a description of the manifestation of knowledge/truth and power as the normative socio-reality that Foucault's work describes, even though it is not.[4] However, whilst May concurs with Rancière's statement by telling us in an essay on Jean-Luc Nancy and Ranciere, that Ranciere's definition of police is "in reference to Michel Foucault's 1977–78 *Collège de France* lectures on the rise of policing as a mobilization of populations" (May 2012a: 165), Badiou tells us that Rancière crafted his definition of police by playing on the Greek noun *πόλις* (*polis*) (city/state) (Badiou 2006: 116) to describe the standard understanding of 'governmental' politics. Whilst this etymological explanation is not quite correct, it helps us keep in mind the *firm* polemic that Rancière insists on between the politics of the *demos* as dissensus and the government of the *polis* as consensus.

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[4] May states: "Rancière's use of the term police is not exactly the same as Foucault's. It is not concerned solely with practices of governmentality, and it is not embedded in a view of politics that was prevalent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, like Foucault's treatment, Rancière's use of the term keeps alive the idea of the police as involving a social ordering that is enforced not merely by military style intervention–armed men in uniforms–but more significantly by the idea of a proper social order" (May 2008: 4). However, what May does not state, is that before the modern manifestation of police there was a method of social ordering known by the term *Polizeiwissenschaft* (police science) (see Neocleous 2000). It is towards this particular method that Rancière is referring within his understanding of the term police. Whereas, as Mark Neocleous writes in his book on the history of the police: "Foucauldians use the police concept so abstractly that it comes to look as though it is yet one more synonym for 'power', 'discipline' and 'governmentality'" (Neocleous 2000: ix). As Neocleous states towards the end of his book: "The whole police system is geared towards 'consensus'–the ideological precondition of bourgeois society" (114). As Rancière states in an interview: "This same word 'police' clearly refers to two very different theoretical edifices. In *Omnes et Singulatim*, Foucault conceives of the police as an institutional apparatus that participates in power's control over life and bodies; while, for me, the police designates not an institution of power but a distribution of the sensible within which it becomes possible to define strategies and techniques of power" (Rancière 2000b: 94).

For Rancière, the inequality of socio-reality manifests by *partage*. However, this is not a call for unification. Equality, for Rancière, as he tells us in his *On the Shores of Politics*, is not about unifying but declassifying (Rancière 1995: 32-3). Let us not forget the quote from Rancière above that cites society as a fiction and individuals as real beings. In other words, individuals are not beings of a descriptive ontology that theoretically classifies and unifies them with the fictional taxonomy of the masses, the proletariat, etc., but are *real* beings who exist outside of these fictional identities. This is why Rancière strives in his archival work, expressed in his *The Nights of Labor*, to reach out to individuals like Désirée and Gauny as real beings outside of theoretical representation. In doing so, Rancière not only highlights the autodidactism of the political existents in *The Nights of Labor*, but also attacks the perpetuation of social stratification by political philosophy with its taxonomic simulations within a deferred equality of the 'masses'. Thus, Rancière does not aim for the end of history within the vector of an egalitarian society as Marx did by pursuing the terminus of the dialectic of historical materialism: communism. Instead, Rancière, like Foucault, exposes his readers to a non-dialectical history after the years of academic and militant Marxism that the twentieth century was exposed to and that he played a key part in in his early career (like many French social theorists of that time). However, because Rancière sees social reality as *partage*, he believes, as he informs us in *Disagreement*, that we need to see encounters between the dominated and the police as a polemical "meeting of the heterogenous," rather than the "smooth connection" that Foucault's relations of power denotes (Rancière 1999: 32). Accordingly, for Rancière, something is not political, in his sense of the term, just because it involves relations of power and resistance to those relations (32). For Rancière, politics is not resistance but a dissensus that creates a politico-aesthetic space that opens within a polemic encounter between two forms of logic: "police logic and egalitarian logic" (32).[5] Therefore, it is not a revolutionary storming of the winter place or a utopian deferral of equality to a telos similar to that which Marx or Rancière's former teacher Louis Althusser offer. Nor is it, as Anders Fjeld puts it, part of a "Machiavellian tradition" where "democracy [is] understood as originary division or self-perpetuating conflict" (Fjeld 2016: 153).[6] Rather, politics

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[5] This is why, parts 2 and 3 of this thesis connect Foucault's understanding of *parrhesia*, and not relations of power, with Rancière's understanding of politics as dissensus.

[6] Not being part of the Machiavellian tradition, is one of many things that practices of equality and freedom share. As Foucault has it, as we shall explore in Part 2: "Rather than speaking of an essential antagonism, it would be better to speak of an "agonism"" (Foucault 1982a 342). The Machiavellian tradition is, as Fjeld puts it, "a reaction against the totalitarian experiences of communism in the Stalinist USSR" (Fjeld 2016: 152). Fjeld continues: "[T]his Machiavellian tradition defends democracy as a regime of perpetual indeterminacy and division which–through its very dynamics of conflict–wards off totalitarian unification, bureaucratisation and state domination" (152). Thus, there is no rupture here

is an emancipatory space between revolution and consensus that Rancière offers as the site "where those of no account are counted" (Rancière 1999: 36), which this thesis defines as both a transgressive and transformative space. It is a dissensual space between realities amidst the contradictory actuality "of two worlds in a single world" (27).[7] "Politics," as Rancière informs us regarding his bi-univocal term, "is not made up of power relationships; it is made up of relationships between worlds" (42).

For Rancière, because we only become political existents by the act of dissensus, human beings are not political animals (*zoon politikon*) by nature through the ability of speech (logos), in contrast to other animals who merely have a voice (*phōné*) to indicate "pleasure or pain" (Rancière 1999: 21), as Aristotle informs us they are in Book I of his *Politics*. In this disagreement with Aristotle's notion of human political nature, Rancière agrees with Hobbes (1, 76). However, unlike Hobbes, for Rancière, politics does not originate in utilitarianism or reason–the utilitarian need to escape "the war against all" (17) that e`xists in a state of nature, as Hobbes would have us believe, that makes us turn to the safety of a governed *polis*, just as reason does within its understanding of the advantages of society: "[*C*]*ivil societies are not mere gatherings; they are Alliances* [. . .]" (Hobbes 2003: 24, Hobbes emphasis). According to Rancière, there is no *arkhé* of politics; there is only a presupposition: equality. Thus, Rancière bypasses notions of beginnings (be they utilitarian or not) and ends (telos, transcendence) with his insistence of a presupposition of equality that manifests as an immanent dissensual politics that happens now, rather than through the deferred equality that political philosophy incorporates within taxonomic simulations. For Rancière, political philosophy and social theory are part of the police within their imperious, descriptive ontologies of identity. This is because they are the polar opposite of political existents, as the latter are "nonidentary subjects" (104) by

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of the type involved in Rancière's understanding of politics and dissensus, but a continual antagonism "based," as Fjeld puts it, "on the Machiaveliian idea of an originary division between the nobles who seek to dominate and the people who seek to avoid being dominated [. . .] Reconceptualised as a conception of democracy, this tradition thus recasts conflict as central to the vitality of society" (152) (cf. Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy* (Machiavelli 1996)). As such, as Fjeld puts it, "Rancière is anti-Machiavellian because his distinction between police and politics is not an originary division" (Fjeld 2016: 153) but rather, "a gap in the fabric of the sensible between incommensurable logics" (154).

[7] As Rancière later puts it in an interview: "[E]quality only generates politics when it is implanted in the specific form of a particular case of dissensus" (Rancière 2004a: 52).

their acts of dissensus that do not conform to the taxonomy and logic of the inequality of the police and thus break with the latter's imposed identities.[8]

Any act of a presupposition of equality in an inegalitarian society is an act of dissensus and thus, generates politics. This is why Rancière states, in a quote above, that the politics that equality generates stems from dissensus. It is only by the *act* of dissensus that the *sans-part* become political existents: "Politics exists when the natural order of domination is interrupted by the institution of a part of those who have no part [. . .]" (Rancière 1999: 11). For Rancière, without a dissensual politics we either have the inequality of "domination or the disorder of revolt" (12). Therefore, dissensus is not some kind of Hegelian dialectic of thesis (police), antithesis (*demos*, politics, democracy), and a supposition of a world of equality forever deferred in a dialectic of ideals. Rather, it is a constantly inaugural act where the *sans-part* can be heard through logos as political existents rather than the *phōné* that is associated with the masses, plebeians, the proletariat, or any other term of the oppressive simulation imposed upon them by the fiction of society or deferral of equality.[9] In a world of inequality, those associated with *phōné* are the subaltern as cipher, the *sans-part*. Whilst those who possess logos are seen as the political animal (political in the usual understanding of the word as governmental) that legislates, partitions, and distributes reality: "that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise" (29). The contrast between the political animal and animals without speech that Aristotle gives us may well make us think that the allegory of the logos of the police and the *phōné* of the *demos* is about difference. However, unlike Gilles Delueze in his battle for equality through a productive ontology of difference (Deleuze 1994 [1968], Deleuze and Guatarri 2000 [1972], 1987 [1980]), Rancière cites *mésentente* as the divisional nexus of the police and the *demos* in regard to *le partage du sensible*: the distribution of the sensible as the unequal sharing out and division of socio-reality within the miscount (exclusion) of the *sans-part* that includes them through their exclusion in the division of those who count and those who do not. Thus, we return to the division of society cited above: the division of disagreement. However, as Rancière informs us in *Disagreement*,

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[8] As Katia Genel has it: "[T]he logic of the social is opposed to the logic of the political, insofar as the former rests upon an assignment of positions. The process falling under the concept of government, organising the gathering of individuals and their consent in a community, is based on a hierarchical distribution of places and functions" (Genel 2016: 20).

this is neither disagreement in the sense of Lyotard's understanding of *différend* nor a term that seeks resolution in the ideal agreement that Habermas writes of.

2.2 *Mésentente*: Disagreement and Misunderstanding

In the third chapter of *Disagreement*, Rancière strives to separate his understanding of politics and disagreement from Habermas' notion of a "communicational intervention" [10] within agreement (Rancière 1999: 55). For Rancière, politics is not agreement but disagreement in its polemic against the *blaberon* (*le tort*) (wrong)[11] of the inequality of the miscount of *le partage du sensible* that will never cease: "The persistence of the wrong is infinite because verification of equality is infinite [. . .]" (39). In other words, dissensus, in the form of politics, is always inaugural. Therefore, for Rancière, politics is dissensus rather than the consensus that Habermas strives for in his two volumes of *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Vol 1 1984 [1981]), (Vol 2 1987a [1981])[12] within the possibility of an ideal agreement–doing so, as Jean-Louis Déotte informs us, without taking into consideration how exactly the *sans-part* would be heard through logos and not *phōné* (Déotte 2004: 79). As Žižek puts it (supporters of Habermas might disagree):

> [A]s Rancière proves against Habermas, the political struggle proper is therefore not a rational debate between multiple interests, but the struggle for one's voice to be heard and recognized as the voice of a legitimate partner [. . .] (Žižek 2000: 188)

It is only when they are recognised as political existents by dissensus that the *sans-part* are heard and understood through logos. Prior to that, the *sans-part* are heard through *phōné.*

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[9] Acts of dissensus within the American civil rights movement that were cited in the last chapter made the 'mute speech' of African Americans heard, be it by sitting on restaurant or bus seats reserved for whites only or attending newly unsegregated schools.

[10] Rancière actually writes "*agir communicationnel*" (communicational act) on p.85 of the French edition of *Disagreement*, *La Mésentente: Politique et philosophie*. Galilée. 1995.

[11] When Rancière cites the word 'wrong' he is not referring to any generic injustices but to politics. That is to say, he is referring to the 'wrong' of the distribution of the sensible because it is only the act of dissensus against that 'wrong' that can, for Rancière, create politics: "Not every wrong is political" (Rancière 2003: 4). See pp. 138-9 of *Disagreement*. See also, pp.3-6 for Rancière's introductory definition of Aristotle's term, *blaberon*.

[12] Rancière actually cites Habermas' *The Philosophical Discourses of Modernity* (Habermas 1987b) (Rancière 1999: 47, 55-6).

Nevertheless, the *sans-part* are required and expected by a police logic to understand orders and the need to obey them and thus this logic paradoxically presumes, within the ability of understanding that it expects, that there is an "equality of speaking beings" (Rancière 1999: 33). In his *Disagreement*, Rancière cites "Do you understand?" as a "false interrogative" (44). It is false, Rancière states, because the question is not genuine but rather, a kind of imperative which states that "you don't need to understand [. . .] all you have to do is obey" (45). Thus, for Rancière, this false interrogative agrees with Aristotle's distinction in Book one of his *Politics* between the *hexis* (possession) and the *aisthesis* (perception/recognition) of logos (language) (17): "[T]here are people who understand problems and people who have only to understand the orders such people give them" (45)–ancient Greek citizens possessed logos and were its speakers, whilst slaves merely understood logos but did not possess it. Therefore, there are those who create and distribute socio-reality and there are those who must only recognise/understand that distribution–this is why there is an underlying aesthetic stress on the need for a creation of different realities by the *sans-part* within Rancière's work. However, Rancière informs us that it is this very understanding of orders that illustrates an "equality that gnaws away at any natural order" (16). In other words:

> There is order in society because some people command and others obey, but in order to obey an order at least two things are required: you must understand the order and you must understand that you must obey it. And to do that, you must already be the equal of the person who is ordering you. (Rancière 1999: 16)

Thus, for Rancière, we possess an equality of the faculty of understanding: "[T]he inequality of social ranks works only because of the very equality of speaking beings" (Rancière 1999: 49). Yet, there are those who seek to partition "the world into those who command and those who obey" (46). It is through an imposed *partage* that we have a disagreement between "those who think [. . .] that all speaking beings are equal as speaking beings, and those who do not think so" (49), and in this sense, Rancière appeals, like Habermas, to the equal right of all to create socio-reality.[13] However, through the infinite verifications and inaugural acts of equality, we have the dissensus of disagreement, not the consensus of agreement, as Habermas would have it.[14]

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[13] As Kenneth Baynes puts it, Habermas appeals to "the equal status of citizens as co-authors of the legal order to which they are bound" (Baynes 2016: 169).

[14] For a detailed account of Rancière's critique of Habermas, see Russell, M. S., & Montin, A. 'The Rationality of Political Disagreement: Rancière's Critique of Habermas' (2015).

Thus, Rancière's acts of dissensus within disagreement are antonymous to Habermas' communicative actions of consensus because, unlike Habermas, he does not envision an instituted equality; democracy, for Rancière, is always dissensus and never consensus.[15] But what of Lyotard's *différend*? How does that differ from *mésentente*?

In *Disagreement*, Rancière writes that there is no need to contrast, as Lyotard does, modernity's grand narratives (meta-narratives) with "language games" and postmodernity's small narratives (Rancière 1999: 50). In fact, as Rancière informs us in a 2003 conference paper, there is no evidence of a postmodern turn to small narratives, and this is why all of his archival research had, amongst other aims, the aim of "deconstructing that presupposition" by attempting to show that "social emancipation" has always been created by small narratives (Rancière 2003: 9). If we turn to Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984) [1979], which was published at the same time that Lyotard was writing *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute* (1988 [1983]) to which Rancière refers, we can read Lyotard's citation of the postmodern condition as being an "incredulity toward meta-narratives" (Lyotard 1984: xxiv). This incredulity, for Lyotard, was due to the occidental demise of ideologies through the death of God, two world wars, the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century, etc., and the commencement and plurality of *petit récits* (small narratives)–narratives as truths rather than Truth. For Lyotard, it was no longer meta-narratives that legitimised the consensus of socio-reality but the illusionary referent of the real through the technological performativity of scientific knowledge invested by state power (45). To resist the inequality of normative society and to decentralise power, Lyotard offered 'paralogy': a shift against or even beyond reason in the productivity of new ideas (60-6). In doing so, he cited the demise of meta-narratives but offered the theory of language games (rules) and their heterogeneity within small narratives purportedly leading to a fairer society.[16] For Rancière, however, the heterogeneity of language games does not end the "narrative of politics" but constitutes politics because politics is dissensus through the meeting of the heterogeneous: the police and the *demos* (Rancière 1999: 50). For Rancière, politics is *mésentente, and mésentente*, much like *différend*, means both disagreement and

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[15] Rancière, as Fjeld writes: "decenters traditional philosophical-political thought by dissolving conceptual guarantees that any logic or agency is adequate to a situation" (Fjeld 2016: 152). Or as May puts it: "The demos has been excluded. A democratic politics is the appearance of that which has been excluded. This is an intervention, not a discussion" (May 2008: 49).

[16] Some commentators (Hornsey 1996, Keane 2003), however, whilst sympathetic towards Lyotard's cause, see it as incredulous that he believes that occidental meta-narratives have all dissipated.

misunderstanding: "I would like to call *differend* (*différend*) the case where the plaintiff is divested of the means to argue and becomes for that reason a victim" (Lyotard 1988: 9). In Rancière's understanding of *mésentente*, as mentioned above, we have the misunderstanding between the logos of the police and the *phōné* of the *sans-part*: "The problem is knowing whether the subjects who count in the interlocution "are" or "are not," whether they are speaking or just making a noise" (Rancière 1999: 50). Therefore, *mésentente* and *différend* are very similar in meaning. However, just as Rancière's *mésentente* differs from Habermas' communicative action in that there is no resolution to *mésentente*, it also differs from Lyotard's *différend* for the same reason. Even though Rancière does state that there are better and worse police orders (Rancière 1999: 31), he is against narratives of a new order.[17] This lack of belief in a new order is something that Žižek critiques Rancière's forms of democracy for.

2.3 Democracy: Contra Žižek and May

Before turning to Žižek's critique of Rancière's forms of democracy, we must first understand what these forms are. Just as Rancière's term politics differs in meaning from the standard definition which Rancière places under the banner of the term police, so too does his understanding of democracy differ in meaning from the standard definition which he places under the terms "consensus democracy" and "postdemocracy" (Rancière 1999: 95). Thus, Rancière continues his appropriation of what to him are misused quotidian terms by applying different terms to their everyday definitions–the term police applied to the usual definition of politics is a prime example–and by applying his own bi-univocal definitions to those everyday terms, such as politics and democracy. For Rancière, 'postdemocracy' is a misuse of democracy and thus he uses the term to mean 'after democracy' rather than a democracy of a "postmodern age" (101). As Rancière states: "The term will simply be used to denote the paradox that, in the name of democracy, emphasizes the consensual practice of effacing the forms of democratic action" (101-2). Or, as Rancière more overtly puts it in his *Hatred of Democracy* (2009 [2005]): "Societies, today as yesterday, are organised by the play of oligarchies. There is, strictly speaking, no such thing as democratic government" (Rancière 2009d: 52).[18] This is why, for Rancière, politics understood as "consensus democracy" is "the

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[17] As Chambers states in an essay on Rancière: "When it comes to police we require a democratic vigilance, not a utopian dismissal" (Chambers 2011: 36).

[18] For those who wish to question Rancière's statement that we have always been controlled by oligarchies (today as yesterday) by citing Ancient Greek democracy, Rancière states whilst in the past "representation was the exact

41

conjunction of contradictory terms" (Rancière 1999: 95). For Rancière, consensus is part of a police logic and democracy is part of a logic of equality: "What indeed is consensus if not the presupposition of inclusion of all parties and their problems that prohibits the political subjectivation of a part of those who have no part, of a count of the uncounted?" (116). As Rancière's bi-univocal term, however, democracy is something very different:

> Democracy is, in general, politics' mode of subjectivation if, by politics, we mean something other than the organisation of bodies as a community and the management of places, powers, and functions. Democracy is more precisely the name of a singular disruption of this order of distribution of bodies as a community that we proposed to conceptualise in the broader concept of the police. It is the name of what comes and interrupts the smooth working of this order through a singular mechanism of subjectivation. (Rancière 1999: 99)

For Rancière, politics is constituted by a ternary apparatus of forms of democracy[19] as "a specific mode of human being" that is "the system of forms of subjectivation" (Rancière 1999:101). Subjectivation (see Note 2 of the introduction), is something that we engage with in the rest of this thesis. For now, let us state that it is the *sans-part* made manifest as non-identary subjects by the rupture of dissensus and thus, non-conformant with any of the pre-given identities of socio-consensual reality–this is what makes Rancière's forms of democracy

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contrary of democracy" (Rancière 2009d: 53), there was never a "direct democracy" (52) for everyone. Let us not forget that the Athens of ancient Greece was a society of slave owners. In Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries, as the classicist and historian Luciano Canfora informs us, "the ratio of free men to slaves was one to four [. . .] Even the poorest, most wretched individual possessed at least one slave [. . .] In the home slaves were supervised by women, who were also non-persons, insignificant and nonexistent individuals in Athenian political society" (Canfora 2006: 25). Only those who were considered to be the social elite could be political beings. As such, democracy only existed for men who were of age and not a slave, but indigenous and a property owner: "At least until the time of Solon (sixth century bc) full political rights–which constitute citizenship itself–were not granted to those who did not own property" (23). As Rancière informs us, even right up until the nineteenth century in France only "those who could afford a poll tax of 300 francs" could vote (Rancière 2009d: 52). This is not to say that universal suffrage equates to democracy. As May points out it in a 2007 essay on Rancière, whilst voting is the only way we "participate in either its [the consensus] creation or maintenance," it "serves more to legitimize the police than to change it–which is perhaps why so few people vote" (May 2007: 23).

[19] "There is democracy if there is a specific sphere where the people appear. There is democracy if there are specific political performers who are neither agents of the state apparatus nor parts of society, if there are groups that displace identities as far as parts of the state or of society go. Lastly, there is democracy if there is a dispute conducted by a nonidentary subject on the stage where the people emerge" (Rancière 1999: 100).

open to Foucault's creative ontology that enables democratic existents to carry out practices of freedom. Subjectivation is the aesthetics of the appearance of the political existent. Thus, it is also the creative side of the disruption of dissensus. This does not mean, however, that creation follows disruption, seriatim; with subjectivation, disruption and creation are one. [20] Žižek, however, as stated above, is highly critical of Rancière's dissensual forms of democracy.

Žižek's work is, as the title of one of his books puts it, *In Defense of Lost Causes* (Žižek 2008). What are these lost causes? Namely, a telos and a belief in "a *new* lasting order" (419, Žižek's emphasis). Or, as Žižek more sternly puts it on the same page, "the brutal imposition of a new order." With the "Leap of Faith" (2) that Žižek asks us to take in a return to the telos of new social orders, he cites the likes of Rancière's dissensus as part of "the crisis of determinate negation" (420). Žižek is both a Lacanian and a Hegelian, with some Marx thrown in for good measure. Therefore, he seeks a return to the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis, synthesis.[21] Whilst, for Žižek, Rancière's forms of democracy are the dissensus (antithesis) that ruptures the consensus of the police order (thesis), they do not lead to a synthesis–a negation of the negation: a new social order. Therefore, for Žižek, Rancière's democracy subverts the socio-reality of inequality but offers no plan for a new order and thus, remains a determinate negation. However, for Rancière, democracy is a practice and does not offer the deferral of an ideal. Thus, Žižek's critique seems to be off target. Rancière, unlike Žižek, has learnt the lesson that the twentieth century gave us regarding new social orders: "Equality turns into the opposite the moment it aspires to a place in the social or state organisation" (Rancière 1999: 34).[22] Right up

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[20] "Rancière's philosophical project," as Laurent Jeanpierre informs us in the foreword to a book of interviews with Rancière, "continues to be misread almost universally as being split into a so-called 'political' moment followed by a moment described as 'aesthetic' (Jeanpierre 2016: viii).

[21] Even though these terms are used to describe his dialectic, Hegel never used these terms together. The terms put together as a dialectic actually derive from the German idealist Johann Gottlieb Fichte (Fichte 2005 [1804]). Hegel describes his own dialectic tripartite in § 79 of part one of his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline* (2010 [1812]) as "(a) *the abstract* side or that of the *understanding*, (b) *the dialectical* or *negatively rational* side, (y) *the speculative* or *positively rational* side" (Hegel 2010: 125, Hegel's emphasis). It is in § 86-9 of this text that Hegel uses this tripartite to form his famous dialectic of being, nothing, becoming (136-46).

[22] Žižek believes, as his book *Did Somebody say Totalitarianism? Five Interventions in the (Mis) use of a Notion* (2001) aims to illustrate, that this kind of thinking, although he does not connect Rancière to the following statement but mentions him only in passing in this particular text (Žižek 2001: 245), is merely an exploitation of "the horrors of the Gulag or Holocaust" as a means to renounce "all serious radial engagement" and thus defend "the existing order" (4).

until the year of his death, in the last of his essays *What is Enlightenment?*, Foucault was also warning us that experience has shown us the dangers of new world visions (Foucault 1984: 46). Therefore, for both Rancière and Foucault, we must work within the structures of what we have rather than carry out a *coup d'état*.[23] On the other hand, whilst not exactly calling for the storming of the Bastille or the Winter Palace *à la* Saint Petersburg 1917, Žižek still seems to be taking the didactic stance of the *maître savant* by representing not only a defence of lost causes but also of political philosophy against Rancière's dissensus.

Žižek states, citing and paraphrasing Peter Hallward (Hallward 2006: 123), that an "aesthetic reconfiguration" such as Rancière's form of dissensus, within the era of the spectacle, "has lost its subversive dimension" and thus, "it can easily be appropriated into the existing order" (Žižek 2008: 418).[24] In a prior text–*The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (Žižek 2000)–Žižek puts this more strongly and cites dissensus as a "game of hysterical provocation" (Žižek 2000: 238) whilst translating *mésentente* as "misapprehension" (234) rather than disagreement and misunderstanding:

> The test of the true revolutionary, as opposed to this game of hysterical provocation is the heroic readiness to endure the conversion of the subversive undermining of the existing System into the principle of a new positive Order which gives body to this negativity [. . .]. (Žižek 2000: 238)

As we know, Rancière does not offer a revolution of the social in the way that Žižek advocates– he is not a revolutionary, let alone a 'true revolutionary', whatever that means. Nor are his practices of equality more in line with alternatives such as the political thinker Cornelius

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[23] Warnings like this are nothing new. Camus' *The Rebel* (2000), already quoted from above, originally published in French in 1951, was, to the chagrin of Sartre, a vehement warning of the totalitarianism that revolutions can bring: "All modern revolutions have ended in a reinforcement of the power of the state" (Camus 2000: 127); "Utopias have always been coercive and authoritarian" (157).

[24] However, as already quoted from *The Emancipated Spectator* in Chapter 1 of this thesis, Rancière believes that, regarding the use of art within the politico-aesthetic: "[A]rt has to provide us with more than a spectacle, more than something devoted to the delight of passive spectators, because it has to work for a society where everybody should be active" (Rancière 2009b: 63). We can also recall the citation in Chapter 1 of Rancière's exemplification of the Cuban artists working in the community.

Castoriadis and his revolutionary project, for example.[25] Rancière, as stated above, adopts the ignorant schoolmaster's role, and so there is no offering of a negation of the negation–to expect otherwise would be to misunderstand Rancière's oeuvre. What Rancière offers, is a presupposition of equality within a democratic existence of political dissensus for the individual and communities (not society as a whole) to utilise and expand upon within an autoemancipation as they so wish. In other words, a democratic politics is not merely reactive. It is politics as aesthetics and thus, is an action rather than a reaction; it is an act of equality. "It is not, then," as May agrees, "simply parasitical upon that from which it dissents" (May 2008: 176). However, as we expand on below, this does not mean, as May agnostically wonders, that democracy can be institutionalised. A presupposition of equality, for Rancière, is a practice and a way of life for the individual expanding into communities, not something to be institutionalised emerging from some kind of socio-project of equality. As Nick Hewlett puts it:

> Instead of the idea that human beings can strive to improve their lot by working towards equality and freedom, Ranciere, like Jacotot, takes equality to be a starting point for all political analysis and not a medium–or long-term goal to be striven for with the help of an approach located within the Enlightenment tradition of social progress. (Hewlett 2010: 94)

As stated above, this thesis puts forward Rancière's practices of equality as a way of life within the possibility of another life (*une vie autre*), not the possibility of another political revolution. To want the violence of political revolution in non-totalitarian states, following the aftermath of twentieth-century revolutions, is illogical. Therefore, we can think of the forms of emancipation that Rancière offers, to purloin the title of one of the journals he used to write for (*Les Revoltes logiques*), as logical revolts. This title is even more apt than it initially appears because it is originally taken from the line of an Arthur Rimbaud poem *Démocratie*,[26] and thus it leans towards politics as aesthetics, the thematic of the next chapter. Whilst this thesis does not join

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[25] "[T]he project of a society in which all citizens have an equal, effective possibility of participating in legislating, governing, and judging, and in the last analysis, in instituting society. That state of affairs is predicated on radical changes in the present institutions. That's what we may call the revolutionary project, with the understanding that revolution doesn't mean massacres, wanton bloodletting, the extermination of counter-revolutionaries and the taking of the Winter Palace. Clearly that state of affairs is a long way from the present system, which functions essentially nondemocratically" (Castoriadis 2010: 3-4).

[26] "*Aux centres nous alimenterons la plus cynique prostitution. Nous massacrerons les révoltes logiques*" (Rimbaud 2001: 309). "In cities, we nourish the most cynical prostitution. We slaughter logical revolts" (Rimbaud 2002: 264).

Žižek's strong adherence to political revolution, however, it does at one level join in with the critique that Rancière's oeuvre has a disruptive–in 'Hegelese' (as Žižek jokingly puts it)– 'negation' but lacks a creative negation of the negation (in other words, a new order emerging out of a synthesis of the negation of the consensus by dissensus). This is exactly where Foucault's ontology of freedom comes into play within the space of dissensus that democratic politics, in Rancière's understanding of the term, opens up. This is not a negation of the negation, however, but a synergy of creative practices of equality and freedom with a focus on the individual and community that leaves an inaugural dissensus as inaugural, as we shall see. Thus, there is no offer of an answer here of the kind that Žižek seeks, but a proposal that can be engaged with in the lacuna of dissensus that Rancière leaves open for us to be creative in as democratic and autodidactic existents. On another level, however, this thesis, as stated above, goes with Rancière's understanding of democratic politics as both disruptive and creative, as shown in the next two chapters–this is why Rancière understands politics as aesthetics and the democratic stage that it creates (whilst thinking against Plato's critique of the theatrocracy of the masses in *The Republic*–see next chapter) as a "theatre" (Rancière 1999: 88). Put succinctly, for now, politics is both disruptive and creative because within the transgressive act of dissensus the *sans-part* are transformed into political existents: "Politics does not happen just because the poor oppose the rich. It is the other way around: politics (that is, the interruption of the simple effects of domination by the rich) causes the poor to exist as an entity" (11). Let us now touch on one more critique by Žižek and then we can turn our critical gaze towards May's text *The Political Thought of Jacques Rancière: Creating Equality* (May 2008) and his appropriation of Rancière's work for his anarchist project, as critiqued by Chambers (2013) and Fjeld (2016).[27]

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[27] Like Foucault, Rancière does not reduce his work to any 'ism', including anarchism. As such, when asked in an interview if his political position is anarchist, he states only in the 'strictest sense' of the term tied into his understanding of democracy as "the power of those who have no particular entitlement to wield it" where democracy "is the very principle of politics and not a particular form of government" (Rancière 2010c: 238). Thus, his anarchism is, as Rancière states, "tightening the knot between three terms that are ordinarily disjointed: politics, democracy and anarchism" (239). This understanding of anarchism is not, as Rancière states, adhered to by "active anarchisms" or those who "have declared themselves anarchist" (239). Also, it does not pertain to any ideals or proclaim any external telos or any aim to institutionalise a presupposition of equality/democratic politics as May does in his offering of anarchism that we engage with below. Thus, Rancière's position can only, as he states, "be called anarchist *stricto sensu*" (238).

Žižek not only imposes Hegel's dialectic of negation on Rancière's democratic dissensus, but also what seems to be Hegel's master/slave dialectic, stating that dissensus needs the police as "the big enemy" in order that it may engage in "marginal/subversive activity" where "the very idea of accomplishing a total subversion of the Order ('global revolution') is dismissed as proto-totalitarian" (Žižek 2000: 234). However, as stated above, Rancière's work is not an ideal made manifest as an anti-thesis dependent on the thesis that it opposes, be it through a master/slave dialectic or otherwise–political democracy for Rancière is not about recognition and a claiming of identity but rather, subjectivation and therefore, non-identity. Furthermore, for the reasons stated above, Rancière, quite rightly, *does* worry about the proto-totalitarian consequences of new orders, as did Foucault. This is why equality is a practice that constantly seeks verification, as already mentioned, because a truly equal society is an infeasibility and thus dissensus and verification of equality will always be necessary: "Whether the police is sweet and kind does not make it any less the opposite of politics" (Rancière 1999: 31). To think otherwise, is to fall into a belief in utopias and ideals. Therefore, Rancière's offering of equality is something that happens now. It is not an ideal that needs a 'big enemy' to represent itself against in some kind of justification as to why equality does not exist now and why we have to look to the future for equality. If anything, as stated above, according to Rancière, individual inequality exists because of equality (the equality of possessing the faculty of understanding language (and thus orders) as speaking beings), not the other way around. And communally, for Rancière, there is a certain co-dependency between the two. As he writes in an essay in *On the Shores of Politics*: "A community of equals can never become coextensive with a society of the unequal, but nor can either exist without the other. They are as mutually exclusive in their principles as they are mutually reinforcing in their existence." (Rancière 2007: 84). In other words, without inequality there is no equality and vice versa. Furthermore, if we read Rancière's *The Nights of Labor*, the individuals that he cites seem far from wanting, let alone needing, a big Other in some kind of pseudo-Stockholm syndrome that Žižek seems to be inferring with his mixture of a Hegelian philosophic and Lacanian psychoanalytic critique. This inference appears to stem from Žižek's frustration with the lack of a global revolution rather than a valid basis for critique. To use Žižek's translation of *mésentente*, his comments appear to be coming from a 'misapprehension' of Rancière's democratic politics. If there is any validity to Žižek's critique, it would be as, as Davis puts it: "a psychoanalytically inspired universal paradox about contesting authority [rather] than an observation specifically about Ranciere's theory" (Davis 2010: 95). Now that we have used Žižek's critiques to help illustrate what Rancière's work is not, let us move on to May's appropriation of Rancière's form of democracy.

47

May asks if a democratic politics can be institutionalised without notions of utopia (May 2008: 176). In doing so, he seems to be leaning towards the same stance as Žižek but purportedly without the stress on new orders, believing somehow that an institutionalised democratic politics is not a form of a new order: "To be wary of utopia," May informs us, "does not require us to surrender the possibility of institutionalising a democratic politics" (177). In asking the above question, however, May understands that Rancière believes that democracy can never be institutionalised because for Rancière, democracy only happens in an order of police logic (177). Therefore, his question concerns a vector outside of Rancière's purview:

> Is it possible for a dissensus that arises as a struggle within a police order to carry itself forward into a more substantial form without necessarily losing its character as an expression of equality? Must it be the case, in principle, that a democratic politics cannot exist without a police order? (May 2008: 179)

Whilst May himself initially answers no to these questions, he states that he sees it best to remain "agnostic rather than atheist" (May 2008: 179) regarding the matter as he simultaneously critiques Rancière for being a *maître savant*: "By denying in advance that it [(democratic politics)] can lead away from a police order altogether, Rancière seems to slip into an intellectual role that he is elsewhere careful to avoid" (179). This is true in a very pedantic sense but is also a sophistry of sorts as this is the whole crux of Rancière's understanding of equality: immanent practices that happen now with no focus on deferral. Thus, to accuse him of being a *maître savant*, seems somewhat harsh, and May himself agrees with this in the next paragraph where he writes: "the institutionalization of a democratic politics would no longer be a politics in Rancière's sense because, by definition, politics is a dissensus. Therefore, anything that moves beyond dissensus is no longer a form of politics" (179). So, the query that May states he raises, whilst apparently keeping to the definition of politics as dissensus, "is whether a democratic politics can lead to something else, whatever name we want to give it, that institutionalizes the presupposition of equality. Otherwise put, the question is whether a democratic politics can itself build institutions" (179-80). Thus, May seems to lie somewhere in-between the respective stances of Žižek and Rancière in what appears to be some kind of external telos of an ersatz utopia. However, equality, for Rancière, as I have stated many times because it is such an alien concept to the Enlightenment influence that theoretically surrounds us, is a presupposition and a practice, not an ideal with a telos, be it ersatz or otherwise:

"To pose equality as a goal," Rancière states in the 'Afterword' to the English translation of *Le Philosophe et ses pauvres*, "is to hand it over to the pedagogues of progress, who widen endlessly the distance they promise that they will abolish." (Rancière 2004b: 223)

It appears that May and Žižek, be they pedagogues of anarchism, a Hegelian dialectic, or otherwise, are also pedagogues of the Enlightenment's ethos of progress and therefore, offer a utopia, even if May represents it as an ersatz utopia regarding the possibility of an institutionalised equality as a substitute for utopia: a utopia without utopia that unfolds on its own without any imposed vector or programme. Whilst May seems to be a lot closer to Rancière than Žižek in that he leaves open the possibility of politics becoming institutionalised in his 'agnosticism' rather than insisting on a negation of the negation, he does appear to have his own agenda when he seeks to justify his anarchist project in the quest of answering his questions of social progress: "The most promising place to investigate would be in the history of anarchist politics, since that is where radical egalitarianism has been taken seriously. And yet anarchism has remained marginal in the history of political struggle" (May 2008: 183). Therefore, what May seems to be doing, as Chambers and Fjeld point out, is to link politics and police in a dialectic to suit this agenda.[28]

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[28] Chambers states: "May "elevates" politics to a pure form of action, while reducing police to an *anti-political* and implicitly repressive order of domination and injustice. This leads, I argue, to an unproductive conception of "the police" in the service of a limited theory of politics" (Chambers 2013: 76, Chambers' emphasis). Chambers reinforces this by quoting May: "In the end, the goal of policing *is precisely that of eliminating politics"* (May in Chambers 2013: 77, Chambers' emphasis, May 2008: 43). As Chambers points out, "this claim makes policing, by definition, a mechanism for the destruction of politics" (Chamber 2013: 77), and "in May's hands: one utterly loses Rancière's sense of the police as "neutral" or "non-pejorative," and instead one comes to see police as the evil other to politics" (83). This "reading," Chambers states, "fits perfectly, of course, with an anarchist project in which true freedom and equality come only *from* the people and *after* the elimination of government" (77, Chambers' emphasis). Chambers' critique is more nuanced than the summary above can show (75-87) (cf. Chambers 2011). However, Fjeld's states much the same but with a different derivative that states May presents an anarchist representation of Rancière because he follows Rancière's understanding of equality from *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*–"where equality was a social relation based on horizontal principles"–rather than his later work where equality becomes "an operative principle related to *interruption* of the police order" (Fjord 2016: 155, Note 5, Fjord's emphasis). Thus, whilst May agrees with Rancière's definition of politics as dissensus, he seems to, as Chambers and Fjord attest, join politics and police in a dialectic ("quasi-dialectic" (Chambers 2013: 85)) of thesis and anti-thesis to suit an agenda of anarchism and a suppositional telos of an institutionalisation of a presupposition of equality. As May writes in a later essay aptly titled 'Rancière and Anarchism': "He [[(Rancière)]] has much to offer contemporary anarchism, and his thought can itself be better understood in dialogue with that renewed tradition" (May 2012b: 117).

It appears that both May's and Žižek's particular agendas make them misread Rancière's work in their respective exegeses, although Žižek is more overt in this misreading, and not see the agonistic[29] relationship of the police and politics, consensus and dissensus, that creates a gap for practices to ontologically unfold. Thus, it appears that the 'real' break from Rancière here is between Žižek's and May's respective (re)quests for equality as a collective effort within the transcendent manifestation of a 'new social order/democratic institution of a presupposition of equality' and Rancière's understanding of equality as immanent, individual practices within the mode of 'human being-together', which Hallward succinctly describes as possessing "the primacy of subjective commitment as the basis of emancipatory politics" (Hallward 2006: 122).[30] Therefore, outside of the obvious dialectic impositions of Hegel and anarchism upon Rancière's democratic politics, there are aspects of Žižek's critique and May's 'agnosticism' that appear as a logos of collective transcendence as a method of emancipation that is attempting to exclude an immanent and autotelic self-constitution of the individual by attempting to negate the inaugural negation pertaining to dissensual politics. In this exclusion, this break with an inaugural dissensus, there seems to be a 'misapprehension', or even an overlooking of Rancière's politics as aesthetics–even though Žižek, in the 'Afterword' (part of which is lifted from his *The Ticklish Subject*) to Rancière's *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible* (2004 [2000]), cites Rancière's particular type of an "*aestheticisation of politics*" as a "great breakthrough" and as "the assertion of the aesthetic dimension as INHERENT in any radical emancipatory politics" (Žižek 2004: 76, Žižek's emphasis). In Žižek's and May's wish for all that is solid to melt into air, they seem to either make little allowance for the politics of aesthetics that Rancière offers within a human being-together as a dissensual 'community' or are unconvinced by it as a form of emancipation from the consensus. With politics as aesthetics, we can, as Rancière writes in *The Emancipated Spectator*, "construct different realities, different forms of common sense–that is to say, different spatiotemporal systems, different communities of words and things, forms and meanings" (Rancière 2009b: 102). However, this is not an offering like May's of being open to a democratic politics becoming institutionalised but rather, how individual emancipations expand into communities and not society as a whole because the

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[29] I use the term agonistic because Rancière's understanding of the relationship between consensus and dissensus indirectly mirrors Foucault's understanding (that this thesis explores in chapters 5 and 6) of the coexistent and agonistic relationship of discursive and non-discursive practices with practices of freedom.

[30] This is especially the case when we consider being-together created by a betweenness as quoted in this thesis' introduction: "Political being-together, is a being-between: between identities, between worlds" (Rancière 1999: 25). It

latter leads to inequality: democratic politics, for Rancière, is always about dissensus and never about consensus.

To sum up, against a police logic obsessed with logos and discourse, Rancière offers politics as aesthetics as a means of non-identity and an artisanal and polemic community that can weave new realities using equality as a practice of logical revolts via, in what Genel has quite nicely named, a "redefined emancipation" (Genel 2016: 20). Because Rancière does not conform to a didactic political philosophy by offering a new order and instructing us how to reach it via an end to consensus, various commentators, including Žižek, critique his particular offering of emancipation[31] or, like May, take an agnostic stance within the hope for an institutionalised equality. However, for Rancière, to become didactic and telic would be to go against a presupposition of equality and the agonistic reality of an auto-emancipatory existence that his oeuvre offers. It would be to go against his redefinition of emancipation within politics and aesthetics and to make his oeuvre fall under the very genre of political philosophy that he critiques. Chapter 3 now turns to Rancière's offering of politics as aesthetics and aesthetics as politics.

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is this space of being-between identities that allows a self-constitution through a creative ontology of freedom as an ethics of the self and individual practices of freedom.

[31] As Hewlett sees it, Rancière breaks with "an Enlightenment concept of progress, without convincingly replacing it with another" (Hewlett 2010: 106). Or as Hallward words it: "Although Rancière offers a brilliant account of the enthusiasm that accompanies and often inspires a political sequence, he neglects many of the more intractable problems of organising and sustaining such a sequence" (Hallward 2006: 127-8).

Chapter 3 - Redefining Emancipation: Politics as Aesthetics and Aesthetics as Politics

This Chapter's thematic is the simultaneity of politics and aesthetics within Rancière's redefinition of emancipation. Chapter 2 noted that Rancière names this simultaneity 'subjectivation' (*la subjectivation*). Through an engagement with subjectivation, it will become clear that for Rancière, it is only individuals, or communities of individuals, who are able to emancipate themselves from inequality, not society as a whole. Accordingly, there are no utopias in Rancière's redefinition of emancipation but heterotopias and communities: worlds within worlds.[1]

To address this chapter's thematic, two questions are answered. The first is the opening question from a transcription of a 2003 conference paper 'The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics', where Rancière asks: "What does it mean to think politics and aesthetics under the concept of dissensus?" (Rancière 2003a: 1). To answer this question, we turn to the first chapter of Rancière's *Aesthetics and its Discontents* (2009c [2004]) in an engagement with his regimes of art. In answering the first question, we are led to the second question: What does it mean to *enact* politics and aesthetics under the concept of dissensus? To answer this, we engage with and contest both Tanke's critique (Tanke 2011) that Rancière's aesthetic revolution is lacking due to the absence of a full engagement with the imagination as a creative form of emancipation, and his call for a reconceptulisation of the imagination as a form of collective dissensus. From there, by returning to Rancière's conference paper, we lay a foundation for Part 3 of this thesis that aims to answer the further question: What does it mean to *live* practices of equality and freedom as a way of life–to live *une vie autre*?

3.1 Regimes of Art

Rancière formulates three regimes of art: the ethical regime, the representative regime, and the aesthetic regime. These regimes have often been compared and contrasted by Rancière with the three *epistemes* formulated by Foucault in *The Order of Things* (Tanke 2011: 77), (Rancière 2000a: 13). Foucault used the formulation of *epistemes* to define the normative

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[1] Rancière's use of the term heterotopias equates to disruptions of consensual space and time. As such, it differs to Foucault's understanding of heterotopias as textual in his *The Order Things* (Foucault 2002: xix). Rancière's meaning of heterotopias also differs from how Foucault uses the term later to refer to boarding schools, prisons, etc., in his lecture given in March 1967 and published in October 1984 as *Des Espace Autres* in the French journal *Architecture/Mouvement/Continuité*.

See https://monoskop.org/images/b/b0/Foucault_Michel_1984_1986_Of_Other_Spaces.pdf Accessed 25/11/20.

manifestation in modernity of three arenas of knowledge–philology, biology, and political economy–as a mode of objectification (Foucault 2002: xxiii). *Episteme* is a neologistic term created by Foucault from the Ancient Greek word *epistēmē* meaning knowledge. Foucault used this term to denote the epistemological field that governs knowledge and thus determines the era in which we exist (183). Each *episteme* defines a separate point in time with each later *episteme* abolishing the prior: the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and Modernity *epistemes*. Therefore, *epistemes* lack the fluidity of Rancière's regimes of art which can coexist:

> [T]he aesthetic regime of art, for example, is a system of possibilities that is historically constituted but that does not abolish the representative regime, which was previously dominant. At any given point in time, several regimes coexist and intermingle in the works themselves. (Rancière 2004a: 50)[2]

In *Aesthetics and its Discontents*, Rancière borrows Friedrich von Schiller's use, in a letter penned in 1795 (Letter XV in Schiller 1902), of the Greek statue Juno Ludovici as a means to illustrate the art and the politics pertaining to it. Rancière uses this statue to exemplify how it may be viewed differently depending on what particular regime of art we see it through (Rancière 2009c: 28). Rancière refers to the ethical regime, which he also names the regime of resemblance, as a regime where the Juno statue is considered as an image of a divinity rather than art *per se*. In this regime images are evaluated on their effect on both the individual and the collective within the dynamic of what truth they pertain to (28). Thus, this regime, for Rancière, is both an ethical regime and a regime of resemblance.

The next regime, the regime of representation, shifts from resemblance to *mimesis* (imitation). Through being seen as imitation, the Juno statue now becomes art in the general understanding of the word by being classified as a sculpture (Rancière 2009c: 29). The

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[2] Foucault believed that a new *episteme* was imminent, and with its coming, as he famously wrote at the end of his *The Order of Things*, "man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea" (Foucault 2002: 422). Davide Panagia points out that the aesthetic regime makes dissensus "a practice of world-making" (Panagia 2018: 55). In this sense, even though this regime emerged at the same time as modernity within their joint break from representation, we cannot help but think that maybe Rancière is in some way offering the aesthetic regime as a means to push past the Modern *episteme*: "[T]he concept of an aesthetic revolution functions as a polemical concept in relation to the concept of modernity" (Rancière 2016a: 57). However, as shown in later chapters of this thesis, Rancière explores the understanding of the subject as a double rather than the emergence of a new human form. We shall return to Foucault's *epistemes* in more detail in Chapter 5.

statue is now seen as a representation rather than a resemblance.[3] The next regime, the aesthetic regime, shifts from imitation to free appearance. However, unlike the other two regimes, for Rancière, there is a tension within the aesthetic regime between two forms of politics of aesthetics: "the politics of the becoming-life of art and the politics of the resistant form" (Rancière 2009c: 44) (see below).

Rancière focuses on aesthetics not only as a two-hundred year old discourse but also as "a specific regime for the identification of art" (Rancière 2009c: 8).[4] This regime, like the other regimes, illustrates that art is not ahistorical but is, much like the human subject, historically constituted. In this regime there is a shift from representation: "[I]n the aesthetic regime of art, the property of being art is no longer given by the criteria of technical perfection but is ascribed to a specific form of sensory apprehension. The statue is a 'free appearance'" (29). Rancière cites Schiller's term 'play'–"any activity that has no end other than itself" (30)–taken from Kant's aesthetic analysis and formulated as "anthropological and political propositions" (31), as capturing the aesthetic regime's type of distribution. Rancière refers to Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgement* [1790] and its illustration of how we experience the aesthetic through free play (30). In Kant's first critique, *Critique of Pure Reason* [1781], Kant tells us that the sensible and the understanding's application of concepts are mediated by the schemata that operate through the imagination (Kant 2000: A138/B177, A139/B178). In his *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, he tells us that within aesthetic judgements the imagination and the understanding are suspended and thus the free play of these faculties occurs outside of the understanding's concepts (Kant: 2002: § 9). This "free play" of the understanding and sensibility (Rancière refers to sensibility rather than imagination–see below) is "an activity without goal" and "an activity that is equal to inactivity" (Rancière 2009c: 31). Therefore, the enactment of play before the Juno statue is an inactivity, just as the statue is inactive in representing nothing, as it is "absorbed within this circle of inactive activity" (31). Through this suspension, Rancière tells us, the aesthetic regime adheres "to a sensorium different to that of domination" (31) and thus, it suspends consensual reality and its distribution of the sensible. Just as Kant's notion of free play *suspends* the dominant legislation of empirical reality, aesthetic dissensus *suspends* the domination of a consensual

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[3] In *The Order of Things*, Foucault gave a similar example using money to illustrate the shift from resemblance to representation. He noted that money once resembled that which it denoted by being made of precious metals, whilst in the age of representation it was made of base metals and thus represented rather than resembled wealth (Foucault 2002: 191).

[4] "My intention is not to 'defend' aesthetics but to contribute to clarifying what the word means, insofar as it is a regime of the functioning of art and a matrix of discourse, a form for identifying the specificity of art and redistribution of the relations between the forms of sensory experience" (Rancière 2009c: 14).

distribution of the sensible. It is this suspension stemming from a new regime of art that Rancière states leads to "a new art of living, a new form of 'life-in-common'" (30). As Rancière writes in the essay 'The Aesthetic Revolution and Its Outcomes' (2002), the aesthetic regime "holds the promise of both a new world of art and a new life for individuals and the community" (Rancière 2010a: 115). This is because it calls into question the hierarchical binary of mind over matter and in doing so, calls into question the police legislation of socio-reality over and above the *sans-part* (Rancière 2009c: 31).[5] Therefore, the aesthetic regime is a complete shift from the regime of representation and its normative of hierarchic binaries where one of the sides signifies a logos and the other signifies its absence and thus is excluded in its inclusion as a supernumerary: [6] male-female, heterosexual-homosexual, rich-poor, occidental-oriental, for example. This is a hierarchy, as stated in Chapter 1, that goes back at least as far as Plato and his transcendent ideal forms and immanent appearances that made Deleuze state in his *Difference and Repetition*: "The task of modern philosophy has been defined: to overturn Platonism" (Deleuze 1994: 59). It is a hierarchy of binaries where Jacques Lacan can state "Woman doesn't exist" (*La femme n'existe pas*) (Lacan 1990: 38) within the binary of man and woman, and Rancière can state the *sans-part* do not exist within the fiction of society and the binary of police and *demos*, logos and *phōné*. This is why the *sans-part* must create their own existence in conflicting ways against a consensual distribution of the sensible, and why Rancière quotes (Rancière 2009c: 31) Schiller's statement that we are only fully human when we play (Schiller 1902: 56). This statement becomes more comprehensible when we not only contrast the free play of appearances to the rigidity of consensual reality but contrast the freedom of play to the "servitude of work" (Rancière 2009c: 31)–a servitude that takes away the time needed to 'play' and create other worlds and thus keeps the *sans-part* in a consensual reality of domination where only a police logic creates. As Rancière puts it: "[T]he idea of work is not initially the idea of a determined activity, a process of material transformation. It is the idea of a distribution of the sensible: an impossibility of doing 'something else' based on an 'absence of time'" (Rancière 2004a: 42). This is why, as we explore in Chapter 8, the artisan and poet Gauny lived by a cenobitic economy inspired by the Cynic Diogenes so that he could have days outside of the spatiotemporal regulation of work and be saved from the

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[5] The aesthetic regime "calls into question the neutralised status of *techné*, the idea of technique as the imposition of form of thought on inert matter" (Rancière 2004a: 43).

[6] Supernumerary stems from the Latin *super numerum* meaning 'beyond the number'. One meaning of the term supernumerary, which is especially relevant here, and is why this thesis adopts the term, is its use in the theatre to describe an actor who appears on stage without speaking. A supernumerary in this sense is basically someone the film industry calls an extra: a person who is seen but rarely heard and merely forms the background for those who speak.

simple division (fragmentation, dismemberment) imposed by the movements of a tool, by the rhythms and by the furies of an existence spent working.[7]

The so called legitimacy of police logic, Rancière states, has always rested on the aesthetic binary of refined over uneducated senses (Rancière 2009c: 31)–"those who think and decide and those who are doomed to material tasks" (Rancière 2004a: 44)–in an aim to justify that only a few may partake in the creation of the socio-realities in which we live whilst others may merely work: "What aesthetic free appearance and free play challenge is the distribution of the sensible that sees in the order of domination a difference between two humanities" (Rancière 2009c: 32). Free play, for Rancière, shows a profundity of revolution. It shows a revolution of "sensible existence" (32) rather than a *coup d'état* where power merely changes hands and "the operation between two humanities is *de facto* renewed" (37). Because it can reframe space and time and thus suspend the spatiotemporal inequalities of consensual reality, we can think of aesthetics as politics just as we can think of politics as aesthetics: "[P]olitics is a question of aesthetics" because it is "a matter of appearances" (Rancière 1999: 74). This does not mean that art leads to utopia by destroying the distribution of the sensible. What it means, is that art, within Rancière's lexicon and the aesthetic regime, is the enabler of the simultaneity of transgression and transformation– politics as art, art as politics–that opens a democratic space of dissensus where acts of equality happen now through political existents, rather than by the deferral of a telos that states one day a police order of logic will end.[8]

Returning to the tension identified by Rancière in aesthetics between art as two forms of politics (the becoming-life of art and the politics of the resistant form), Rancière states that if art were to become life it would annihilate itself as art because it is only through its non-conformity to the consensus that it exists as a separate entity (Rancière 2009c: 46). It is this separate entity, for Rancière, in the form of a critical art, that aims to create an awareness within us of "mechanisms of domination" in the further aim to transform humans "into a conscious agent of world transformation" (45)–to transform them from spectator to

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[7] "*sauvée du simple morcèlement imposé par les movements de l'outil, par les rythmes et par les fureurs de l'existence ouvrière*" (Rancière 2017a: 16). The translation is mine as will all translations of *Le Philosophe plébéien* be, except for those taken from the translated extracts in Rancière's *The Nights of Labor* and *The Philosopher and his Poor*. With any of my translations, the original French will always be placed in a footnote.

[8] "Art is not, in the first instance, political because of the messages and sentiments it conveys concerning the state of the world. Neither is it political because of the manner in which it might choose to represent society's structures, or social groups, their conflicts or identities. It is political because of the very distance it takes with

emancipated spectator. However, understanding does not change situations and the disenfranchised do not remain disenfranchised due to misunderstanding, according to Rancière. Rather, they remain in a subordinated life of miscount "because they lack confidence in their capacity to transform" their life and to transform "the non-necessary or intolerable character of a world" (45). For Rancière, we do not have to worry about art's self-destruction by becoming life because life can take its form in art (40). Life can become a form of art within the ontological creation of new worlds and new ways to exist. It is by taking this form that life can change and lives can be changed. It is by the art of creating dissensual suspensions of the space-time continuum of consensual reality that transformation can take place simultaneously with dissensus because dissensual acts of equality cause and are caused by transformation: dissensus both creates and is created by political existents. In theory, this is all well and good. However, how is emancipation to happen in practice through politics as aesthetics? What does it mean to enact politics and aesthetics under the concept of dissensus? How do practices of equality equate to emancipation?

3.2 An Aesthetic Revolution

In § 9 of *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, Kant wrote of "the free play of the imagination and the understanding" (Kant 2002: 5: 218). Rancière does not mention the suspension of the imagination in his brief description of Kant's systemisation of aesthetics in *Aesthetics and its Discontents*, but the suspension of the sensible and the understanding, as cited above. Tanke goes beyond this small observation and states that there is a lack of engagement with imagination throughout all of Rancière's work. As such, Tanke calls for a reconceptulisation of the imagination as "a collective power of dissensus" (Tanke 2011: 143). Tanke states that Rancière not only unsatisfactorily illustrates how equality can be transformative within the aesthetic (6) but also discounts the significant role that other thinkers ("Kant, Schiller, Hegel, and the Romantics") gave the imagination as the medium for rupturing the oppression of the quotidian distribution of space and time: "Indeed, it is the free functioning of the imagination that not only accounts for and defines the uniqueness of art, but which breaches the dominant distributions of the sensible" (148).[9] However, as Tanke reminds us, Kant et al. equated aesthetics and the imagination with freedom, not equality (143). This does not seem

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respect to these functions, because of the type of space and time that it institutes and the manner in which it frames time and peoples this space" (Rancière 2009c: 23).

[9] "There is a consistent movement in Rancière's thought away from investigating the role played by the imagination within the thinkers under consideration, as is evidenced by prioritising Schiller over Kant and Hegel, and even the *Letters* (1794) over Schiller's *Kallias* or *Concerning Beauty* (1793), where the Kantian faculties are more central" (Tanke 2011: 150).

to be the reason as to why Rancière apparently discounts the role of the imagination within an emancipation premised on practices of equality though. Initially, it seems, it is probably more to do with Tanke's suggestion that it is because Rancière sees aesthetic "events," be they "textual" or "visual," as expressions of social capacity rather than the subjective faculty which Kant denotes (151).[10] Whilst this is valid, it seems more correct to state that Rancière does not engage with the imagination within his highlighting of Kant's free play because his focus is, as always, on equality; in this case, the equality that is offered within aesthetic judgements and the dissensus they offer through a suspension of consensual reality. This is presumably why Rancière cites the suspension of the sensible rather than the imagination because the former is what the aesthetic revolution aims for by dissensus, according to Rancière. To understand this, however, we need to understand what Kant's aesthetic judgements are.

Kant states in his *Critique of the Power of Judgement* that aesthetic judgements are universal: "That is **beautiful** which pleases universally without a concept" (Kant 2002: 5: 219, Kant's emphasis).[11] It is important to understand, however, that by beautiful Kant is not referring to subjective judgements of beauty which Kant names agreeableness.[12] According to Kant, when we make an aesthetic judgement, unlike a judgement of agreeableness, we must be certain that this judgement is valid for everyone (5: 214). As cognitive beings possessing the same faculties of cognition, humans are expected by Kant to have the same aesthetic judgments regarding what is beautiful or sublime (5: 218). For example, no individual would state that a sunset is only beautiful for them because we all know that the

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[10] As such, Rancière may have wanted to distance himself from the imagination because it could be deemed to belong to the sphere of psychology. He may also have wanted to distance himself from the imagination because of its links to phenomenology and texts such as Sartre's Husserl inspired *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination* (Sartre 2004 [1940]).

[11] This is a fuller definition by Kant: "The subjective universal communicability of the kind of representation in a judgment of taste, since it is supposed to occur without presupposing a determinate concept, can be nothing other than the state of mind in the free play of the imagination and the understanding (so far as they agree with each other as is requisite for a **cognition in general**): for we are conscious that this subjective relation suited to cognition in general must be valid for everyone and consequently universally communicable, just as any determinate cognition is, which still always rests on that relation as its subjective condition" (Kant 2002: 5: 217-18, Kant's emphasis). Or as Paul Guyer in the 'Editor's Introduction' to *Critique of the Power of Judgement* puts it: "[A]s Kant's argument will reveal, the only universal that we seek is the idea of interpersonal agreement in pleasure in a beautiful object or in awe at a sublime one [. . .]" (Guyer 2002: xxiv).

[12] "With regard to the agreeable, everyone is content that his judgment, which he grounds on a private feeling, and in which he says of an object that it pleases him, be restricted merely to his own person. Hence he is perfectly happy if, when he says that sparkling wine from the Canaries is agreeable, someone else should improve his expression and remind him that he should say "It is agreeable to me" (Kant 2002: 5: 212).

judgement that a sunset is beautiful is universal. Within this sameness of judgement that we share there is a form of equality–sunsets are not just beautiful for the privileged, but for everyone. Rancière goes one step further and states: "In the formal universality of the judgement of taste [. . .] he [(Kant)] seeks the anticipation of the perceptible equality to come [. . .]" (Rancière 2004b: 199). By this, Rancière is referring to the fact that Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgement* was published one year after the French Revolution (198). This revolution, like most revolutions, held the hope for an equality to come for everyone, just as aesthetic judgements are the same for everyone, according to Kant.

Pierre Bourdieu, in his *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1996 [1979]), offered an alternative to Kantian aesthetics through sociology (Coulangeon and Duval 2015: 1). He did so, by looking to social stratification as the framework from which the classificatory systems of structures of the perception of socio-reality and its aesthetics stem (Nice 1984: xiii-iv). In the postscript, Bourdieu interprets Kant's aesthetic judgements as a perpetuation of social inequality because of Kant's representation of agreeable judgements as inferior to universal judgements of beauty. By doing so, Bourdieu believes Kant was projecting and perpetuating the bourgeois belief that the proletariat do not meditate on the beautiful but revel in the shallow pleasures of the agreeable: "Kant's analysis of the judgement of taste finds its real basis in a set of aesthetic principles which are the universalization of the dispositions associated with a particular social and economic condition" (Bourdieu 1996: 493). Rancière states, however, that in Bourdieu's haste to cite Kant's aesthetic judgments as ahistorical, he pretends to forget the close dates of the publication of Kant's critique and the French Revolution:

> One year after the French Revolution, his aesthetics presents itself as the contemporary of a century and populations confronted with the problem of "uniting freedom (and equality) with compulsion (rather of respect and submission from a sense of duty than of fear)." (Rancière 2004b: 197)[13]

Accordingly, Rancière sees Bourdieu's critique of Kant's hierarchical duality of the universal understanding of the beautiful and the subjective understanding of agreeableness as a means to dogmatically use this critique to achieve his ends. These ends, for Rancière, are the same as the ends of all the other thinkers he critiques in *The Philosopher and his Poor*: to be the all-knowing theorist who seeks to instruct the unenlightened masses on how to

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[13] The last section in quotation marks is Rancière's quotation of Kant from *Critique of the Power of Judgement* (5: 355).

emancipate themselves. Bourdieu, as Davis points out, may well have a point regarding the notion of how aesthetic judgements of beauty in a social environment can "serve" in an "oppressive role" (Davis 2010: 132). The point here, however, and Davis does not dispute this, is not to argue if Bourdieu or Kant and Rancière are correct or not, just as we did not argue in the first chapter about whether Jacotot and Rancière are correct or not regarding a supposition of equal intelligence. The point here is to see how exactly the aesthetic can be an arena of equality in the suspension of the inequality of the consensual distribution of the sensible.[14] Suppositions of an equality of intelligence and an aesthetic equality equate to an equality of the human ability to learn and create, to be an autodidact and artist. It is how the supposition of equality within aesthetic judgements could contribute by specific interventions within the distribution of the possibilities of an aesthetic equality that Rancière asks over and above the question of the validity of this supposition. Equality in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* is a declaration of "a capacity belonging to all" (Rancière 2012a: 211). Equality in *Aesthetics and its Discontents* is also a declaration of a capacity belonging to all, the aesthetic capacity to create and to emancipate oneself from certain ways of thinking, being, and perceiving in doing so.

Moving back to our engagement with Tanke, it is the supposition of the equality of aesthetic judgements, along with the dissensual aspect regarding the suspension of the everyday distribution of the sensible, that has Rancière's focus, not the imagination. Just as it was a supposition of an equality of intelligence in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* that was Rancière's point of focus, not the will that enacts it (even though that aspect was vital in the classroom for the Jacotot that Rancière portrays). Therefore, to critique Rancière for not making the imagination his key focus in his engagement with the supposition of an equality of aesthetic judgement and free play, would be like critiquing him for not making the will his key focus in his engagement with the supposition of an equality of intelligence–it seems to miss the point of Rancière's engagement with equality. For Rancière, the key points of Kant's aesthetic judgements are the supposition of an equality of aesthetic judgements and the suspension of the quotidian that free play offers. This is illustrated by Rancière's focus on free play via the medium of Schiller's anthropological and political propositions rather than through Kant directly (as Tanke himself states above). It is this very suspension that allows the free play of the imagination and understanding outside of concepts. Consequently, free play is a form of dissensus because dissensus, by its definition, is a suspension of the distribution of the

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[14] As Rancière states in his essay 'Work, Identity, Subject' regarding French thought, including his own: [I]t is a characteristic generally attributed to it–either as a virtue or a flaw–that it asks not so much about the truth or falsity of particular claims. Rather, it asks in what ways these claims can be asserted; that is, these claims are the result of which specific interventions in the distribution of possibilities" (Rancière 2012a: 205).

sensible and therefore, the regime of representation and police logic. Whilst Tanke agrees that Rancière exemplifies illustrations of the imagination at work, his point of contention is that Rancière does not explore imagination itself. So, what is the point of exemplifying Rancière's illustrations of the imagination at work to contest Tanke?

In *The Philosopher and his Poor*, Rancière writes of Gauny's free play taking him away from the *furies* of work through an "aesthetic gaze" whilst working on a parquet floor as he imagines that the home he works on is his own. Rancière quotes Gauny writing about himself in the third person:

> Thinking himself at home, as long as he has not finished the room in which he nails the boards, he likes the layout of the place; if the window opens onto a garden or over a picturesque horizon, he stops moving his hands for an instant and shifts his thoughts towards the spacious view in order to enjoy it better than the owners of neighboring homes. (Gauny in Rancière 2004b: 199)

With this quote, originally from an article in a French workers' newspaper (*Le Tocsin des travailleurs*) published in June 1848, we can see the point of citing these illustrations when disputing Tanke's critique. The point is that exemplifications like this help to drive home Rancière's interest in the supposition of equality in aesthetic judgements over a direct interest in the imagination. This is why Rancière states that Gauny seems (although he is not) to be commenting on Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgement* by his aesthetic gaze (Rancière 2004b: 199). Furthermore, Gauny the joiner existed in the very social position that Bourdieu stated Kant's aesthetic judgement perpetuated. Yet, there he was on his knees nailing floorboards until an aesthetic gaze that took in the beautiful created a moment of suspension of his position (both physically and socially) "severing," as Davis puts it, "the link between social status and the capacity for aesthetic experience" whilst testifying "unwittingly to the promise of egalitarian universalism in Kant's theorization of aesthetic experience" (Davis: 2010: 133). There was a suspension of consensual reality between the activity of Gauny's arms and his gaze (Rancière 2012a: 214) as a "heterotopia" between work and leisure, a "disruption" of the distributed consensus of "space" (Rancière 2010b: 20) and time, reminding us of the *betweenness* of dissensus that we discussed in Chapter 2. The point, however, is not to show that Rancière exemplifies the imagination at work. Tanke himself says that Rancière does so. Nor is it to contest Tanke's statement that within Rancière's work a "thorough reckoning with the imagination is wanting" (Tanke 2011: 150). The point is to show that when it comes to emancipatory practices of equality, the absence of an engagement with the imagination is not the lack that Tanke takes it to be. Practices of

equality, like practices of freedom, are acts that create and emancipate by becoming a way of life. As Rancière states in the conference paper that this chapter started with, aesthetico-politics achieves "freedom and equality incorporated in *living attitudes*, in a new relationship between thought and the sensory world, between the bodies and their environment" (Rancière 2003a: 8-9, my emphasis). Thus, creation within practices of equality occurs when these practices become a way of life rather than by "systematically" pursuing the imagination as Tanke states we should (Tanke 2011: 156). Tanke understands this as he states directly afterwards: "Joining with Rancière, however, it is necessary to connect this capacity [(the imagination)] to the generative effects of equality" (156), and on the next page where he states that the imagination is a "capacity whose force is created through the assumption and practice of radical equality" (157). However, a few pages later, when Tanke writes, regarding the imagination, that "[w]e need a deeply empirical account of the trans-subjective conditions that permit and/or block its activation" (160),[15] this begs the question, how would such a study take place, and more importantly, what would happen after it? Even if a police logic were to encourage that which apparently goes against it through implementing new rhythms of the school and workday etc., how would that implementation manifest? Are the findings to be implemented through a socio-pedagogy within the aim of a telos, thus feeding back into the very didactic police logic that they seek to refute? Tanke does not say what he wishes to do with the findings of such a study were it to occur. However, through well-meant systematic studies regarding the capacity of the imagination, we can hear didactic echoes of Althusser (*le maître savant*) through a suspension of equality as a practice by a telos of equality as an ideal that reminds us of May's studies of anarchism and his 'agnostic' dialectics of the institutionalisation of equality as a presupposition. Practices of equality happen now, and such studies are not practices but didactic deferrals of equality and a well-intended refusal to accept Rancière's statement that, to repeat a quote from *Disagreement* cited in Chapter 2: "Equality turns into the opposite the moment it aspires to a place in the social or state organization" (Rancière 1999: 34). Therefore, we can agree with Tanke when he states that the imagination is a capacity whose force is created through the assumption and practice of radical equality. However, when he calls for a 'deeply empirical' study, the disagreement is that it is to individual practices of a presupposition of equality that we must focus on as a means of emancipation, not to direct studies of how the encounters that activate the capacity of the imagination are preempted. "Emancipation," as Rancière writes in the aforementioned essay 'Work, Identity, Subject', is "the always singular act by which an

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[15] Tanke continues further down on the same page: "We must study the specific distributions of space-time that preempt the encounters required for activating this capacity of the imagination, everything from the rhythms of the school and work day, to the compositions of neighborhoods and cities, and the circuits of artistic display" (Tanke 2011: 160).

individual declared him-or herself capable, and declared any other capable, of exercising a capacity belonging to all" (Rancière 2012a: 211). Emancipation via a presupposition of equality is, as Rancière writes in *Le Philosophe plébéien*, an "*auto-émancipation*" (Rancière 2017b: 114). For Rancière, it is by the demonstration of the existence of equality by acts of auto-emancipation or communal acts of dissensus, rather than the demonstration of the existence of inequality (by Tanke's study suggestion, for example), that we should turn to.[16]

Autodidactism and practices of a presupposition of equality do not happen through didactic studies aimed at activating imagination. They happen via an aesthetic revolution and emancipatory acts of a creative ontology within individual explorations of new fictions. This is exactly what Rancière aims to illustrate with his archival work on artisans such as Gauny. In the essay 'The Paradoxes of Political Art', Rancière writes of the aesthetic regime's reframing of fiction as: "a way of changing existing modes of sensory presentations and forms of enunciation; of varying frames, scales and rhythms; and of building new relationships between reality and appearance, the individual and the collective" (Rancière 2010a: 141). An aesthetic revolution aims to emancipate us from the fiction of a consensual society, its spatiotemporal inequalities, and attempts to fool us that it is the real: "Consensus means precisely that the sensory is given as univocal" (149). This is why, as mentioned in the last chapter, Rancière does not create neologistic *terms*[17] but, in a shift from homonymy to antinomy, polemically creates bi-univocal *definitions* of the very terms–politics, police, disagreement (*mésentente*), and democracy–that a police logic univocally hijacks in its fiction that it cites as social reality, the real. To undo and to re-articulate the consensus of the real, the *sans-part* can create practices of aesthetic fictions within a polemic bi-univocality that denies the quotidian any validity as *the* real (149). Through practices of equality as a way of life, individuals may find their own emancipatory path whilst understanding that socio-reality itself exists in inequality. As Rancière puts it: "No matter how many individuals become emancipated, society can never be emancipated" (Rancière 2007: 84). Rancière goes on to say:

> [A] choice must be made between being equal in an unequal society and being unequal in an 'equal' society, a society which transforms equality into its opposite. A community of equals is an insubstantial community of individuals engaged in the

[16] As Rancière states in his *On the Shores of Politics*: "[T]he fact that the science of social criticism is perpetually rediscovering inequality is to my mind precisely what makes it worth taking another look at the practices which set out to do just the opposite" (Rancière 2007: 45).

[17] The exception being 'dissensus'.

ongoing creation of equality. Anything else paraded under this banner is either a trick, a school or a military unit. (Rancière 2007: 84).

Whilst certain socio-inequalities, such as those fought against by the civil rights movement for example, can be ameliorated (they never *fully* go away) by being made illegal, socio-inequality still exists and will always exist within the polemic between the police and the politics of the *demos*, regardless of improvements in government. This is why Rancière's redefinition of emancipation does not offer utopias but, as he tells us in an interview titled 'Is History a Form of Fiction?', heterotopias, communities, other worlds within the consensual world (Rancière 2004a 41). Rancière's own definition of politics untangles emancipation from a dialectic of the end of history. In doing so, his redefinition of emancipation is open-ended rather than being the utopianism that some commentators such as Paul Patton (2012) cite it as by echoing the diatribe against emancipatory thinkers not offering a new formulation of an equal society.

Patton characterises Rancière's work, as well as Foucault's, Derrida's, and Deleuze's and Guattari's, as a post-structuralist utopianism: "Post-structuralist political philosophy presents a variety of more or less unrealistic utopianisms [. . .]" (Patton 2012: 134). This is because, he tells us, that the work of these thinkers' does "not consist in elaborating a conception of what a just and democratic society could be like 'under reasonably favourable but still possible historical conditions', thereby providing a standard against which existing democracies can be measured" (134). However, the absence of a template of a just and democratic society in Rancière's work does not make it an offering of utopianism but of autodidactism because practices of equality are to be lived as individual's practices rather than seen as ideals for society to reach by elaborated conceptions. These practices consist of living differently to the way a consensual ontology dictates in ways of thinking, being, and perceiving. This is what Rancière's understanding of an aesthetic revolution pertains to: "transformative effects that redefine lived worlds" (Rancière 2016a: 56). As Rancière informs us, Jacotot's corollary to a presupposition of an inequality of intelligence asserts: "[I]t is individuals alone who can emancipate themselves, as society as such maintains itself solely through multiple bonds created by the inegalitarian presupposition" (Rancière 2012a: 211). Therefore, Rancière encourages autodidactism and individual creative acts rather than giving didactic elaborations, as this would mimic the very police logic that creates these multiple bonds and would place practices, be they of equality or freedom, within the *atopos* of ideals and the inequality of hierarchy.

The police will always be the opposite of the politics of the *demos*, but we can still engage in practices of equality and live an ongoing emancipation as individuals and communities by doing so. Thus, whilst things can improve–there are better and worse police orders–an inequality will remain between politics and police: there is no resolution to this, be it through social revolution or through the conceptions of a just democratic society to which Patton refers above. Rancière's redefinition of emancipation seeks to escape the element of romanticism of ideal representations within metanarratives of emancipation as a telos of progress and an end of history. It does so, by placing an emphasis on the reality of everyday lives or rather, the 'common lives' of cenobites[18] as an auto-emancipation of individuals within a way of life enacted by practices of equality, acts of creativity, and possible austerity measures incorporated in a cenobite economy (see Gauny's cenobite economy in section 3 of Chapter 8). It is a day-to-day life polemically lived against the assertion of consensual reality as the only reality and against the deferral of equality by promissory ends as the only emancipatory answer to that reality. Therefore, a self-emancipatory life is not led by a telos and a didactic, social revolutionary understanding but by a 'finding', a 'discovering' of an emancipatory way of life through a heuristic process which is autotelic, autodidactic, and auto-emancipatory, but not hermetic, as it is a both a common life (as a cenobite) and a 'life-in-common' in a connection to the heterotopia, 'other place', of dissensus, of communities.[19] It is this kind of life that is illustrated in Rancière's archival work where nineteenth-century artisans' writings stand for themselves without the imposition of theory. This allows the authors to be seen as *real beings* of flesh and blood seeking another life whilst existing outside of political philosophy and its descriptive ontologies.

To summarise this section, to exist in social reality is to exist in inequality. However, within a social reality of inequality, we can still possess ourselves within a self-tutelage and explore, as quoted in Chapter 1, "the possibilities for reconfiguring a field of possibilities" (Rancière 2016a: 64) within practices of equality that exercise a capacity belonging to all. Therefore, the studies of the imagination and the studies of anarchism that Tanke and May respectively suggest, seem to bypass what practices of equality are, or misappropriate them in a need for a non-achievable resolution rather than the open-ended form of emancipation that Rancière

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[18] The word cenobite, which this thesis uses to refer to Gauny's 'cenobite economy', stems from the Greek word *Koinobion* meaning convent which in turn stems from *koinis* (common) and *bíos* (life).

[19] The words 'finding' and 'discovering' are used above because 'heuristic' is a paronym of the Greek *heuriskein* 'to find', 'to discover'. *Heuriskein* is more commonly known in the first-person singular conjugation 'eureka' (*heurēka*), as purportedly exclaimed by Archimedes. The eureka moment arrived for Archimedes with the displacement of water. For an emancipatory way of life, *heuriskein* arrives with the displacement of a consensual way of existing, thinking, and perceiving.

offers. Traditionally, political philosophy has been classified as either descriptive or prescriptive. As Rancière's oeuvre is not the prior, academics such as Žižek, Patton, Tanke, May, et al. seem to rally against his work (in varying degrees) for not being the latter, even though Rancière is not a political philosopher.[20] However, Rancière is not prescriptive because he understands that the way to an emancipatory life is not didactic but autodidactic where individuals become self-prescriptive regarding their own emancipation. To refer again to the lines of the Rancière quote above: "It is individuals alone who can emancipate themselves, as society as such maintains itself solely through multiple bonds created by the inegalitarian presupposition" (Rancière 2012a: 211). Therefore, practices of equality are a way of life that needs to be lived outside of the Enlightenment's pedagogical ethos of progress that seems to aid both consensual reality's hegemonic deferral of equality and freedom and the many critiques on the absence of a resolution in Rancière's presupposition of equality and reformulation of emancipation. Accordingly, it seems that Rancière's stress on equality happening 'now' within his redefinition of emancipation for the autodidactic individual, is either being missed or partially dismissed by a belief in the production of a prescriptive progress, rather than the creativity of individual emancipation. As Camus wrote, however, in his aforementioned book against state revolution: "The society based on production is only productive, not creative" (Camus 2000: 216).

3.3 A Poetic Emancipation

We can recall from Chapter 2 that Žižek critiqued Rancière's dissensual democracy as being in need of the big Other that Rancière calls the police within his determinate negation, as Žižek terms it. However, as Rancière stresses in the aforementioned transcription: "There is no place outside of the police" (Rancière 2003a: 6). To think otherwise, is to leave immanent practices of equality and engage in metaphysical ideals of transcendence. As the twentieth century has shown, this engagement tends to manifest either liberal or totalitarian oligarchies within a deferral of equality and freedom as ideals. Because there is no place outside of the police, however, it does not mean that within the consensus there is an equal society waiting to be born. As Rancière tells us in his *Hatred of Democracy*: "[E]galitarian society is only ever the set of egalitarian relations that are traced here and now through singular and precarious acts" (Rancière: 2009d: 96-7). In other words, even though there is no place outside of the police, "there are conflicting ways of doing things with the 'places' that it [(the

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[20] If he was, it would be under his bi-univocal definition of politics as dissensus, making him a philosopher of dissensus. As such, it would be quite ironic to classify a thinker who thinks against taxonomy.

police)] allocates: of relocating, reshaping or redoubling them" (Rancière 2003a: 6). This way of doing things occurs with the space of "disconnected places" (7).

We have discussed how dissensus creates a space of equality, a space that allows democratic existents to ontologically unfold practices of equality and freedom. However, the citation of the word *space* is not only the use of poetic license to frame dissensus within the symbolic; the space created by dissensus is also tangible. It is, as Rancière informs us, "a new form of (dis)connection between the material and the symbolical" (Rancière 2003a: 7). It is, therefore, the space of disconnected places that lies against the consensual connections of police logic that form socio-reality. It is, as stated above, the *betweenness*, the space between the arm and the gaze of Gauny, the space between identities, between worlds, and the space between the two extremes of a consensual system of distribution and metaphysical ideals of equality and freedom. It is a space "between consensual thinking and the ethical absoluticisation of the wrong" (16).

Rancière gives the example of disconnection in *The Nights of Labor*. We can recall that this text highlights archival examples of how certain individuals from the *poor*, to use Rancière's collective term and ironic mimicry of the fictional names of objectification of the *sans-part*, took the time to disconnect from a consensual narrative of the binary of work and rest: "time wrested from the night and from sleep for the purpose of individual transformation and collective *oeuvre*" (Rancière 2012a: 210). These individuals did so by becoming autodidacts during the evening hours of rest by writing prose and poetry in that which Rancière terms, in the conference paper transcription that we are using, "a 'paper' life'" (Rancière 2003a: 13).[21] Whilst Rancière uses the term "poetics" (14) as a means to distance himself from the descriptive ontology of political philosophy, dissensus, as this thesis stresses, is a creative ontology within its manifestation of democratic existents and an open space for those existents to further create. As Rancière states, writing about himself in the third person: "An ontological treatise thus means for him an attempt to construct a common space for those constructions, a form of intelligibility of their play" (Rancière 2009a: 119). Through the disconnection from the imposition of a consensual space and time, there is a connection to the self by possessing ourselves via the term offered in Chapter 1: a 'self-tutelage'–an authority over and an instruction of the self. To help possess ourselves, we can take some of the time that work takes from us, just as the workers in *The Nights of Labor* did such as

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[21] To write can mean to create new existences and new worlds. As Rancière writes in his essay 'The Politics of Literature': "The politics of literature thus means that literature as literature is involved in this distribution of the visible and the sayable, in this intertwining of being, doing and saying that frames a polemical common world" (Rancière 2010a: 152).

Gauny with his 'cenobitic economy'. Through a self-tutelage, through a poetics and the theatre of dissensus where we build a political "stage" (Rancière 2003a: 11) for a scene of dissensus within a consensual system, there is the creativity of a world of democracy. This world goes against a consensual world where democracy is merely a euphemism for an "oligarchic law" (Rancière 2009d: 73) which attempts to hide behind a procedural democracy of universal suffrage and chimerical notions of the individual, liberalism, and freedom, a world where politics (in the generic sense of the word which Rancière would define as the police) is a semantic aegis to legislate behind through a distribution of people and places within a consensual system of ubiquitous demarcations of space and time. What Rancière means when he writes of an "oligarchic law" of government in his *Hatred of Democracy* is that "elections essentially ensure that the same dominant personnel is reproduced, albeit under interchangeable labels" (Rancière 2009d: 73). [22] A world of dissensual creation, however, is a world where people can become a poet, or as Rancière says of Gauny, an artisan of a new identity, a new individuality. [23]

Søren Kierkegaard once asked, in a different context, what is a poet (Kierkegaard 1987 [1843])? As a creative ontology is cited by Rancière as a poetics, we can also ask *what* rather than *who* a poet is. However, we find a different answer to Kierkegaard's. [24] A poet, in a world of dissensus, is the democrat, the political existent, a part of the *demos* that becomes a nonidentity through the dissensual suspension of the ways of thinking, being, and perceiving imposed by a police logic and an imperious ontology. However, through self-tutelage, by adopting a presupposition of equality and autodidactism as a way of life, the poet becomes a *who* rather than a *what* by possessing and reshaping themselves and the places in which they live as an emancipated spectator rather than a spectator existing as part of the spectacle of consensual reality and identities:

> Art lives so long as it expresses a thought unclear to itself in a matter that resists it. It lives inasmuch as it is something else than art, namely a belief and a way of life. (Rancière: 2010a: 123)

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[22] As Alain Badiou puts it in his call for "a reinvented communism": "Elections are but a façade for preserving the dominant order" (Badiou 2017: no pagination). Patton gives a more in-depth explanation of oligarchic law: "By this, Rancière means government by professional politicians who are repeatedly elected to the same or different public positions, who attended the same schools as their opponents from competing parties along with their advisors and public servants, who sometimes rotate between public roles and positions in private companies, but who invariably serve, in legitimate or illegitimate ways, the interests of wealth" (Patton 2012: 140-1).

[23] "*devient l'artisan de sa nouvelle individualité*" (Rancière 2017a: 24).

Plato wished to exclude poetry from his ideal republic (Plato 2003: 607b). In the same prohibitory partition that excluded artisans from the political stage because they had no time outside of work to attend to democracy by participating in the governance of the city, Plato wished to exclude poets from the theatrical stage as they might assume characters that they should not (Rancière 2004c: 26). This is something that we return to from a different angle in chapters 4 and 8 through Gauny, who was both a worker-poet (*poète-ouvrier*) of dissensus and a published poet who sought to assume other identities until he reached that which he named his transformation: "I have notes, subjects and plans for more than one other existence [. . .] up to the day of my transformation".[25] As Gauny was eighty-one years old when he wrote these words in a letter to his friend Amélie Ragon in 1886, he was being literal with the words *existence* and *transformation* as the latter word referred to his death.[26] However, we can think of transformation as the death of socio-imposed identities that then allows us to live another life through the democratic politics and art that enable us to create other existences, as Gauny did in his younger years. If we look at Plato's binary prohibition of democratic politics and art (the political and theatrical stages), we can see how politics and aesthetics are intrinsically connected (Rancière 2009c: 26), as Plato understood all too well. Within his anti-theatrocracy of the people in his *Republic*, Plato excluded "democracy and theatre" so that he might create a community of ethics rather than politics (26) as a means to adhere to the 'noble lie' of social stratification and thus to exclude the *demos* from existing in a political space and time. Through the hegemony of a 'work' ethic there is a "relegation," as Rancière states in an interview aptly titled 'On Work and Art', "of the worker to the private space-time of his occupation" (Rancière 2004a: 42). Gauny sought to emancipate himself from this relegation by his way of life as a poet and as an aesthetic revolutionary within his own creative ontology. Rancière refers to Gauny's correspondence and diary entries as a means to explore an aesthetic revolution as a way of life, as he believes that any new form of emancipation must be an aesthetico-political one through the dynamic of the individual and communities, not the 'masses' of a social revolution.

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[24] "What is a poet? An unhappy person who conceals profound anguish in his heart but whose lips are so formed that as sighs and cries pass over them they sound like beautiful music" (Kierkegaard 1987: 19).

[25] "*J'ai des notes, des subjects et des plans plus d'une autre existence* [. . .] *jusqu'au jour de ma transformation*" (Gauny in Rancière 2017a: 22, Rancière's emphasis).

[26] Rancière informs us in *Le Philosophe plébéien* that in France at the time when Gauny was living, the idea of transformation through a palingenesis of the soul was a popular one and that the French theosopher and writer, Pierre-Simon Ballanche, had a huge effect on Gauny and many others with his 1828 publication of '*Essais de palingénésie sociale*' which, as the title suggests, also wrote of social transformation (Rancière 2017b: 117).

Rancière describes an aesthetic revolution as a poetics, a new art of living, and a new form of life-in-common where we are led to ask what it might mean to *live* practices of equality as a way of life and as an aesthetic revolution. This is the point to be addressed, not the systemisation of imagination for the simulation named the masses, nor in fact the systemisation of anything (we are not Hegelian), but the actuality of practices of equality and freedom as a way of life for individuals of flesh, blood, and bone in the creation of another existence, another life–*une vie autre*. We turn to this art of creating another existence in Part 3 with a synergy of Rancière's practices of equality and Foucault's practices of freedom, exemplified through the life of Gauny as an aesthetic revolution. To prepare the way for this exemplification, the next chapter gives some background information on both Rancière's archival work and Gauny's life and times.

Chapter 4 - Archives, Revenants, and Aesthetics: The Milieu of the Life of Louis-Gabriel Gauny

In this last chapter of Part 1, we turn to the background of the life of Gauny, the protagonist of Rancière's archival work, through Rancière's *The Nights of Labor* and Gauny's *Le Philosophe plébéien* (edited by Rancière). We do so, to help clarify how Gauny's emancipatory life differs from other forms of emancipation and thus to head off any mistaken readings. Therefore, this chapter prepares the way for Part 3, which engages in a search of another way to live as a means to express an answer to the question 'What does it mean to live practices of equality and freedom as a way of life'? This expresser offers a partial foundation for the synergy of practices of equality and freedom in Part 3 that examines the life of Gauny the artisan-poet as lived through these practices within *une vie autre*.

In this chapter, we initially turn to the background of Rancière's archival research and the academic milieu from which it manifested as an alternative to and refusal of the didacticism of Marxists such as Althusser and the didacticism of the human rights ethic of the ex-*gauchistes* known as the *Nouveaux philosophes*. We then turn to Rancière's understanding of an aesthetic revolution as pertaining to an equality of social space and time rather than a material isonomy of well-being. To help us understand the ordeals that workers faced within the milieu in which Gauny the joiner worked and dreamt and Gauny the poet wrote, Rancière gives an 'Outline Chronology' at the end of his *The Nights of Labor*. This chronology highlights important dates in French, nineteenth-century, political and social history and the various lives that make up the key archival characters in *The Nights of Labor*. Thus, to aid an understanding of Gauny's ordeals, the next and final section of this chapter, even though it might be familiar territory to some, turns to a very brief outline of the economic, political, and social *mise en scène* of nineteenth-century France, as well as some of the early socialist movements of this era.[1]

4.1 Archives and Revenants

In his archival work, Rancière brings workers back to life who were not heard by history as individuals but were made mute under their objectification as the benighted 'poor' by the theories of so-called emancipatory thinkers who constructed their own history: a history of the masses. Rather than 'simulating' these individuals as part of the 'poor' by deploying the tools of

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[1] For a chronology of Gauny's life (written by Rancière), turn towards the end of *Le Philosophe plébéien* (267-9).

the political philosophy that he critiques in *The Philosopher and his Poor*, Rancière allows the voice of those not heard in life or history to be heard by their poetry, letters, worker newspaper articles, and journals.[2] However, this is not in order to show an abstract 'real' worker, so to speak, but to allow individuals to speak as individuals and not as a worker or a proletariat but as a *poiētēs* (poet) of the *sans-part* engaged in creating fictions and new worlds.[3] Thus, as Jason Frank puts it, Rancière does not merely allow the words of these workers "to speak for themselves as source documents" but also "writes in a way that dramatises the poetics of the historian's craft" as a form of "experimental historiography" (Frank 2015: 256). As Kristin Ross, the English translator of Rancière's *Le Maître ignorant* writes in her essay 'Rancière and the Practice of Equality' (1991b), the standard form of history is "the slow accumulation of data with which the historian fills an empty, homogeneous time" that bears "a distinct resemblance to the gradual, step-by-step acquisition of understanding through explication that Jacotot's method so dramatically explodes" (Ross 1991b: 68). *Les Révoltes logiques*, however, Ross informs us, stated an interest in a different understanding of history:

> An episode from the past interests us only in as much as it becomes an episode of the present wherein our thoughts, are decided [. . .] What interests us is that ideas be events, at all times a break, a rupture, to be interrogated only from the perspective of the here and now, and only politically. (*Révoltes logiques collective* in Ross: 1991b: 68)[4]

This particular understanding sounds much like Foucault's description in his *Discipline and Punish* of genealogy as "the history of the present" (Foucault 1991: 31).[5] Rancière has cited Foucault's genealogical method as an influence and has stated the difference between his and Foucault's theoretical approach (Rancière 2000b), and we shall partially explore this in the first chapter of Part 2. For now, let us say that we can see the influence of the genealogical method and 'the history of the present' in Rancière's solo archival work where the lives of the characters of this work reflect a means for individuals to rupture contemporary, consensual reality through an aesthetic revolution. Even though contemporary readers may well be neophytes regarding

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[2] This resonates somewhat with Foucault's GIP project. Cf. The GIP Manifesto https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/manifesto-of-foucaults-groupe-d-information-sur-les-prisons-1971/3263

[3] By poet, I refer to the Greek etymological root for a definition: *poiein* meaning 'to create'/'to make'. I use this meaning regarding the creation of new worlds and new fictions by a *poiētēs*, a creator, a maker.

[4] Here, we can take 'politically' to mean a form of dissensus.

an aesthetic revolution, however, this does not mean that they become acolytes of these characters. As Tanke writes: "Poetic forms credit their audiences with possessing this ability to re-create the words of the poet or work of the artist into their own terms. In this sense, the poet's lesson is opposed to that of the stultifying master's" (Tanke 2011: 88-9). Therefore, we can re-create the poetic forms of dissensual lives into our own contemporary terms through Rancière's non-stultifying, experimental, historiography. This historiography, as Ross puts it, is an "act of storytelling" that echoes the past in the present and "posits equality" in the belief of the reader's ability to understand the narration of storytelling without the need for the positing of inequality through explication (Ross 1991b: 69). However, Rancière's archival work was a means not just to get away from a didactic history of the masses and revolutionary ideals to a narrative history of the present but also, as Frank points out, "the emerging discourse of human rights" during the 1970s "which Rancière would later theorise as the ethical turn of "postpolitics"" (Frank 2015: 254). This was a postpolitics where the door was reopened for intellectuals to resume, as Ross tells us, in her *May 68 and its Afterlives* (2002), their "traditional pre-May status" (Ross 2002: 176) *à la* Althusser, *le maître savant*. This ethical turn involved thinkers such as French philosopher and activist André Glucksmann whom Rancière critiques in a *Les Révoltes logiques* essay later published in English as 'Joan of Arc in the Gulag' (Rancière 2012b: 101-24).[6]

Gluckmann et al. became known as the *Nouveaux philosophes* with their shift towards, as Alex Callinicos puts it, the fixed idea that Marxist theory possesses "a totalitarian logic leading inevitably to the Gulag" (Callinicos 1982: 10) and that all *gauchiste* projects possess this logic, regardless of their form: "New philosophers like Glucksmann employed the figure of the solitary suffering individual over the dominated class as a way of shifting public discourse away from the politics of collective emancipation and towards the ethics of individual rights and legal protection" (Frank 2015: 254). This shift was fueled by the translation from Russian into French

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[5] It is also somewhat reminiscent of Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* that we shall engage with in the next chapter, where Foucault details a form of history not based on continuity.

[6] This essay was published in a collection of 1975 to 1985 *Les Révoltes logiques* essays by Rancière known as *The Intellectual and His People: Staging the People, Volume* 2 of which Frank writes: "At the centre of *The Intellectual and His People* is Rancière's critique of the "*nouveaux philosophes*" during the 1970s, former Maoist militants who argued that the totalising emancipatory claims of various Marxisms led directly to the gulag [. . .] The intellectual and political trajectory of such prominent and disillusioned militants as André Gluskmann, Bernard-Henri Lévy, and Alain Finkielkraut led them to reject not only Marxism but also broader efforts on the left to achieve collective emancipation from capital imperialism, whether in the form of the "third Worldism" of postcolonial radicalism or emerging claims of radical democracy" (Frank 2015: 254).

in 1974 of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* (Solzhenitsyn 1985 [1973]) which heightened the awareness, as the title suggests, of the existence of the gulags and the horrors of life in the USSR. The following year, Glucksmann's *La cuisinière et le mangeur d'hommes*: *Essai sur les rapports entre l'Etat*, le *marxisme, et les camps de concentration* (Glucksmann 1975) was published. This book, which can be translated in an abbreviated English title as *The Cook and the Cannibal* (or Man-eater), borrows terms, as Peter Dews essay 'The *Nouvelle Philosophie* and Foucault' (1979) highlights, from Foucault's account of the Panopticon in the latter's *Discipline and Punish* to express the regime of surveillance of a "rational state, which promises freedom yet brings only tyranny" (Dews 1979: 137).[7] The book involves a commentary on *Gulag Archipelago* along with a condemnation of Marxism and is the book that Rancière critiques in his 'Joan of Arc in the Gulag'. Criticisms of Marxism, however, were not particularly a new dynamic. Georges Bataille's development of base materialism in the late nineteen twenties and early thirties went against Marx's materialism and the emphasis on production in the prior's aim to save Marxism from the totalitarianism of Stalinism (Noys 1998), and Camus criticised Marx in his *The Rebel* (2000 [1951]).[8] Also, as Dews reminds us,

> although the *Nouveaux Philosophes* were among the first to openly and violently proclaim their anti-Marxism, they were preceded by a whole generation of thinkers (Baudrillard, Deleuze, Foucault and others) whose work was already a long way from being Marxist. (Dews 1979: 129)

Camus, influenced by Nietzsche, shifted from Marxist revolution to rebellion with the belief that it is only through aesthetics and creation that we can transfigure a world of "master and slave" (Camus 2000: 217). The *Nouveaux philosophes*' move away from Marxism, however, was towards a human rights ethic. This was because they believed, as Dews informs us, "that since any political ideology will eventually be used to justify crimes against humanity, the only 'safe'

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[7] However, as Dews further informs us, Foucault's much earlier *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* 1988 [1961] had more effect on the *Nouveaux Philosophes* because it lay in congruence with "their belief in the inherent oppressiveness of reason" (Dews 1979: 141). As those who have read *Madness and Civilisation* know, it addresses the hierarchical binary of reason and unreason/madness and the internment of the mad (along with other peripheral denizens: the unemployed, criminals, etc.) known as the 'Great Confinement' in seventeenth-century France.

[8] In fact, many of Camus' attacks against Marxism were echoed by the *Nouveaux philosophes* with, as Jeanyves Guérin's essay 'Albert Camus: The First of the New Philosophers' (Guérin 1980) tells us, very little recognition of Camus (Guérin 1980: 366).

form of political action is a militant defence of human rights" (Dews 1979: 129). Rancière named this a 'post politics' because it still incorporated, like the system from which it sought to save the 'suffering individual' from, a vertical relationship of hierarchy where thinkers seek to be, as Rancière writes in his 'Joan of Arc in the Gulag', "the authorized voice of those below" (Rancière 2012b: 119).[9] Within this verticality there is the highlighting of 'those below' as victims in need of the West and in need of thinkers such as the *Nouveaux philosophes* to put themselves forward, like the very Marxism that these ex-*gauchistes* went against, as an "epistemic authority" (Frank 2015: 254) that resembles "the moral mission of colonialism" (Ross 2002: 161) to rescue the third world. Through this verticality, "the colonial or third-world other of the 1960s is refigured and transformed from militant and articulate fighter and thinker to "victim" by a defence of human rights strictly identified as the rights of the victim" (167). In this shift from politics to the ethics of 'human rights', the third-world 'Other' becomes a mirror for the West to reflect itself against within a delusional and hegemonic "hypertrophy of identity" (168) as equal and free and as purportedly a 'democratic' mouthpiece for third-world victims who remain the *phōné* of the West's logos. Accordingly, the ex-*gauchistes* moved from speaking for one apparent victim, the proletariat, to another, the third-world Other, and western hegemony used human rights as a pretext for neocolonial activities, as it still does. Just as the student will never reach the level of the teacher in the pedagogical environment that Jacotot criticised, third-world nations will never reach the level of the Occident: "Never will the student catch up with the teacher; never will the "developing" nations catch up with the enlightened nations [. . .] *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* can suggest how today's democratisation of the globe–our own contemporary institutionalisation and representation of progress–is just the new name for inequality" (Ross 1991b: 68). This illustrates how, as stated above, Rancière's historiography is a history of the present reflecting contemporary issues with the mirror of the past.

Rancière does not promote the *vertical* relationship of saviour and victim within the latter's enforced mutism by the so called ethics of human rights. Instead, he offers the *horizontal* relationships of a presupposition of equality where the *sans-part* can speak for themselves and

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[9] As Badiou puts it: "Ranciere demonstrates [. . .] that the mainspring of the effervescent promotion of human rights and humanitarian interventions is a political nihilism, and that its real aim is to have done with the very idea of an emancipatory politics" (Badiou 2006: 118). Indirectly attacking Plato's philosopher king and the guardian class, Rancière states: "The very idea of a class in society whose specific role is to think is preposterous and can be conceived only because we live under a preposterous social order" (Rancière 2014: xiii).

create their own lives and worlds by, as Rancière states in his essay 'The Paradoxes of Political Art', a "re-framing of the 'real'" (Rancière 2010a: 141). Rancière writes:

> The 'aesthetics of politics' consists above all in the framing of a we, a subject a collective demonstration whose emergence is the element that disrupts the distribution of social parts, an element that I call the part of those who have no part–not the wretched, but the anonymous. The 'politics of aesthetics', as for it, frames new forms of individuality and new haecceities. It does not give a collective voice to the anonymous. Instead, it re-frames the world of common experience as the world of a shared impersonal experience. (Rancière 2010a: 141-2)[10]

Rancière is referring to the *sans-part* as the anonymous framed in the aesthetics of politics as a we and a politics of aesthetics that reframes the world of consensus to one of dissensus, as Part 3 examines. Rancière aids the new forms of individuality mentioned above that distance themselves from the victim syndrome of 'human rights', and also the *collective voice* that social theorists state they speak for,[11] with the experimental historiography of his archival work that gives us poetic revenants who had aimed in their lived existence to re-frame the real. These revenants are formed by the flesh of words contained in the archival skin of the 'paper lives' of atypical workers and the *rêve ouvrier de la vie autre* (workers' dream of another life). As Rancière tells us in the archival *Le Philosophe plébéien*, Gauny faced the quotidian in an oneiric state and thus lived in another world as a (metaphoric) somnambulist.[12] In doing so, he showed that it is to the art of reverie that those in search of the imagination could turn. Rancière, however, turns to aesthetics.

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[10] The original French edition of this essay '*Les paradoxes de l'art politique'* is published as Chapter 3 of *Le Spectateur émancipé* (2008). This is different to Chapter 3 of the English edition *The Emancipated Spectator* published in 2009, which has a different essay, 'Aesthetic Separation, Aesthetic Community'.

[11] For example, the use of the word 'wretched' in the translation above presumably refers to Frantz Fanon's collective term in the English translation of his well-known book *Les Damnés de la terre* (1961) as *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963).

4.2 Aesthetics

Perhaps, as Bataille wrote in a 1949 essay, we are all moving strangely below the sky,[13] and art, as the title of his essay states, is a cruel practice: '*L'Art, exercice de la cruauté*'. To create existences other than those offered within the seduction of consensual reality as the reality, requires the cruel practice of art through the sacrifices entailed within a cenobite economy (see Chapter 8) that funds a path of dissensus and transformation–'*la subjectivation*', as Rancière names it. The sacrifices made by the artisan-poets whom Rancière writes of, were a lack of rest and little sleep as they made up for the daytime hours lost to work by using the night hours for the creative labour of writing and autodidactism. This was a form of dissensus, as these workers broke out of the narrative imposed upon their time out of work. Furthermore, this creative labour and autodidactism gave these worker-poets a deeper understanding of their social constraints. In turn, this understanding deepened their suffering as they dreamt of an other life and other worlds. This is the cruelty of practices of art, to dream of other worlds whilst understanding, ever more deeply, the suffering of an abbreviated existence as the *sans-part* in a consensual world.[14] As Rancière writes in *The Nights of Labor*: "[T]hose other worlds, which supposedly anaesthetize the sufferings of the workers, can actually be the thing that sharpens their awareness of such sufferings" (Rancière 1989: 19). Whilst this is referring to the metaphysical world that the solace of religion offers the poor, "the opium of the people," as Marx put it (Marx 2000: 72), Rancière also refers to the immanent but not imminent worlds that the workers of his archival work dreamt of–worlds where there were not any masters or even worlds where they themselves were masters.[15] Gauny also believed, that along with the metaphysical, you should have dreams of immanent worlds "to awaken passions in your wretched existence" (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 19). Perhaps, on this path here below, we move less strangely under the sky of a consensual reality when we act through dissensus in dreams of an other world and other lives,

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[12] "*un autre monde, il a vécu en somnambule*" (Rancière 2017a: 14).

[13] "*sommes-nous, nous agitant étrangement sous le ciel* [. . .]" (Bataille 1988: 481).

[14] As the floor tiler Bergier wrote in a letter to Gauny in May of 1832, "*Qu'il est cruel, de rêver le bonheur!*" (How cruel it is to dream of happiness!) (Bergier in Gauny 2017: 200, Bergier's emphasis). Also, Rancière tells us, in a footnote to a letter by Gauny to Jules Mercier in *Le Philosophe plébéien*, that the latter, after working for the *Globe* newspaper and composing hymns for the Saint-Simonians, killed himself rather than return to a 'normal' life (Rancière in Gauny 2017: 208, foot note 2).

[15] "There was scarcely any worker among the most revolutionary ones who did not dream, at some point or another of becoming a master" (Rancière 1989: 33).

and thus enact the disruption that Bataille believes we all wait for: this disruption of the order that overwhelms us.[16]

Whilst the cruelty of the practices of art existed for the worker-poets that Rancière writes of, the very act of these practices within an aesthetic revolution gave the artisans an other life, a life of creation, albeit ensconced in an abject poverty that they wished to escape. The escape that Rancière's presupposition of equality offers is congruent with this life of creation within his reformulation of emancipation as an escape from a taxonomic ontology and the mutism of the supernumerary. This is an emancipation from being beyond the consensus number–seen but unheard (or heard only as *phōné*) and miscounted–and it is an escape from 'being' itself as it is imperiously and ontologically formulated within practices of hierarchy and a consensual distribution of space and time: a distribution of the sensible–*le partage du sensible*. However, there is no offering of economic or social parity for the 'masses' within this emancipation. Therefore, there is no spectre haunting Rancière's work. There are only revenants who come to us from the archives as the words of the dead turn into the flesh of lives.

In his archival *The Nights of Labor*, Rancière does not engage with the major thinkers that he was to later attack in his *The Philosopher and His Poor*, but with the 'poor' themselves by the archives of letters and works of French, nineteenth-century proletarians.[17] Whilst this is a significant enactment of equality in comparison to the objectivity imposed upon nineteenth-century workers by the political philosophy that Rancière has criticised, it does somewhat become, due to the absence of the interpretation of other thinkers, a hermetic enactment in its conceptual isolation. This is also the case, to a degree, with Gauny's work, as Rancière chose, as editor, what parts of Gauny's work would be in *Le Philosophe plébéien* and in what order, as well as writing introductory essays for two out of the three chapters. Thus, both of these books become part of what is, as Ross stated above, Rancière's act of storytelling. However, it is

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[16] "*ce dérangement de l'ordre où nous étouffons*" (Bataille 1988: 484). My translation lies in congruence with Rancière's understanding of how *le partage du sensible* overwhelms the *sans-part* with a consensual distribution of the very framework in which we live: space and time. There is, however, another suitably apt meaning in an English translation by Supervert 32c Inc: "this disordering of the order that suffocates us" (Supervert 2003: 5).

[17] "[I]n the 400 pages dedicated to the 'archive of the proletarian dream', not a single historical or sociological reference in labour movement studies is mentioned, nor any classical philosopher, while the writings of the carpenter Gauny or the seamstresses Désirée Véret and Jeanne Deroin are examined as carefully as the words of Plato or Aristotle would be by academics and scholars" (Deranty and Ross 2012: 11).

important to be aware that Rancière, much like Foucault, is a self-confessed storyteller.[18] As Rancière states, he wished to restage the "'worker's movement' as an aesthetic movement" (Rancière 2008: 13-4), thus shifting the focus from the didactic, socialist ideas of emancipation to the archival offering that he makes of workers who merely wanted to escape poverty and the hardships of work rather than embrace *liberté, égalité, et fraternité*.

Before using Gauny's life and work in Part 3 as a lived exemplification of a synergy of practices of freedom and equality, thus breaking the hermetic seal of a purely Rancièrean interpretation of Gauny, we shall engage with Foucault's work in Part 2 of this thesis. Before we do, however, we turn to a brief adumbration below of the turbulent, politico-economic setting of nineteenth-century France as well as an outline of two of the prominent, nineteenth-century, socialist movements of France, one of which, Gauny belonged to. In doing so, we can better understand the ordeals involved in Gauny's way of life and the horizon of his individual emancipation that, like other workers, sought to escape the horrors of industrial and political revolutions. Lastly, we address Rancière's archival findings that go against political theorists' belief in artisans taking pride in their work and seeking the very political revolution that Gauny et al. wished to detach themselves from.

4.3 The Milieu of Gauny's Life

The son of an earthenware potter and a laundress, Gauny was born in the suburbs of Paris on June the 19th, 1806 into a time of great poverty: "In 1814, 75 percent of France's citizens were peasants" (Stovall 2015: 57). This high rural population would not decline until the 1850s following the construction of railways in France in the same two decades that Rancière's *The Nights of Labor* focuses on: the 1830s and 1840s. A whole section of Gauny's *Le Philosophe plébéien* (Gauny 2017: 67-84) is devoted to his anger against these paths of iron–'*Les chemins de fer*' (railways)–where Gauny notes that an air of servitude[19] is imposed upon the workers: Through their vast organisation, the railways have refined the torments which disrupt individual liberty.[20] The businesses and work that both the network and building of these railways stimulated within the industrial revolution, doubled the population of Gauny's hometown: the

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[18] Also, let us not forget that the French word for history (*histoire*) can be translated as story, tale, narrative.

[19] "*l'air du servage*" (Gauny 2017: 67).

[20] "*Par leur vaste organisation, les chemins de fer ont raffiné les tourments qui désorganisent la liberté individuelle*" (68).

population of Paris went from half a million in 1801 to one million in 1851 (Stovall 2015: 71). With the aid of political revolutions, the economic revolution also brought about the rise of the bourgeoisie which morphed the economic disparity between nobles and peasants to capitalists and proletariat.[21]

Early nineteenth-century France was not only a poor, rural, landscape, but also a turbulent, political one following the overthrow of the *Ancien régime*. The sanguinary horror of the French Revolution (1789-1799) had only finished seven years before Gauny's birth and was then followed by the dictatorship of Napoleon Bonaparte and the Republic of France. Then came the Bourbon Restoration that Jacotot had to flee from, as mentioned above. This coincidentally occurred in the very year that Gauny began his writings running from 1830 until 1880 that are now kept in the Bibliothèque Municipal de Saint Denis. These fifty years in France were also full of political change with yet another revolution in 1848 which ousted the constitutional monarchy of the Bourbon Restoration and allowed an elected government to rule. Then came the rule of another emperor in 1852, Bonaparte's nephew Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, and a return to an elected government rule in 1870 following the Franco-Prussian war (1870-1871) and the capture of Bonaparte by the Germans. This was the beginning of modernity in France and the age in which Gauny lived, an age that he fought against in the same way that Rancière suggests fighting against the *le partage du sensible* of modernity: by fictions that oppose consensual fictions, an aesthetic-political dissensus of space and time, and autodidactism.[22]

Socialist, utopian movements started to emerge in early nineteen-century France as a reaction to the instability and uncertainty of turbulent, political and economic revolutions. Two such movements that Rancière mentions in his *The Nights of Labor* are Fourierism and Saint-Simonianism, stemming directly from the works of François Marie Charles Fourier (1772–1837) and Claude Henri de Rouvroy, comte de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), respectively. As both of these thinkers had suffered during the French revolution–"Saint-Simon was imprisoned during the Terror, and Fourier was ruined by the siege of Lyons in 1793"–they were against the idea of

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[21] The initial need for urban labour derives from the Middle Ages and was accelerated by industrialisation. This brought about a more complex society and thus the administrative 'policing' (see Neocleous 2000 and Oestreich 2008) that led to the very 'police logic' that Rancière criticises.

[22] As Gauny wrote: "*Il faut apprendre, apprendre sans fin, toujours apprendre !–Afin que l'esclave puisse, avec vérité et conviction, prouver au maître ce qu'il y a de meurtrier pour l'individu et surtout pour l'espèce humaine* [. . .]" (You

any further revolutions, especially as revolution had made the chasm between the poor and the rich even wider (Callinicos 2011: 47). In his book on Fourier, Jonathan Beecher informs us that "Fourier has commonly been seen, along with Saint-Simon and Owen,[23] as one of the utopian precursors of a socialism [. . .]" (Beecher 1986: 2). Whilst this is true, Fourierism and Saint-Simonianism were twisted socialist movements: Charles Fourier was openly anti-Semitic[24] and Saint-Simonianism was totalitarian (Iggers 1970) at worst, authoritarian (Carlisle 1987) at best. If the imperialism of western hegemony and the unfolding of twentieth-century social revolutions by communism were not warning enough of the dangers of the deferral of equality and freedom through the medium of ideals, then the nineteenth-century manifestation of the anti-democratic and anti-liberal Saint-Simonian movement and the anti-Semitism of Fourier give us further warning.[25]

Even though Fourierism had a much longer lasting success than Saint-Simonianism (1825 - 1832) and became "a relatively prominent social movement" in the 1840s and 1850s (Beecher 1986: 7), as far as we know, Gauny had no contact with Fourierism, and his rapport with Saint-Simonianism, as Rancière states, will be a strange game of adhesion at a distance.[26] Saint-Simonianism was both a socialist movement (in a call for equal opportunity) and a conservative movement (in a call for order through hierarchy) through its upholding of authoritarian views expressed by the medium of Christianity, reconfigured through an understanding based on a limitless state power (Iggers 1970: 2-3). Therefore, whilst Saint-Simon himself believed in equal opportunity, he also believed in a "natural inequality" (Crossley 2002: 111). This dynamic of natural inequality sounds somewhat like Plato's three metals in the Republic and gives us an understanding of the meaning of the Saint-Simonian slogan: "To each according to his ability, to each ability according to its works" (106). However, Saint-Simon did not directly follow Plato but

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have to learn, learn without end, always learn!–So that the slave can, with truth and conviction, prove to the master what is murderous for the individual and especially for the human species [. . .]) (Gauny 2017: 51).

[23] This refers to Robert Owen (1771-1858) the British social reformer.

[24] Fourier writes of "Liberal retrogression, or the accumulation of liberal prejudices which lead to shocking actions such as the granting of the rights of citizenship to the Jews [. . .]" (Fourier 1971: 199). See also, the 1946 essay by Edmund Silberner, 'Charles Fourier on the Jewish Question'. In *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Oct., 1946), pp. 245-266. Published by: Indiana University Press.

[25] As Emile Durkheim stated in his 1928 book on Saint-Simonianism, *Socialism and Saint-Simon* (Durkheim 2009 [1928]), whilst socialism was seen as the hope of impoverished workers, it was posited as an "ideal" rather than a practice (Durkheim 2009: 4).

[26] "[e]*t ses rapports avec le saint-simonisme seront un étrange jeu d'adhésion à distance*" (Rancière 2017a: 17).

something that appears to be borrowed from Plato's tripartite: the anatomist Marie François Xavier Bichat's classification of three types of human beings into "the brain type, those with the motor capacity and the men of sentiment" (111).[27] Saint-Simon believed "that these types corresponded to divisions in society: a) scientists; b) workers; c) artists and men of religion" (111). The Saint-Simonians were also against the "self-sufficiency of the individual" as they believed that "liberal individualism was responsible for the division of society into haves and have-nots" (121-22). Therefore, Gauny's adhesion at a distance from this movement as an outlier is highly understandable. As Gauny states in a different context: A discipline that muzzles independence is a crime against humanity because its regulations are shackles of slavery.[28] Thus, the obvious question seems to be, why did Gauny the non-proselyte have any contact with them at all? We can only surmise that he did so for the same reason as other workers. As Rancière puts it in his essay 'The Myth of the Artisan: Critical Reflections on a Category of Social History' (1983):

> The less sophisticated workers sought in Saint-Simonism a kind of mutual aid society which, for the poorest among them, would function as a welfare office, and for the others as a kind of social security system. The more enlightened workers were seeking intellectual growth, an escape from the worker's world. (Rancière 1983: 5)

This quote above nicely captures how Rancière's archival work aims to reveal that certain French, nineteenth-century workers had no real socialist inspirations of fraternity or pride in their status as artisans but just wanted to escape poverty and work.[29] The word 'myth' in the title of Rancière's essay from which the passage above is taken, refers to the myth that, unlike labourers, artisans took pleasure and pride in their work. The motif that runs through Rancière's archival studies, however, is of artisans wanting to escape work. With this motif, Rancière is not only attacking the myth of artisans taking pleasure in their work or the ideology of 'individualism' which acts as a hegemonic aegis for a bourgeois work ethic that causes competition between

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[27] This is the very same Bichat whom Foucault addresses in Chapter 8 of his *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (Foucault 2003 [1963]).

[28] "*Une discipline qui musèle l'indepéndance est un crime de lèse-humanité, car des règlements sont des carcans d'esclavage*" (Gauny 2017: 68).

[29] As Bettina Lerner puts it in an essay on Rancière: "It was the instability and precariousness of their everyday lives, rather than the belief in the redemptive promise of labor, that drew workers to the Saint-Simonian movement where some found fulfilment while many others confronted disillusionment and contradiction" (Lerner 2017: 40).

workers, but also the didacticism of social revolution and its insistence on a working-class fraternity and workers taking pride in industry. This ties into the criticism that Bataille, Camus, Baudrillard, and Rancière have all made above against Marx: whilst he did address the alienation of the sale of labour, he did not address the principle of labour itself and the alienation involved in being labour power. As Claire Blencowe points out, Hannah Arendt argued, in her *The Human Condition* (1998 [1958]), that "Marx failed to differentiate between alternative types of vita activa–between different types of active life. He confused the drudgery of labour (biological life) with the artistry of work (world building or craft) and the autonomous creativity of political action (speaking or acting in a public of autonomous actors)" (Blencowe 2012: 10).[30] Accordingly, instead of addressing the principal of labour or seeing aesthetics as a means to create new worlds as Rancière does, Marx saw aesthetics as a means of exploring how work could cease alienating workers by becoming a form of art and therefore "autotelic" (Eagleton 2004: 204). Marx treated, as Callinicos writes, "productive labour as fundamental to what human beings are" (Callinicos 2011: 74). Therefore, he promoted labour power and the mode of production through his dialectic deferral of emancipation within a historical materialism.[31] Gauny, however, reported on the harsh reality of labour rather than an ideal: "The worst of all my ills as a worker is the brutalizing nature of the work. It suffocates me" (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 54).[32] As tailor-poet Hilbey stated:

> I did not say that I was reduced to sewing children's clothes. I said that I adopted that especially because it demands less care and intelligence. Let those who want nicely

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[30] In other words, he failed to differentiate that which Arendt designates as "three fundamental human activities" that make us *animal laborans*, *homer faber*, and *zoon politikon*: "labour, work, and action" (Arendt 1998: 7).

[31] However, the irony of his promotion of industry/labour, as Claire White points out (White 2014: 9), was not lost on Marx who wrote in his 'The Bourgeoisie and the Counter-Revolution' (1994 [1848]) of how "the victory of bourgeois ownership over feudal ownership" led to the triumph "of industry over heroic idleness" (Marx 1994: no pagination).

[32] Even in his life as an artisan, free from the space and time of the consensus, where Gauny is able to create "for himself a relationship to his work that is both playful and ascetic, and make of this relationship the basis for a philosophy of emancipation" (Rancière 1989: 7), his marginal role was neither easy nor one he would have chosen had he the luxury of choice: "He is overwhelmed with indifference and unproductive matters. He is the one that the entrepreneur sacrifices to his day-laborers. Before anything else the entrepreneur readies work for them and neglects the jobber, whose lost time in no way hurts the entrepreneur. If some unproductive piece of work crops up, he imposes it on the jobber; and it is always the jobber that he satisfies last, enclosing him in the exigencies of a finished task without any concern for the hours and pains he expends on it" (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 78).

stitched and fashioned clothes make them for themselves, if they like. I, for my part, intend to brutalize myself as little as possible. (Hilbey in Rancière 1989: 54)[33]

With the advent of capitalism, however, the hegemony of a bourgeois work ethic, aided and abetted by a protestant ethic, emerged to vanquish the idea of labour as suffering and slavery. Paul Lafargue, Karl Marx's son-in-law and the co-founder, along with Jules Guesde, in 1882 of "the first French Marxist party, the Workers Party (*Parti Ouvrier Français*, or POF)" (Derfler 1998: xi), anticipated Max Weber's well known *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber 2005 [1920–1]): "Protestantism, which was the Christian religion adapted to the new industrial and commercial needs of the bourgeoisie, was less solicitous for the people's rest" (Lafargue 1907: 32). This quote comes from Lafargue's essay 'The Right to be Lazy' (1907 [1880]) where he criticised the combatants of the French 1848 Revolution and their sidestepping of the cause of poverty through a claim for the right to work that appeared to adopt the very bourgeois work ethic imposed upon workers and thus illustrated the adroitness of its coercive hegemony.[34] Whilst the 1848 revolution in France was to instigate a wave of politically orientated revolutions in various European countries in the same year, it was primarily caused by the French subsistence crises of 1846-1847 and the huge unemployment at the time that was mirrored in other European countries.[35] Therefore, the main impetus for its participants was to earn money to eat rather than a pride in work or a revolutionary zeal. However, with his call

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[33] There are critical responses to Rancière's 'The Myth of the Artisan' that state that artisans did take pride in their work and were proud of their status as artisans (Sewell, Jr., 1983, Newman 1984, Papayas 1984). However, Rancière's archival unfolding of the French workers' disdain for work, be it artisanal or not, is supported by a history of a similar view of work that goes back at least as far as ancient Greece and shows that Gauny's use of the word 'myth' is far from being far-fetched, unique, or even biased in regard to his restaging of the workers' movement as an aesthetic movement: The ancient Greeks thought that work was only fit for slaves which left the prior the time to engage with pursuits of the mind in a hierarchy of cerebral over corporeal labour; Romans such as the consul and philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero thought that artisans were "engaged in a demeaning trade; for there can be nothing well bred about the workshop" (Cicero 2003: 58); and early Christianity depicted labour as a punishment for Adam's and Eve's lack of obedience. In fact, the French word for work (*travailler*), as White informs us drawing from Lucien Febvre's '*Travail: évolution d'un mot et d'une idée*' (Febvre 1948), "entered the French vocabulary in the sixteenth century" and is "derived from the Latin tripaliare, meaning to torture with a tripalium" (White 2014: 6)–the three stakes of wood that people were tied to for torture or burning.

[34] "They proclaim as a revolutionary principle the Right to Work. Shame to the French proletariat! Only slaves would have been capable of such baseness" (Lafargue 1907:16).

84

for idleness, Lafargue was not just attacking the call for a right to work by trying "to convince the proletariat that the ethics inoculated into it is wicked" (Lafargue 1907: 29) but, as Ross puts forward, he also wanted to rupture binaries such as bourgeois and worker, leisure and work, as idleness is an activity that exists outside of these polarities (Ross in White 2014: 26). Thus, whilst indirectly congruent with Rancière and Gauny regarding their view on a capitalist work ethic, Lafargue, a stalwart Marxist, adopted a different approach towards emancipation than the dissensual polarities of Rancière or the tactics of Gauny. However, unlike the life of a double that Gauny was to adopt, Lafargue does not seem to show how someone can be idle and still feed themselves.

The Saint-Simonian movement ended in 1832 after only seven years of operation following "the successful prosecution of three of its leading figures–Prosper Enfantin, Charles Duveyrier and Michel Chevalier–on charges of offending against public morals" (Crossley 2002: 106). The twisted socialism of movements such as Saint-Simonism and Fourierism and the horrors of the political and economic turmoil of the time in which Gauny lived, seem to be reason enough for Gauny to seek a self-emancipation away from mass movements, although he did fight against this need: "When we consider the depravities of the world, a misanthropy often takes hold of our hearts, a need for solitude makes us long for desert places; but there is no one to save in the deserts" (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 99). Thus, there is a certain tension between the individual and the collective that Gauny balances in his emancipatory role, as illustrated in Part 3 where we shall continue with the emancipatory life of Gauny, but as a medium and expression of a synergy of Rancière's practices of equality and Foucault's practices of freedom. However, before doing so, we must first address Foucault's work in Part 2.

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[35] "Between March and June, the level of unemployment among Parisian workers attained 54 percent overall, surpassed 70 percent for entire sectors such as furniture-making, and reached as high as 90 percent in specific trades" (Traugott 1985: 12).

Part 2 - Foucault and Practices of Freedom

Chapter 5 - A Historico-Critical Ontology: Discursive and Non-Discursive Practices

In the beginning of 'Book II' of *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle states that virtue of character (*ēthos*) is a result of habituation (*ethos*). In other words, the practices we create, create us. In this sense, Foucault worked from a Greek philosophical understanding of practices before he turned to practices of freedom, as his archaeological and genealogical research examined how we are produced as subjects by the discursive and non-discursive practices we create. Unlike the Greeks, however, Foucault's work critically addressed how we are 'historically' constituted by practices. Therefore, he described his work, in his late essay 'What is Enlightenment?', as both a historical and critical "ontology of ourselves" (Foucault 1984a: 45). This chapter joins these adjectives in the term 'historico-critical' ontology as a descriptor of Foucault's overall project. This is a project that engages with how we are ontologically produced as subjects by normative manifestations of discursive practices of knowledge and truth and non-discursive practices of power, and how we can ontologically constitute ourselves as subjects by emancipatory practices of freedom using an ethics of the self and our own truth (*parrhesia*).

Due to the order of this project, Foucault's work is generally broken down, for elucidatory purposes, into three separate stages, seriatim: archaeology, genealogy, and ethics. This chapter does likewise, but with the understanding that these three 'stages' are not separate but one continual ontological project focussed on practices. The aim of this chapter is to illustrate how freedom functions in Foucault's work as a practice, not as an act of a free subject against the normative but as a complex interweaving of knowledge, truth, power, and the self-relation of the subject. Therefore, this chapter offers a traversal of Foucault's archaeology and genealogy that enables us to work through the key focus of Part 2 of this thesis: Foucault's offering of an ethics of the self as an emancipatory practice of freedom against normative discursive and non-discursive practices. This chapter will end with an introduction to Foucault's ethics of freedom by using a defence against Žižek's critique of these ethics as a medium.[1] This will lead us into the two remaining chapters of Part 2, both of which pertain to practices of freedom. By keeping our focus on Foucault's emancipatory practices, we not only keep ourselves on track with the

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[1] I utilise Žižek again because, as we saw in Part 1, Žižek represents the good Hegelian and therefore personifies a thinker of the very type of transcendent form of emancipation and dialectic form of history that Foucault's immanent emancipation and non-dialectic history turned away from.

horizon of a synergy of practices of equality and freedom, but also align with Rancière's oeuvre by concentrating on the self-prescriptive rather than the descriptive.[2]

5.1 Archaeology: Knowledge and Truth

Foucault begins his emancipatory project with two similarly orientated books under the auspice of his methodology of 'archaeology'. These texts aim to exemplify the discursive practices of science that emerged from discourses on madness and medicine: *The History of Madness* (2006a [1972])[3] and *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (2003a [1963]). Following these texts, Foucault published two further 'archaeological' books, on which our focus lies: *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (2002 [1966]) and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (2010a [1969]). The prior text examines the episteme as the epistemological field determining knowledge (*savoir*) which governs the knowledge formations Foucault names 'discourses', which in turn make scientific knowledge (*connaissance*) possible.[4]

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[2] Whilst it is necessary to decipher a situation of domination as Foucault has, as Rancière states regarding emancipation, we should not dwell on "why things are the way they are" but "how they could be different" (Rancière 2009e: 183).

[3] The original edition *Folie et Déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* was published in 1961. An abridged version was published in 1964 and was translated, with some additions, into English under the title of *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* in 1965. This abridged edition–"from which roughly 300 pages had been removed, together with most of the scholarly apparatus (about 800 footnotes and the bibliography)" (Khalfa 2006: xiii)–of Foucault's doctoral thesis has since been replaced by a 1972 unabridged French edition–*Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*–which apart from replacing the1961 preface, kept true to the original edition. This 1972 publication was translated and published as *The History of Madness* in 2006 and includes the original 1961 preface. As we draw from this edition, we cite it above rather than citing the initial and abridged English translation.

[4] In the French language, *savoir* and *connaissance* are two different forms of knowledge: the prior involves knowing facts, skills, or information, the latter, knowing places or people. However, Foucault's usage dictates another differentiation in meaning between the two terms: "I use the word "*savoir*" ["knowledge"] while drawing a distinction between it and the word "*connaissance*" ["knowledge"]. I see "*savoir* as a process by which the subject undergoes a modification through the very things that one knows *[connaît]* or, rather, in the course of the work that one does in order to know. It is what enables one both to modify the subject and to construct the object. *Connaissance* is the work that makes it possible to multiply the knowable objects, to manifest their intelligibility, to understand their rationality, while maintaining the fixity of the inquiring subject" (Foucault 2001b: 256). Timothy J. Armstrong liberally translates *savoir* in a paper given by Christian Jambet on Foucault (1992 [1989]), as "our ways of thinking" (Jambet 1992: 233). However, this liberalness does seem to capture the meaning of *savoir*. As Armstrong puts it in his introduction to the book in which Jambert's translated paper appears, *savoir*, within Foucault's understanding, is that which underpins how we think and acts as "the precondition" of how we formulate scientific knowledge (*connaissance*) within our relationship to the world and the discursive rules which dictate that relationship (Armstrong 1992: xi).

Whilst one definition of *savoir* for Foucault is the totality of all *connaissances*, in this text Foucault focuses, as mentioned in Chapter 3, on three empirical sciences: philology, biology, and political economy. The latter text, pertains to the theoretical mechanisms of archaeology and therefore, is an expansion on and elucidation of how the three prior texts 'attempted' to achieve an archaeological methodology of research.[5] Put succinctly, Foucault's overall aim in his archaeology was to unmask, as Fabio Vighi and Heiko Feldner put it, "reality as a contingent discursive fiction" (Vighi and Feldner 2007: 1).

Foucault's career began in the French, academic milieu of a phenomenological Marxism that emerged through the explorational amalgamation of the work of Edmund Husserl and Marx. However, unlike the French academic shift from phenomenology to the conjoining of structuralism and Marxism, Foucault moved away from Marxism whilst arguably side-stepping structuralism.[6] As Foucault tells us in his *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, through the influence of thinkers such as Gaston Bachelard and the latter's understanding of epistemological breaks as transformative (amongst other ideas),[7] Georges Canguilhelm and his idea of transformations and displacements of concepts, Michel Serres and the analysis of "[*r*]ecurrent distributions," and Martial Guéroult and the study of the "*architectonic unities* of systems," he moved away from both the Enlightenment's and Marx's view of history as teleological and continuous, to an understanding of history as contingent and discontinuous (Foucault 2010a: 4-5, Foucault's stress). Through the influence of linguistics, psychoanalysis, Nietzsche, Nietzsche influenced thinkers such as Bataille and the novelist Maurice Blanchot,[8] Foucault also moved away from phenomenology (Gane 1986: 2) and its understanding of an ahistorical human essence.[9]

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[5] As Foucault writes in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, this text was written as a means to give a "greater coherence" (Foucault 2010a: 15) to his past archaeological texts, whilst aiming "to define a method of analysis purged of all anthropologism" (16). Put another way, as Foucault states on the penultimate page: "This book was written simply to overcome certain preliminary difficulties" (210).

[6] In the foreword to *The Order of Things*, Foucault vehemently denied that he was a structuralist: "In France, certain half-witted 'commentators' persist in labelling me a 'structuralist'. I have been unable to get it into their tiny minds that I have used none of the methods, concepts, or key terms that characterise structural analysis" (Foucault 2002: xv).

[7] "While the epistemological break is undeniably significant, the mathematical basis of Bachelard's constructivism, the way he positions his thought with respect to Kant, his understanding of modern physics, especially atomic physics (*microphysique*), and his account of temporal discontinuity, may all be at least as significant, if not more so. In addition, and interwoven with many of the themes just mentioned, Bachelard's idea of a 'distributed rationality' and his description of science as 'a well ordered dispersion' both set a precedent that Foucault's archaeology was later to follow" (Webb 2013: 11).

[8] "I read Nietzsche because of Bataille and I read Bataille because of Blanchot" (Foucault 1983a: 352).

As *The Archaeology of Knowledge* tells us, both the idea of a historical essence to the human form and a continuous history go hand in hand and thus perpetuate each other.[10] For Foucault, however, human existents have no transcendental consciousness in the form of an ahistorical essence. According to Foucault, in his early European but mostly French based historical studies, humans are historically constituted through an episteme and its 'discursive practices': "a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period" (Foucault 2010a: 117). These rules unconsciously dictate human beliefs, language, economics, history, and therefore, social reality, and thus, define how we see the world within a given historical period (210): an "episteme may be suspected of being a world-view [. . .] a certain structure of thought that the men of a particular period cannot escape" (191). Therefore, Foucault describes the positivity of discourses in *The Order of Things* as the 'historical *a priori*', a term, as Beatrice Han informs us, first coined by Husserl in his 1936 essay *The Origin of Geometry* (Han 2002: 4).[11] However, Foucault gives a different meaning to this Husserlian term which is generally understood to be transhistorical:

> This *a priori* is what, in a given period, delimits in the totality of experience a field of knowledge, defines the mode of being of the objects that appear in that field, provides man's everyday perception with theoretical powers, and defines the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about things that is recognised to be true. (Foucault 2002: 172)

In comparison to the standard understanding of *a priori*, the term historical *a priori*, first prominently used by Foucault in his *The Birth of the Clinic*,[12] reads like an oxymoron, causing us

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[9] As Foucault puts it in his *The Order of Things*: "If there is one approach that I do reject, however, it is that (one might call it, broadly speaking, the phenomenological approach) which gives absolute priority to the observing subject, which attributes a constituent role to an act, which places its own point of view at the origin of all historicity–which, in short, leads to a transcendental consciousness" (Foucault 2002: xv).

[10] "Making historical analysis the discourse of the continuous and making human consciousness the original subject of all historical development and all action are two sides of the same system of thought" (Foucault 2010a: 12).

[11] The original German text from 1936 bore no title until a transcription was published in 1939 by Eugene Fink under the title of '*Die Frage nach dem Ursprug der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem*' (Leavey 1989: 25, Note 1). For an in-depth critique of Husserl's essay, see the book from which I quote Leavey: Jacque Derrida's *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction* (1989 [1962]]. This text also has an English translation of Hursserl's essay in the Appendix.

[12] Marc Djaballah states that the concept of the historical *a priori* first appeared in Foucault's published writings in his 1957 essay '*La recherche scientifique et la psychologie*' (Djaballah 2008: 241).

to ask, how can an *a priori* be anything but ahistorical? According to Foucault, in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, because subjects are born into a society of pre-existing, discursive practices "governed by rules that are not at all given to their consciousness" (Foucault 2010a: 211) and can thus be known outside of experience, the rules are *a priori*. As David Webb states, discursive practices "elude experience because of their role in constructing that experience" (Webb 2013: 113). In other words, the *a priori* is not empirical but ontological within its positivity. Thus, it "cannot be abstracted" from the very experience that it constructs (112).[13] Therefore, unlike Husserl's definition of the historical *a priori* as a "transhistoricality" (Han 2002: 4), and for that matter, Kant's understanding of the *a priori* as transcendental (the *a priori* intuitions: space, time, and cause and effect), Foucault's *a priori* is not ahistorical but historical because discourses change throughout history:[14] "this *a priori* does not elude historicity: it does not constitute, above events, and in an unmoving heaven, an atemporal structure; it is defined as a group of rules that characterise a discursive practice" (Foucault 2010a: 127). By being enmeshed in the practices that its rules characterise, the historical *a priori* is not transcendental but immanent as it "is itself a transformable group" (127).[15]

The transformable group of rules that Foucault names the historical *a priori* allows certain 'statements' to be made and others not to be by providing "a condition of reality for statements" (Foucault 2010a: 127). 'Statements', in Foucault's archaeological terminology, are what are said in a given episteme by certain people as opposed to what epistemically cannot be said in accordance with the rules followed by the coexisting discursive practices.[16] A group of

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[13] As Andreea Smaranda Aldea and Amy Allen put it: "Foucault uses the term historical a priori to refer to the fact that the conditions of possibility for thought are both necessary for us—in the sense that we can't think without or outside of them—and also historically contingent—in the sense that they have been otherwise, and could be again" (Aldea and Allen 2016: 6).

[14] As Djaballah puts it: "Kant's critical method aims to establish the conditions of *possible* experience, Foucault's historical analysis aims to restrict its scope to the conditions of *real* experience" (Djaballah 2008: 213, Djaballah stress).

[15] For a detailed discussion of Foucault's historical *a priori*, see Chapter 2 of Beatrice Han's *Foucault's Critical Project: Between the Transcendental and the Historical* (Han 2002) quoted from above.

[16] As Foucault put it in his first lecture at the Collège de France in 1970: "We know perfectly well that we are not free to say just anything, that we cannot simply speak of anything, when we like or where we like; not just anyone, finally, may speak of just anything" (Foucault 1971: 216). May gives the example of a spectator "getting up in a courtroom to declare an accused person either innocent or guilty." "Such a gesture," May writes, "would not be recognized. (In fact, the person would probably be thought mad.)" (May 2006: 38). As such, statements not only represent what can and cannot be said, but also who can say what and who cannot.

'statements' creates separate discourses (117) which constitute us as social subjects within an immanent and non-dialectic history "of discontinuity (threshold, rupture, break, mutation, transformation)" (21). Foucault writes: "We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation [. . .] it is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined" (131), where the sum of all these conditions make up an episteme. With this archaeological methodology, Foucault, like Nietzsche before him, rejected an Eleatic ontology and the stasis of Being as an essence, which places us as fixed entities within a descriptive and thus imperious ontology through its taxonomy. Instead, he turned to an understanding of historically constituted subjects where human existents are not essences but forms. The Nietzsche inspired Spanish philosopher José Ortega Y Gassett indirectly captured Foucault's understanding when he wrote: "*Man, in a word, has no nature; what he has is . . . history*" (Ortega Y Gassett 1941: 217, Ortega Y Gassett's stress and ellipsis).

Through Foucault's archaeological lens, it is the discursive practices of knowledge that constitute subjects with the aid of scientific discourses acting as a mode of objectification: discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 2010a: 49). As Foucault writes in *The Order of Things*: "It seems to me that the historical analysis of scientific discourse should, in the last resort, be subject, not to a theory of the knowing subject, but rather to a theory of discursive practice" (Foucault 2002: xv). Therefore, Foucault was not exploring scientific disciplines but discourses and positivities of knowledge via discursive practices (Foucault 2010a: 178).

According to Foucault, along with many other thinkers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, humans have no essence. For Foucault, a belief in a human essence lays the ground for a hegemonic justification for a normative society, which roughly equates to what Rancière calls a consensual reality of distribution but with a focus on exclusion rather than trangression.[17] In the normative societies in which we live, according to Foucault, anyone who does not fit the normative is pushed to the periphery and they become, if we use Rancière's adoption of

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[17] "The idea of the distribution of the sensible is no doubt my own way of translating and appropriating for my own account the genealogical thought of Foucault–his way of systemising how things can be visible, utterable, and capable of being thought" (Rancière 2000a: 13). However, as Rancière continues, "where Foucault thinks in terms of limits, closure and exclusion, I think in terms of internal division and transgression [. . .] Here we are in a polemical arena rather than an archaeological one" (13).

Aristotle's terms, the *phōné* of the normative's logos. This is why in his 1970 inaugural lecture at the Collège de France ('The Order of Discourse'), Foucault names the binary of normative and non-normative, "logophilia," as one side of the binary is the logos that possesses "the sovereignty of the signifier," signifying the Other as non-normative and being signified by that Other as normative in a play of mirrors where the logos exists through a "will to truth" (Foucault 1970: 66). This truth goes hand in hand with the 'truth'-seeking of knowledge. It is this 'will to truth' and this 'will to knowledge' (terms adopted by Foucault from Nietzsche) that adhere to ideas of a human essence which in turn creates normative hierarchies amidst an exclusionary knowledge and truth which regulates discourse.[18] This regulatory truth is a regime of truth, as Foucault would later call it, a production of truth that appoints "the set of processes and institutions by which individuals are bound, determined, or forced to submit" (Foucault 2014a: 94). Therefore, this regime creates individuated regimes of truth which all aid the taxonomy of making the human subject an "object of knowledge (*savoir*)" (101): a "regime of madness" explored in *The History of Madness*; and a "regime of delinquency" and "regime of sexuality" (101) which Foucault's later work explores in *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality vol 1*, respectively. Just as Rancière focusses on the archived writings of unheard, proletarian, individuals who are normally ignored in favour of the history of the masses, Foucault's archaeology focusses on those who were normally ignored through being silenced by the normative and in doing so, it engages with the unexamined area of discursive practices and what made them acceptable in particular historical times and places through a "regime of practices" (Foucault 1981: 276). Like Rancière, Foucault was trying to rewrite a consensual/normative history and, like Nietzsche before him, was fighting against modernity and the history written in its favour. "The task," as Michael Mahon states in regard to Foucault's genealogy that we discuss below but can equally apply to his archaeology, "is to provide a counter-memory [. . .] to dredge up forgotten documents, minor statements, apparently insignificant details, in order to recreate the forgotten historical and practical conditions of our present existence" (Mahon 1992: 9). We could also count Gauny in this number, as he too wrote

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[18] This is why Foucault stated in the preface to the original publication of his *The History of Madness*, reprinted in the unabridged edition that we draw from, that his book was not a book on the history of the "language of psychiatry" but on the archaeology of the silence of the mad caused by a discourse on madness and the exclusion of the mad through a "monologue by reason" (Foucault 2006a: xxviii). This does not mean that Foucault was carrying out an ironic attempt to give a voice to the mad through the use of the 'reason' of his archaeological methodology, as Derrida stated (Derrida 2002 [1967]), thus continuing the monologue of reason. What it does mean, was that he was trying to illustrate how a normative discourse operated in excluding and thus silencing the mad. The reply to Derrida's critique, 'Reply to Derrida', can be found in the appendices of *The History of Madness* (Foucault 2006a: 575 – 590).

against modernity and the expansion of the industrial revolution by the building of railways and prisons where the work of the proletariat was a prison in itself, as detailed in Chapter 8 of this thesis. However, Gauny was writing *of* his time *through* his time rather than through the reflection of the past via a counter-history *à la* Foucault or Rancière. Just as Rancière clearly states his aim of offering a "counter-history of 'artistic modernity'" (Rancière 2013: xiii) in his *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art* (2013 [2011]), Foucault states likewise in an interview named 'Truth is in the Future':

> What I am trying to do is provoke an interference between our reality and the knowledge of past history. If I succeed, this will have the real effects in our present history. My hope is my books become true after they have been written–not before. (Foucault 1980b: 301)

Foucault's historico-critical ontology aimed to offer ways to reconfigure truth and thus move away from the normative constraints of a subject and knowledge within a regime of truth. This is another reason why Foucault favours a view of a discontinuous history of ruptures because it disrupts the normative view that we exist in a teleological history of progress towards truth (Foucault 2014a: 12), be it through the pedagogy of the Enlightenment and its belief in progress, Marx's historical materialism culminating in a communist state, oligarchic hegemony hidden beneath the facade of democracy and the meta-narrative of freedom, or otherwise. As May puts it in his *The Philosophy of Foucault*: "Introducing discontinuities into history [. . .] stymies the attempt to see each historical period as a further development or refinement of the previous one" (May 2006: 29). Foucault's understanding of history fights against a telos-bound view that justifies the maladies of the contemporary with a deferral of freedom, a freedom to come: we are not free now but one day will be through the progressive steps of history, etc. This is why, like Rancière's presupposition of a radical equality, Foucault's offers freedom as a practice, not as an ideal, as practices are not deferred but happen now as a way of life, just as discursive practices of gender roles, etc., exemplify 'ways' of life. To counter discursive 'practices', we need alternative 'practices' not metaphysical ideals, as ideals of freedom perpetuate rather than escape discursive practices in their congruence with a belief in a human essence that needs to be given freedom and is beyond critique as it is seen as the 'way we are' within our so-called human nature and behaviour. As May states: "[T]here are diverse individuals acting in accordance with the roles allotted them [. . .] People are classified and through their behavior if not their beliefs, accept their classifications" (May 2007: 31).

According to Foucault, the exclusionary acts of a normative are aided in the silencing of the Other by the mode of objectification of the "dividing practices" of taxonomies: "the mad and the sane, the sick and the healthy, the criminal and the "good boys"" (Foucault 1982a: 326), and so on. Thus, the unreasonable, those who do not fit into the normative, are excluded by their peripheral inclusion within a normative society as the unreason against reason, the madness against the purported sanity of the normative. As Foucault writes in *The History of Madness*:

> From the depths of the Middle Ages, a man was mad if his speech could not be said to form part of the common discourse of men. His words were considered nul [sic] and void, without truth or significance, worthless as evidence, inadmissible in the authentication of acts or contracts [. . .]. (Foucault 2006a: 217)

The History of Madness is a history of partition: "it is the history of the gesture of *partage*, division, separation" (Khalfa 2006: xv). Or, as Colin Gordon's synonymic phrasing states, it is "a history of the other, the forms of its delineation as other, of its exclusion, its expulsion and/or closure into dedicated spaces of otherness" (Gordon 2013: 89). Foucault's archaeology aims to show how a discourse, such as the one on madness, occurs and in turn creates the conditions of possibility for a taxonomic and objectifying scientific knowledge that aids the manifestation of a normative society and its partitions. As Foucault's initial major publication, *The History of Madness* sets the scene for all his work as a historico-critical ontology of how subjects are formed by a normative society of taxonomic exclusion, aided by the literal partition of asylum or prison walls and the abstract walls in society that peripheralise the non-normative Other in a cartography of socially stratified space within imaginary but very real borders that map out these partitions. As Rancière would put it, it is a distribution of the sensible. In fact, the first words of Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* state, "This is a book about space" (Foucault 2003a: ix), and because the thematic of the partitioning of social space was a lineament of Foucault's oeuvre, Deleuze described him as a 'new cartographer' (Deleuze 1988a). The exclusion of the non-normative works, Foucault believes, by the axes of three modes of objectification: discursive practices of knowledge, dividing practices of taxonomies, and "the way a human being turns him- or herself into a subject" (Foucault 1982a: 327). The first two modes have been explained above. The last mode, however, refers to how we can create ourselves as subjects through sexuality (327) and thus gestures towards Foucault's ethics of freedom that we begin our engagement with towards the end of this chapter, and his genealogy of power. We now turn to an engagement with why Foucault incorporated genealogy within his analysis.

5.2 The Order of Things

Whilst Foucault's *History of Madness* "was the history of a division" and alterity through the discourse of madness, *The Order of Things* was "the history of semblance, sameness, and identity" (Foucault 1966: 13). In this history Foucault aims to show how the three forms of scientific knowledge cited above were possible within the epistemological fields he names epistemes that we touched on briefly in Chapter 3–the Renaissance episteme, the Enlightenment episteme, and the Modern episteme–which govern discourses of knowledge and in doing so, determine the historical dynamic in which we exist: "In any given culture and 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 a practice" (Foucault 2002: 183). As mentioned in Chapter 3, unlike Rancière's regimes of art, epistemes are not coexistent–each new episteme abolishes the prior–and the early Foucault felt that we were on the cusp of a new episteme and thus the end of the thematic of logocentrism and all that it entails: the primacy of the subject and an essence to the human form wrapped in a normative taxonomy and a belief in a continuous history of progress stemming from an *archế* (origin).

As can be seen above, Nietzsche's work was seminal for Foucault and he reminds us that for Nietzsche, following the advent of new sciences, modernity brought the death of God (Foucault 2002: 373). According to Foucault, when God died, by replacing God's infinitude with an "analytic of finitude," the human form transformed into the invention of modernity known as *man* and in doing so, become both an object of knowledge and a knowing subject (345-6). However, the demise of both *man* and the Modern episteme were imminent, according to Foucault, because this episteme possessed four oscillations of instability; the first of which we have just mentioned: *man* is both an object of knowledge and a knowing subject–an "observed spectator" (340). Being both a knowing subject and an object of knowledge, *man* also caused a second oscillation by being both transcendental (the condition of knowledge) and empirical (conditioned by knowledge) and thus, *man* is an "empirico-transcendental" double (347).

The third oscillation was, according to Foucault, "The 'Cogito' and the Unthought," where conscious thought sought the unconscious: the unthought that eludes us whilst still purportedly grounding our thinking (Foucault 2002: 351-358). The last oscillation is "the retreat and the return of the origin" caused by our seeking of an *archế*–our founding origin (358). Now whilst Foucault quite rightly states that to seek an origin is to seek "an ever receding point that is never

itself present in any history" (Foucault 2010a: 25), our past, like the tide of the sea that Foucault uses as a metaphor for the death of *man*–"man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea" (Foucault 2002: 422))–both retreats and returns, according to Foucault, through being that which is furthest but also closest to us in that it both delimits and contributes to the formation of the now. In Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* he highlighted this effect of retreat and return in regard to past epistemes which he renamed archives. These two terms, epistemes and archives, have hardly any difference in meaning (May 2006: 44). However, as *The Archaeology of Knowledge* followed *The Order of Things* and thus, focussed a little too much on expanding upon the death of *man*, Foucault states in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* that he began a "series of notions"–"discursive formations, positivity, archive [. . .] statements, the enunciative field, discursive practices"–that were seen by him as "a whole apparatus" of "bizarre machinery" and "a source of embarrassment" (Foucault 2010a: 135). In conjoining knowledge and power, Foucault replaced the 'bizarre machinery' of archaeology with another machine, *le dispositif* (apparatus), which was much more than an apparatus or a machine: "[W]hat I call a *dispositif* is a much more general case of the episteme, or rather, the episteme is a specifically discursive *dispositif*, whereas the *dispositif* in its general form is both discursive and non-discursive, its elements being much more heterogeneous" (Foucault in Elden 2016: 54) [19] –the non-discursive pertains to "institutions, political events, economic practices and processes" (Foucault 2010a: 162). As Foucault later stated, regarding his move to power and a genealogical approach to history, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* had confused discourse too much with knowledge and the paradigmatic (epistemological breaks) within its series of archaeological ideas (Foucault 1980a: 55). In fact, even in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* itself, Foucault was already mentioning ideas of 'other archaeologies' that portended his future work: "archaeologies that might develop in different directions [. . .] the archaeological description of sexuality [. . . .] carried out not in the direction of the episteme, but in that of what we might call the ethical" (Foucault 2010a: 192-3).

To return to the topic of the retreat and the return of the origin, Foucault states that whilst we cannot have knowledge of our founding origins because one thing defers to another infinitely, we can have a partial knowledge of prior archives through the perspective that historical distance affords us (Foucault 2010a: 130). However, we cannot have as much knowledge of the current archive in an archaeological methodology because we lack the perspective of historical

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[19] For a discussion of both *le dispositif* and Foucault's understanding of *le dispositif*, see Agamben's 2006 essay translated as 'What is an Apparatus?' in Agamben 2009, pp. 1-24.

distance and the rules that govern us in an archive operate unconsciously, as mentioned above, by discursive practices. Therefore, as Foucault puts it, "it is not possible for us to describe our own archive, since it is from within these rules that we speak" (130). Therefore, the contemporary archive "emerges in fragments, regions, and levels, more fully no doubt, and with greater sharpness, the greater the time that separates us from it" (130).

Foucault's understanding of discourses and epistemological ruptures allowed him to move away from ideas of a continuous history to a history of discontinuity. For it was discontinuity, and not a continuity between the present and past archives, that allowed us to have some understanding of the now, according to Foucault, by registering the differences between our archive and those of the past (Foucault 2010a: 131). However, as his archeology could only interpret past archives and not the contemporary archive, and as Foucault started to realise that not everything could be interpreted solely by knowledge and discourse, he adopted Nietzsche's genealogical method of analysis to undertake a history of the present whilst maintaining parts of his archaeological methodology. Therefore, he continued his historico-critical ontology through a novel interpretation of power as productive rather than "juridical" or as a "Marxist conception organized around the notions of state apparatus, dominant class" (Davidson 2006: xiv), etc. In doing so, Foucault wanted to show how normative practices do not repress us as Marxist and Freudian analysis would have it but produce us as subjects.[20] Foucault aimed to illustrate this by a continuation of his ontological project that would now be "genealogical in its design and archaeological in its method" (Foucault 1984a: 46), involving an interrogation of both knowledge/truth and power. Therefore, Foucault's genealogy was, as Elden puts it, "a supplement to, rather than a replacement of, his archaeological analyses" (Elden 2016: 6). Accordingly, it involved the examination of the relations between the discursive and the non-discursive. This involvement with the non-discursive, in this case, political events, links to Mark Kelly's comment that May '68 and the students' rebellion in Tunisia, where Foucault was living and working at the time of May '68, politicised Foucault (Kelly 2014: 66-7) and thus, Foucault attributes this influence as primary "in his discovery of power as the experience of historical events themselves" (90). This, as Kelly puts it, manifested as "a *politicisation* of archaeology"

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[20] As Rancière puts it: "Foucault's aim was to counter a Freudo-Marxist type of discourse, to show how a certain idea of 'the politics of life' rests on misrecognising the way in which power is exercised over life and its 'liberation'" (Rancière 2000b: 93).

through Foucault's understanding of power where he began "investigating how discourses fit into politics and society" (70, Kelly's stress).[21]

5.3 Genealogy and a Technology of Power: Discipline and Punish

Foucault made his genealogical approach known in 1970 at his first lecture–*L'ordre du discours*–at the Collège de France.[22] All of Foucault's following lecture series at the Collège de France have been collated into thirteen books. [23] These lectures are invaluable for understanding the trajectory of Foucault's historico-critical ontology and how he began to incorporate power and then ethics within his research. Therefore, we shall be touching upon all of them in varying degrees but will only go in-depth with those pertaining to our subject matter– Foucault's ethics of freedom–as mentioned in the introduction.[24]

After Foucault's inaugural lecture, he wrote the essay 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' (1984c [1971]) to further drive home his use of Nietzsche's genealogy and, as mentioned above, the latter's understanding of the will to knowledge and the will to truth. He then gave four series of lectures at the Collège de France which led to the 1975 French publication of *Discipline and*

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[21] As Kelly states, indirectly connecting to the aforementioned *dispositif* and its shift from a focus on discursive practices to discursive and non-discursive practices: "While the analysis of discourses remains central, Foucault proposes to incorporate the analysis of institutions into his approach, analysing discourses in their relations to concrete social and political forces, to understand how they are *produced*, and what they produce in turn" (Kelly 2014: 69, Kelly's stress).

[22] This is a university with no students where open lectures are given to anyone who wishes to attend and lecturers give a detailed account of their current research. The English translation of Foucault's inaugural lecture at the Collège de France–*L'ordre du discours*–is available under both the title of 'The Order of Discourse' and 'The Discourse on Language'. The latter acts as an appendix for some editions of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.

[23] *Lectures on the Will to Know* (1970-71), *Théories et institutions pénales: Cours au Collège de France (1971-1972)* (*Penal Theories and Institutions* (1971–1972)) (not yet released in English), *The Punitive Society* (1972–1973), *Psychiatric Power* (1973–1974), *Abnormal* (1974–1975), *Society Must be Defended* (1975–1976), *Security, Territory, Population* (1977–1978), *The Birth of Biopolitics* (1978–1979), *On the Government of the Living* (1979–1980), *Subjectivity and Truth* (1980-1981), *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* (1981-1982), *The Government of Self and Others* (1982-1983), *The Courage of Truth* (1983-1984).

[24] As a reminder, these are: *Subjectivity and Truth* (1980-1981), *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* (1981-1982), *The Government of Self and Others* (1982-1983), and *The Courage of Truth* (1983-1984), as well as the six lectures given by Michel Foucault at Berkeley in October and November 1983, initially published as *Fearless Truth* (Foucault 2001a).

Punish.[25] The first of these lectures is published as *Lectures on the Will to Know*[26] 1970-71 (Foucault 2013) and the last, as *Psychiatric Power* (Foucault 2006b). The prior, as Kelly puts it, was a "Nietzschean gesture," within Foucault's turn to genealogy, as the lecture series led to "an analysis of Greek political thought" (Kelly 2014: 72)–Nietzsche was a philologist before he was a philosopher. The latter, was Foucault finding his feet, so to speak, within his particular understanding of power that would become clear in his *The History of Sexuality Vol 1*, doing so, as Foucault informs us in the 'Course Summary' of *Psychiatric Power*, by looking at power relations as "the a priori of psychiatric practice" conditioning "how the asylum institution functioned" determining "the distribution of relationships between individuals within it, and" governing "the forms of medical intervention" (Foucault 2006b: 345). However, the second and third lecture series are the ones that focus on prisons: *Théories et institutions pénales: Cours au Collège de France (1971-1972)*[27] (*Penal Theories and Institutions: Lectures at the Collège de France* (1971–1972)–not yet released in English, as stated in Note 22 above) and *The Punitive Society* (1972–1973) (Foucault 2015a). If we take these series of lectures into account along with the commencement of the GIP[28] that Foucault belonged to, *Discipline and Punish* can be seen not only as a natural result of these lecture series but also as a more overt form of resistance than Foucault's other books. Foucault virtually states so at the end of the first chapter of 'Part One' of *Discipline and Punish* where he mentions how he has learnt from the recent prison revolts across the world "[t]hat punishment in general and prisons in particular belong to a political technology of the body" (Foucault 1979a: 30) and ends with his famous line (mentioned above) pertaining to writing the history of the present in reference to his history of contemporary prisons and punishment. If this is not clear enough, on the very last page of *Discipline and Punish* he tells us that "we must hear the distant roar of battle" (308).[29]

Following the aforementioned lectures, Foucault's French publication of *Discipline and Punish* arrived in the book shops six years after *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. *Discipline and Punish* deals with disciplinary techniques of power and the spatial arrangement of 'docile bodies'

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[25] *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (*Surveillance and Punishment: the Birth of the Prison*).

[26] *Savoir* can be translated as know or knowledge and as such, the will to know (*savoir*) can also be translated as the will to knowledge (*savoir*).

[27] Foucault. 2015. *Éditions Galiimard et des Éditions du Seuil*.

[28] Group d'Information sur les Prisons (Prisons information group).

[29] As Alan Schrift tells us in his essay 'Discipline and Punish': "Because of Foucault's visibility at the time as a social activist for prison reform, *Surveiller et punir* was received not just as a socio-historical or philosophical analysis but even more as a work of radical social criticism" (Schrift 2013: 139).

through architecture such as the panopticon, which Gauny noted had its techniques transferred from the building of prisons to the building of workshops where he states, as we deal with more fully in Chapter 8, the workshop managers were able to see everything the workers were doing. Foucault's inclusion of the panopticon shows why the French edition of *Discipline and Punish* was named *Surveiller et punir* (surveillance and punishment). With the panopticon, made well known by Jeremy Bentham, prisoners could be observed by a guard who could not be seen in this tower situated in the centre of an "annular building" where the occupant of each cell is "constantly visible" (Foucault 1979a: 200) and thus, adjusts their behaviour, accordingly, believing themselves to be always watched. Therefore, the subtitle *The Birth of the Prison* is apt as Foucault aims to show the shift between different technologies of power. Thus, *Discipline and Punish* starts with a description of the horrors of the public execution of Damiens the regicide in 1757 and directly after, displays the timetable of a Parisian prison written eighty years later (3-7). In doing so, Foucault wishes to show how "[t]he body as the major target of penal repression disappeared" (8). Through reform and the authorities' wish not to show criminals as victims because it risked the chance of a public siding with felons, punishment as a spectacle was terminated, and the penal system made punishment "the most hidden part" of its process (9) where prisoners were deprived of "rights" (11) without the official infliction of corporeal pain in death: "The modern rituals of execution attest to this double process: the disappearance of the spectacle and the elimination of pain" (11). Therefore, Foucault writes of a shift to a "'micro-physics' of a "punitive power," the history of which, would not be a history of the body but "a genealogy of the modern 'soul'" (29). By this, Foucault is not utilising a Christian definition of the soul but is defining the soul as a "correlative of a certain technology of power over the body" (29), an internal self in sync with other concepts known as "psyche, subjectivity, personality, conscious, etc" (29-30). The soul, Foucault writes,

> is produced permanently around, on, within the body by the functioning of a power that is exercised on those punished–and, in a more general way, on those one supervises, trains and corrects, over madmen, children at home and at school, the colonised, over those who are stuck at a machine and supervised for the rest of their lives [. . .] The man described for us, whom we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself. A 'soul' inhabits him and brings him to existence, which is itself a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body. The soul is the effect and instrument of political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body. (Foucault 1979a: 29-30)

Thus, Foucault is not just writing of the prison in *Discipline and Punish* but of a disciplinary and panoptic society where the "penitentiary technique" has entered "the entire social body" (Foucault 1979a: 298). As Schrift puts it: "the modern individual, who, by internalising the supervisory gaze of the other, takes all the disciplinary tasks of society upon itself and forces itself to conform to social norms without any external authority imposing those norms" (Schrift 2013: 146). Thus, Foucault asks: "Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?" (Foucault 1979a: 228). For Foucault, the power of normalising individuals had spread through a technology of power stemming from the apparatus of the penal system to where everyone's "body" is subjected to this normative through "gestures," "behaviour," "aptitudes," and "achievements" (304).[30] Therefore, it was not so much that society was a prison writ large for Foucault, but that technologies of power honed in the penal system flooded society via the normative praxis of disciplinary power. As Foucault tells us on the last page of *Discipline and Punish*, this book acted as a genealogy of the "various studies of the power of normalisation" (308). It was this normalisation that was the nemesis of Foucault's oeuvre and his practices of freedom.

5.4 Genealogy and a Productive Power: The History of Sexuality

Unlike Rancière, who carried out a genealogy of the aesthetic, Foucault carried out a genealogy of power and occidental subjectivity. The latter genealogy took place in Foucault's later work and revolved on an aesthetics of the self central to his ethics of freedom but very different from Rancière's genealogy of aesthetics, as the latter was enacted via Rancière's regimes of art. We turn to Foucault's genealogy of subjectivity at the end of this chapter. This section, however, focusses on Foucault's genealogy of power from *The History of Sexuality* vol 1, which traces the shift in the eighteenth century from the sanguinity of a sovereign power that takes life, to the regulation of a productive power that gives life: "[T]he objective is to analyse a certain form of knowledge regarding sex, not in terms of repression or law, but in terms of power" (Foucault 1978: 92).

The History of Sexuality vol 1 is an introduction to the history of sexuality, hence its English subtitle, *An Introduction*. However, the French subtitle–*La Volonté de savoir* (*The Will to Knowledge*)–refers to that which we discussed above: the intertwining of a discursive knowledge and a production of truth via a will to know(ledge) and truth structured by the idea of

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[30] In this thesis, at times, normalising/normal are used interchangeably with the term normative.

a human essence and the Enlightenment's ethos of progress that allows hegemonic deferrals of equality and freedom.[31] The use of the term *savoir* in the subtitle also connects Foucault's genealogy of power with his ongoing archaeology of knowledge through 'other archaeologies' within his historico-critical ontology that had become genealogical in its design whilst remaining archaeological in its method, as mentioned above. However, the key focus in *The History of Sexuality* vol 1 is Foucault's understanding of relations of power.

Foucault treats power as a nominalism that only manifests as relations. Therefore, as Foucault stated in a 1984 interview, for him, the term 'power' was merely shorthand for "relations of power" (Foucault 1984b: 291). As Foucault writes in his *The History of Sexuality* vol 1: "One needs to be nominalistic, no doubt: power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society" (Foucault 1978: 93). It is this strategic attribute, Kelly points out (Kelly 2014: 91), that Foucault aims to illustrate when he states: "Power relations are both intentional and nonsubjective" (Foucault 1978: 94). As Kelly neatly summarises, power is intentional and nonsubjective for Foucault because subjects' strategies and enacted intentions shift "beyond our subjectivity" within the realm of power relations taking "on a life of their own in the relational space in between individual subjects" (Kelly 2014: 91). In other words, there is no centre to power: "[N]either the caste which governs, nor the groups which control the state apparatus, nor those who make the most important economic decisions direct the entire network of power that functions in a society (and makes *it* function)" (Foucault 1978: 95, Foucault's stress).[32] Coming full circle, we can link the antinomic quote above–power relations are both

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[31] In fact, the first lecture series at the Collège de France that we cited above with the English translation of *Lectures on the Will to Know* can be translated, as mentioned in a footnote above, as *Lectures on the Will to Knowledge* (*Leçons sur la volonté de savoir*), and as Foucault states at the beginning of the first lecture of this particular lecture course, all of his "analyses–past or still to come–could be seen as something like so many "fragments for a morphology of the will to know[ledge]"" (Foucault 2013: 1).

[32] To help understand this nominalistic approach, we can think of Foucault's understanding of power as analogous to Kant's understanding of space and time in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant 2000 [1781]), where space and time are not entities in their own right but intuitions from which we intuit the world around us, just as power for Foucault is not an entity but how we relate to and act upon each other. As such, subjects are the conduits for relations of power, just as they are the conduits for space and time, according to Kant. Therefore, Kant does not hypostatise time or space because there are no entities to hypostatise. Likewise, Foucault does not hypostatise power because there is no power to hypostatise; there only relations of power. By this analogy, we can understand why commentators such as Peter Dews believe that Foucault depicts power "as *a kind of* a priori [. . .] coextensive with the real (or at least with

intentional and nonsubjective–with the oxymoronic tactic that Foucault used in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* when he described the positivity of discourses in terms of the historical *a priori*. We can do so because Foucault designates power as productive, an *a priori* matrix of relations, so to speak, yet nevertheless, an ever shifting yet pre-existing and thus historical *a priori* matrix into which we are thrown by birth.[33] Therefore, in this network of power relations, power is not a materiality that we can possess but a relation that enables subjects to act upon the actions of other subjects. As Foucault's put it his essay 'The Subject and Power': "By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several kinds of conduct, several ways of reacting and modes of behaviour are available" (Foucault 1982a: 342).

Whilst relations of power are ubiquitous for Foucault–for we all, according to Foucault, engage in relations of power through our "relations of knowledge," pedagogy, "family," sex, etc (Foucault 2012: 107-108)–they are not omnipotent: "Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault 1978: 93). In fact, according to Foucault, power relations are ubiquitous precisely "because there is no omnipotent power" (Foucault 2012: 107). In other words, it is only through the ability to resist power within relations of power, that these relations become omnipresent. On the same page of 'The Subject and Power' quoted from above, Foucault writes, "slavery is not a power relationship when man is in chains, only when he has some possible mobility, even a chance of escape. (In this case it is a question of a physical relationship of constraint)" (Foucault 1982a: 342).[34] Therefore, a certain amount of liberty is required for relations of power to function, and within these relations freedom is, Foucault tells us, "the condition for the exercise of power" (342) just as equality is,

social reality)" (Dews 1979: 98, my emphasis), or why Foucault detailed power relations, as quoted above, as the *a priori* of psychiatric practice.

[33] I adopt Heidegger's use here of the understanding of being 'thrown' into existence from his *Being and Time* (2006 [1927]). For a comparison of Heidegger's understanding of Being and Foucault's understanding of power, See Hubert Dreyfus's essay, 'On the Ordering of Things: Being and Power in Heidegger and Foucault' (Dreyfus 1992). For a reading of Heidegger's influence on Foucault, see Robert Nichols' *Heidegger, Foucault, and the Politics of Historical Ontology* (Nichols 2014).

[34] In his 1979 lecture "'Omnes et Singulatim": Toward a Critique of Political Reason', Foucault states: "A man who is chained up and beaten is subject to force being exerted over him, not power. But if he can be induced to speak, when his ultimate recourse could have been to hold his tongue, preferring death, then he has been caused to behave in a certain way. His freedom has been subjected to power. He has been submitted to government. If an individual can remain free, however little his freedom may be, power can subject him to government. There is no power without potential refusal or revolt" (Foucault 1979b: 324).

for Rancière, the condition for the exercise of inequality. Thus, for Foucault, relations of power are the very fabric of society without which, he tells us, "society" is merely "an abstraction" (343). Therefore, knowledge and power, for Foucault, are the warp and woof of the production of subjects and society, wove together by a normative production of truth, a "regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true [. . .]" (Foucault 1980a: 73). As Foucault states in a 1984 interview, "knowledge and power" are "not the fundamental problem but an instrument that makes it possible to analyse the problem of the relationship between subject and truth" (Foucault 1984b: 290).[35] The relationship between the subject and truth is something we shall return to within our engagement with Foucault's ontology of freedom and his offering of the courage to speak the truth. For now, we can say that Foucault requested that "philosophy stops posing the question of power in terms of good and evil, but poses it in terms of existence" (Foucault in Senellart 2009: 374). In other words, in a Nietzschean shift beyond good and evil, Foucault did not sanctify freedom as good and demonise power relations as evil, as sovereign power has been demonised as something to be destroyed, but stated that these relations had to be governed, just as we must govern ourselves in a care of the self. Therefore, for Foucault, we should not seek to emancipate ourselves from power relations because we cannot:

> I do not think that a society can exist without power relations, if by that one means the strategies by which individuals try to direct and control the conduct of others. The problem, then, is not to try to dissolve them in the utopia of completely transparent communication [like Habermas] but to acquire the rules of law, the management techniques, and also the morality, the ethos, the practice of the self, that will allow us to play these games of power with as little domination as possible. (Foucault 1984b: 298)

Thus, when Foucault writes in his first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, "[w]here there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (Foucault 1978: 95), we can resist asking how we can escape power if power is everywhere because we can see that the aim for Foucault is not to escape power relations but *to play these games of power with as little domination as possible.* Therefore, by 'strategies', Foucault means there is a combat of sorts that he names in his 'The Subject and Power' lecture as an 'agonism' stemming from the Greek *agon* (struggle). Just as

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[35] Or, as Bregham Dalgliesh puts it: "Foucault focuses his critique on regimes of truth and the trilogy of protagonists that compromise them, knowledge, power and ethics" (Dalgliesh 2017: 2).

practices of equality can only operate within inequality for Rancière, practices of freedom, for Foucault, can only operate within relations of power and vice versa:

> At the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom. Rather than speaking of an essential antagonism, it would be better to speak of an "agonism". (Foucault 1982a 342)

As Aurelia Armstrong puts it in an essay on Foucault that we shall revisit, for Foucault, a "society without power relations would be a society without freedom, since both the existence and experience of freedom depend on the constraints imposed by other actions" (Armstrong 2005: 25). Or as Dalgliesh writes, "freedom," as Foucault sees it, is "an agonistic articulation in respect of the limits that confront us" (Dalgliesh 2017: 2), in that there will always be a struggle between freedom and limits. For Foucault, the anti-dialectician, there is no dialectic supposition that will emerge from the resistance of freedom against a productive power, just as for Rancière, there is no supposition that emerges from the resistance of practices of equality against a police logic of inequality. This is why, in a 1984 interview not long before his death, Foucault stated, as we shall expand on below, that "[f]reedom," rather than being a suppositional entity in its own right, "is the ontological condition of ethics" (Foucault 1984b: 284). In other words, much like Rancière's radical equality, it is a presupposition. We shall return to Foucault's anti-dialectics in the last section of this chapter in a rebuttal of Žižek's criticism of Foucault's understanding of agonism as a nexus between power and resistance. For now, we can state, for Foucault, any understanding of power as omnipotent would keep us within the traditional and dialectic understanding of power and freedom as mutually exclusive where power is a repressive "sovereign power" within the binary of sovereign and subjects, where the prior had "the right to decide life and death" (Foucault 1978: 135). As Foucault states in a 1982 interview, "if there was no resistance, there would be no power relations. Because it would simply be a matter of obedience" (Foucault 1984d: 386). In fact, just as Nietzsche believed that after the death of God, we still lived by an ontotheology as if God were still alive, Foucault believed that political analysis still represented power as if the King were still alive and therefore, analysed a sovereign form of power. As Foucault famously put it in *The History of Sexuality* vol 1, metaphorically playing on the execution of Louis XVI during the French Revolution:

At bottom, despite the differences in epochs and objectives, the representation of power has remained under the spell of monarchy. In political thought and analysis, we still have not cut off the head of the king. (Foucault 1978: 88-9).

Unlike the sovereign right to decide life and death, within a ubiquity of power relations and a productive and disciplinary power, Foucault tells us, modernity has adopted a power over life rather than death through a governmental administration of life. According to Foucault, this did not mean that through this administration of life, those who were deemed to represent a "biological danger to others" (Foucault 1978: 138) could not be killed through genocide, war, or otherwise (137), such as in the holocaust as Foucault exemplifies in 'Section 11' of his lecture series *Society Must Be Defended* (1975–76) (Foucault 2003 [1997]). However, the sovereign right "to *take* life or *let* live" gave way not just to the policing of society within an administration of life but to "a power to foster life or disallow it" (Foucault 1978: 138, Foucault's emphasis). Foucault succinctly summarises this position when he states the following: "A normalising society is the historical outcome of a technology of power centred on life" (144).

In the final chapter of *The History of Sexuality* vol 1, somewhat mirroring the last lecture of *Society Must be Defended*, Foucault named this bio-political power over life, bio-power. Like the technology of power described in *Discipline and Punish* which is a both a micro-physics and macro-physics of power as its technology of power expands into a panoptic society, bio-power is both a micro and macro-physics of power that controls and regulates both the individual and the population by giving rather than taking life through a bio-political regulation.[36] At the nexus where the corporeal and the populace meet, sex becomes "a crucial target of a power organised around the management of life rather than the menace of death" (Foucault 1978: 147). Thus, Foucault tells us, in the eighteenth century there was a shift from the sanguinity of a sovereign power to the sexuality of a regulatory power (148) by a disciplining of the optimisation of the body's capabilities focussed on the body as a machine (anatomo-politics) and by a regulation of the body as a biology (bio-politics): "propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary" (139). Through

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[36]" On the one hand it was tied to the disciplines of the body: the harnessing, intensification, and distribution of forces, the adjustment and economy of energies. On the other hand, it was applied to the regulation of populations, through all the far-reaching effects of its activity. It fitted in both categories at once, giving rise to infinitesimal surveillances, permanent controls, extremely meticulous orderings of space, indeterminate medical or psychological examinations, to an entire micro-power concerned with the body" (Foucault 1978: 145-6).

the discourse of a heterosexual normative and the legality of hetero-marriage, through labour production and biological production, the administration of society aims for a supply of a capable and docile workforce–machines of flesh, to use a phrase by Gauny.[37] If the narrative of a heteronormative discourse is not followed by individuals, they are seen as peripheral and as representing the unreason that opposes the discursive reason of the normative. Thus, like the 'unreasonable' subjects mentioned in *The History of Madness*, if one does not conform to normative reason, one is considered as abnormal, as mad. Or, as Deleuze and Félix Guattari put it, in regard to their similar conception of bio-power in their understanding of the human form as an 'organism', to not conform to the productivity of this normative, is to be seen as '"depraved"' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 159). Thus, there is no essence, be it through sexuality or otherwise, to the human form, which is repressed as it transcends history, according to Foucault (Foucault 1980a: 59). This is the legerdemain of a hegemonic humanism that hides the subject's production behind the meta-narrative of 'freedom'–our essence is repressed but we can strive to free it–and the meta-narrative of truth within the production of 'truth' that supposes the idea of a human essence and what that essence is. Freedom as an ideal, according to Foucault, makes us feed back into power by utilising the taxonomy imposed upon us within a resistance that aims for emancipation, but in actuality is an effect of a normative power that perpetuates the normative society that the meta-narrative production of truth naturalises. Therefore, according to Foucault, a peripheral subject classified by taxonomy is not repressed but produced, just as the subject central to the normative is produced. Thus, to resist this power, according to Foucault, we must form an auto-constituted 'self' rather than utilising the socio-categories imposed on us as a means of resistance.

To conclude this section, we can say that for Foucault, there is no pre-discursive because we are produced as subjects of knowledge, truth, and power. To believe otherwise, to accept the taxonomies imposed upon us as who we are, would be a matter, to co-opt Sartre's term, of *mauvaise foi* (bad faith), where we believe a little too much in the taxonomic socio-role we play, be it through sexuality, class, the performativity of gender, or otherwise. This does not mean that there is an authentic self we should strive to be, but that we can create new fictions and other selves through practices of freedom rather than believing in the identities imposed upon us by a normative regime as natural and as who we are and thus beyond critique. For in doing so, we are embracing the very prison that Foucault names the modern soul by trying to free an

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[37] "*machines de chair*" (Gauny 2017: 80).

essence that does not exist as an essence but as a taxonomy and thus demanding freedom for the very taxonomy that imprisons us. Therefore, a belief in the categories imposed on us perpetuates the taxonomies that function within a normative society as a means to situate us in a matrix of inequality and constrictions upon our freedom to create ourselves. As Bataille stated in his 1945 book *On Nietzsche*:

> It's the positive practice of freedom, not the negative struggle against a particular oppression, that has lifted me above a mutilated existence. Each of us learns with bitterness that to struggle for freedom is first of all to alienate ourselves. (Bataille 2004 xxiv)

Thus, identity politics, within its multiplicity of categorised identities feeds into the very power that it fights against. "Seen from up close," as Fernando Pessoa the Portuguese poet wrote in the early twentieth century, "people are monotonously diverse" (Pessoa 2002: 80). As Bataille states above, it is positive not negative practices that lift us above a 'mutilated existence' where one must alienate one's self from one's normative self and become liberated from negative struggles.[38] This does not mean, however, that we should create our own taxonomies. As Baudrillard stated, "the multiplication of existences leads only to a simulacrum of alterity (Baudrillard 2005: 59). Therefore, "[m]ultiplying identities never produces anything more than the illusory strategies for decentralising power, it is pure illusion, pure stratagem" (59).

For Foucault, repression is a mask used to hide a productive discourse that does not repress who we taxonomically are in socio-reality but produces and heightens it through the manifestation of a normative power and knowledge and classificatory tools of regimes of truth. As Foucault writes in the *The History of Sexuality* vol 1, "The sodomite had been a temporary aberration [(*un relaps*)]; the homosexual was now a species" (Foucault 1978: 43). Therefore, "[w]e must not think that saying yes to sex, one says no to power; on the contrary, one tracks along the course laid out by the general *dispositif*[39] of sexuality" (157). As Schrift puts it, "the modern individual is what he or she is by virtue of comparison with, conformity to, and

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[38] As Rancière puts it: "So there is no paradox in the fact that the path of emancipation is first the path whereon one is liberated from that hatred of the master experienced by the rebel slave. Servility and hatred are two characteristics of the very same world, two manifestations of the very same malady" (Rancière 1989: 82-3).

[39] Following the discussion of *dispositif* above, I have replaced the translation of *dispositif as* deployment with *dispositif* itself.

differentiation from the norm, and it is this individual's individuality itself that is produced through the disciplinary power that examines and judges it" (Schrift 2013: 145). Thus, it is not the freedom of identities that should be fought for, but the dismantling of the very normative discourses and regimes of truth that taxonomically produce these identities which they determine within a hierarchy of stratification. This is what genealogy aims to do. The next section of this chapter shows how Foucault's genealogy of what he names governmentality led to his engagement with a self-governance within a care of the self in an ethics of freedom.

5.5 Countering Criticism: Biopower and Governmentality

As is well documented and listed on the back of the early editions of *The History of Sexuality* vol 1, Foucault originally planned five further volumes of *The History of Sexuality*.[40] However, he later changed his mind and shifted his focus away from power towards ethics through the medium of two other volumes published in 1984 (*L'usage des plaisirs* and *Le souci de soi*)–both of which, we shall engage with in the following chapters–which were not contained in the original plan of five further volumes. Differing reasons have been given for this shift as well as the eight-year absence of a new book: "a crisis in his thought; a wish to avoid giving the subsequent volumes to Gallimard or more fanciful explanations based on personal biography and a dubious grasp of dates and causality" (Elden 2016: 79). In a 1996 interview with Baudrillard, Sylvère Lotringer even went so far as to state that this hiatus was due to Baudrillard's attack in *Forget Foucault* (Baudrillard 2007 [1977]) against Foucault's reformulation of power: "I am convinced that it affected him [(Foucault)] deeply as well as his own work" (Lotringer in Baudrillard 1996: 223).[41] One less fanciful and highly possible reason for this shift

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[40] "2. The body and the flesh; 3. The children's crusade; 4. The wife, the mother, and the hysteric; 5. The perverts; and, 6. Populations and races. None of these books ever appeared, although the courses at the Collège de France from 1973 to 1976 were full of material that could have filled out these studies" (Gros 2005: 508).

[41] Baudrillard's attack against Foucault in his *Forget Foucault* basically states that Foucault's understanding of power is an anachronism that perpetuates a hyperreal simulation of power because power is dead along with the referent, the 'real'. However, considering that Foucault sees power as a nominalism and that he is writing of 'relations' of power that work within what Foucault sees as a discursive and contingent fiction, Baudrillard's philosophy seems to be almost repeating Foucault's understanding from a different angle. Baudrillard's critique is of course more complex than this footnote can reflect, and a full response goes beyond the scope of this thesis. However, as far as we know, Baudrillard did not take Foucault's research via his Collège de France lectures into consideration and focused mainly on the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, which would have restricted his perspective. For those who wish to read a short summary of Baudrillard's critique, see May 2006 pp.147-49.

could be that because Foucault had explored a lot of the themes of the planned volumes in his lecture courses from the beginning to the middle of the 1970s (Gros 2005: 508, Elden 2016: 64), he may have felt he needed to move on to new thematics rather than write books he already knew the outcome of.[42] However, it seems that the core reason for this shift away from a further five-volume trajectory of the history of sexuality and away from power and eventually towards ethics was due to an auto-critique and Foucault's habit of forever shifting in his work. The same type of auto-critique that Foucault applied to his early work was now applied to his genealogy of power which then moved him towards 'other archaeologies', as can be seen in his later Collège de France lectures that overtly show that criticism of a microphysics of power was not the reason for his engagement with ethics; Foucault was not deserting his understanding of power but merely exploring ways to resist a normative production of the 'self'. However, the objections by others against his understanding of a microphysics of power did contribute towards his evolution of his understanding of power which aimed to counter these objections. It is this evolution that is the core of this section as it takes us through Foucault's shift from the body and the disciplinary and productive power that we explored above, to his engagement with population, bio-power, governmentality, and then finally with ethics.

Deleuze, as a friend and peer at the time,[43] sent a memo to Foucault criticising the microphysics of power as some kind of miniaturising of the state: "Is the notion of power still applicable at this level?" "Is it not also a miniaturisation of a global concept?" "I am not sure that micro-managements can be described in terms of power" (Deleuze in Lotringer 2007: 19). Marxists also criticised this microphysics describing it as not applicable to a global politics and the relationship between society and the state (Gordon 1991: 4). In his aim to answer these critiques and attempt to engage with power in politics, Foucault formulated an understanding of power as a governmental rationality which he neologistically named governmentality. Whilst Foucault's foray into a study of government initially emerged in the lecture series *Abnormal (1974–1975)* (Foucault 2003b [1999]) (Senellart 2009: 386), this neologism was first expounded in *Security, Territory, Population (1977–1978)* (Foucault 2009 [2004]) and then again in *The Birth of Biopolitics (1978–1979)* (Foucault 2008a [2004]) and *On the Government of the Living (1979–1980)* (Foucault 2014a [2012]). It was via this lineage of lectures stemming from *Society*

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[42] "A work, when it is not at the same time an attempt to modify what one thinks and even what one is, is not much fun [. . .] to work is to undertake to think something other than what one has thought before" (Foucault 1984e: 455).

[43] Deleuze and Foucault later fell out in 1977 over the use of violence within resistance; Foucault was against its use, unlike Deleuze (Senellart 2009: 393, Note 26).

Must be Defended (1975–1976) (Foucault 2003c [1997]), where Foucault first mentions bio-power, that Foucault went from bio-power to governmentality and then to an engagement with neoliberalism and *homo economicus*. In these lectures, governmentality went through a transformation of definitions until Foucault arrived at the definition of governmentality as "the way in which one conducts the conduct of men [. . .] a proposed analytical grid for [. . .] relations of power" (Foucault in Oksala 2013: 324). For Foucault, just like biopower, governmentality is a practice of individuating and totalising subjects,[44] a practice that emerged from the end of sovereign power. Thus, governmentality is a practice of a microphysics of power applied to the governing of the populace by the state and to individuals and institutions (Gordon 1991: 3-4).

Foucault traced biopower and governmentality back to what he called, in *Security, Territory, Population*, 'pastoral power'. This was a power not stemming from the Greeks or Romans (Foucault 2009: 129) but from Christianity where the shepherd managed and guided their flock, a power used in institutions of religion that was adopted by governmentality within political institutions "from the end of the seventeenth century" (198) to manage and govern the populace.[45] This manifestation of pastoral power in governmentality expressed Foucault's highlighting of a shift from sovereign power's security of its territory to govermentality's security of society by the regulation of the population, as his offering of biopower aims to show.[46] We can see expressions of this security of society not just in the relevant lectures or the bio-politics of *The History of Sexuality* vol 1, but also in the practices that Foucault writes of in *The History of Madness*, *The Birth of the Clinic*, and *Discipline and Punish*. As Foucault's archeology of knowledge and genealogy of power research the formation of the subject from the Renaissance to Modernity, addressing 'population' due to the increase in urban denizens through the weakening of feudalism and the shift from a rural peasantry to an urban proletariat, would seem

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[44] Cf. Pessoa above.

[45] "[O]ver millennia Western man has learned to see himself as a sheep in a flock, something that assuredly no Greek would have been prepared to accept [. . .] This form of power so typical of the West, and unique, I think, in the entire history of civilisations, was born, or at least took its model from the fold, from politics seen as a matter of the sheep-fold" (Foucault 2009: 130).

[46] The focus on population, as Michel Senellart points out, leads Foucault to reformulate "the archeology of the human sciences set out in *The Order of Things*" (Senellart 2009: 379): "[T]he theme of man, and the "human sciences" that analyse him as a living being, working individual, and speaking subject, should be understood on the basis of the emergence of population as the correlate of power and the object of knowledge. After all, man, as he is

a necessity within Foucault's focus on governmental rationality, especially when we include Foucault's engagement with the policing of this population (see Foucault 1979b). A normative discourse is directly about those that fit the normative securing society by a regulation of the population and its 'unreasonable' subjects, those that threaten the normative by their non-normative ways. As Mark Neocleous puts it: "Security is part of the rationale for the fabrication of order. In terms of the demand for order in civil society, it is under the banner of 'security' that police most often marches" (Neocleous 2000: 44). However, whilst security as a regulatory mechanism is a focus of this lecture series, Foucault's key focus in this series is government rationality–governmentality.[47] Foucault traces the history of governmentality as being "the result of the process by which the state of justice of the Middle Ages became the administrative state in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and was gradually "governmentalised"" (109). Foucault then traces this forward to humanism and the transformation of liberalism within a government rationality and security of society to the then emerging practices of neoliberalism, the latter of which he addresses in his next lecture series, which also has a less than exact title.

The next series of lectures, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, hardly mentions bio-politics. Instead, Foucault, in hindsight, 'prophetically' explores neoliberalism, doing so to engage with the then current state of politics, as France was adopting a neoliberal stance at that time, as was the United States of America and what was then West Germany, which he also discusses. In doing so, rather than engaging with neoliberalism as a means to endorse its practices in his short-lived engagement,[48] Foucault was attempting to illustrate the rationality of governmentality by

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thought and defined by the so-called human sciences of the nineteenth century, and as he is reflected in nineteenth-century humanism, is nothing other than a figure of population" (Foucault 2009: 79).

[47] As Senellart points out (Senellart 2009: 380), Foucault states in the fourth lecture, "if I had wanted to give this year's lectures a more exact title, I certainly would not have chosen "security, territory, population." What I would really like to undertake is something that I would call a history of "governmentality"" (Foucault 2009: 108).

[48] Some theorists, as the book *Foucault, Neoliberalism, and Beyond* (2019) informs us, such as the historian Michal Beherent, state that Foucault's interest in neoliberalism combines with his anti-humanism and is thus an endorsement rather than critique of neoliberalism (Sawyer and Steinmetz-Jenkins 2019: viii). However, many commentators write against any readings of Foucault as an advocate of neoliberalism. For some examples, see: Johanna Oksala's essay 'From Biopower to Governmentality' (Oksala' 2013); Henrik Paul Bang's Chapter 11 'Why Foucault Is Not a Neoliberalist' of his *Foucault's Political Challenge: From Hegemony to Truth* (2015); and Wendy Brown's Chapter 2 'Foucault's *Birth of Biopolitics* Lectures: Charting Neoliberal Political Rationality' of her *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (2015). In *The Last Man Takes LSD: Foucault and the End of Revolution* (Dean and Zamora 2021), Mitchell Dean and Daniel Zamora put forward that Foucault turned to neoliberalism as a framework to create a governmentality of the left that would invent a reduced normative form of using power. Colin

aiming to show that the state and neoliberalism were linked together by, as Johanna Oksala puts it, "a rationally coordinated set of government practices" (Oksala 2013: 333) where neoliberalism is a "way of governing" and thus "a form of governmentality" (332). As we have seen in the early twenty-first century, and as Foucault saw at the time of these lectures, the problem is not so much the expansion of the state but "its reduction" (Foucault in Oksala 2013: 332). This reduction can be encapsulated by the promotion of what Foucault cites in *The Birth of Biopolitics* as *homo economicus*. This is not the liberal understanding of humans as economic beings who operate through the premise of needs and exchange (Foucault 2008a: 225) but through the neoliberal push for social existents to operate as human capital via economic competition where they sell themselves: "*Homo economicus* is an entrepreneur, an entrepreneur of himself" (226).[49] Thus, we have the now familiar neoliberal situation of a survival of the economically fittest with the minimum of state intervention through a *laissez-faire*, governmental approach towards corporations and their economic activities whilst enforcing austerity policies which reduce the 'welfare state' and benefits for the economically impoverished. Foucault's criticisms did not mean, however, that Foucault took an 'anarchistic stance' (in the everyday understanding of the term) against being governed. What it meant, was that Foucault adopted a critical attitude towards how we are governed.

In his 1978 lecture 'What is Critique?', which paved the way for the essay this chapter began with, 'What is Enlightenment?', Foucault describes a critical attitude as "an act of defiance" towards limiting the "arts of governing" (Foucault 2007: 44-5). This attitude revolved on the questioning of "how not to be governed like that, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such an objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them" (44). Foucault succinctly defines this attitude as "the art of not being governed quite so much" (45). Much like Rancière, Foucault's work focuses on how we should not be governed. In both their cases, they fight against the governmentality involved within the administrative policing of civil society that unfolded from the Renaissance and the weakening of feudalism. Again, like Rancière, Foucault does not inform us how we should be governed but offers us his engagement with a self-governance in a care of the self and an ethics of freedom.

Gordon, however, has strongly rebutted this, see https://foucaultnews.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/colin-gordon-2015.pdf (Accessed 24-09-21). For a historical overview of the emergence of neoliberalism, see David Harvey's *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press. 2005.

[49] Or, as the Swiss-German cultural theorist and philosopher Byung-Chul Han puts it: "Excess work and performance escalate into auto-exploitation [. . .] The exploiter is simultaneously the exploited" (Han 2015: 11).

Within a critical attitude, Foucault strives to give us tools to think with to aid our decision making regarding how we should be governed and how we should govern our self individually within our desubjugation: "the desubjugation of the subject" through "the politics of truth" (47).

This critical attitude started, according to Foucault, at the same time as the emergence of governmentality and its criticality led him to his ethics of freedom and governing oneself through his engagement with biopolitics and governmentality. As Senellart states regarding the lecture series *Security, Territory, Population* and *The Birth of Biopolitics*, "in the light of Foucault's later work, it is tempting to see these lectures as the moment of a radical turning point at which the transition to the problematic of the "government of the self and others" would begin" (Senellart 2009: 370). For it is by practices of governing ourselves that we may counter practices of government rationality (governmentality) and normative practices of a productive power that produce us as subjects, as we can create ourselves anew by the creative ontology of practices of freedom. As Judith Butler states in her essay on Foucault's 'What is Critique?': "Paradoxically, self-making and desubjugation happen simultaneously when a mode of existence is risked which is unsupported by what he [Foucault] calls the regime of truth" (Butler 2001, no pagination). Therefore, rather than seeing Foucault's work on knowledge and power as merely a sojourn on the roads to Greece and Rome within a view of an 'ethical turn', a *Kehre* towards the subject, as some commentators see Foucault's research on Greco-Roman ethics,[50] we can think of Foucault's historico-critical ontology, as Beatrice Han states, as continuing "from an archaeological interrogation of the *conditions* under which a subject can speak the truth, to the genealogical claim that truth is *per se* the major condition of possibility for the construction of the self as subject" (Han 2002: 10, Han's stress). In other words, to no longer see truth just as a regime but also as something that one can reformulate to create one's self anew. Therefore, a care of the self was reached, as Frederic Gros puts it, not through "a revolution" but through "a slow maturation, of a development with neither break nor commotion" (Gros 2005: 509). If we were to be insistent on describing Foucault's ethics as a shift, it would be best to see it as a somewhat Nietzschean shift from the 'nay' saying of his archaeology and genealogy of power against modernity and a normative subjectivity, to a 'yay' saying towards a creative ontology in the form of practices of freedom and a 'construction of the self as subject', as Han states above, that Foucault named subjectivation. It is this construction of the self in Foucault's ontology of freedom that the next two chapters engage with after a brief introduction to Foucault's ethics

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[50] See Brighenti 2016, for example.

below that illustrates what freedom actually means for Foucault, doing so via the medium of a rebuttal of Žižek's criticisms of Foucault's understanding of the subject and the agonism of power and resistance.

5.6 An Ethics of Freedom

Žižek's rationality of progress stemming from the Enlightenment expressed in a Hegelian dialectic of thesis, anti-thesis, supposition, is anti-Nietzschean because the genealogist Nietzsche went against Hegel and his dialectic, as does Foucault, whom Žižek cites as the "the anti-dialectician *par excellence*" (Žižek 2000: 253). Ironically, by wanting to dialectically leap beyond Foucault, Žižek seems unable to make the Nietzschean and non-dialectic leap beyond good and evil that Foucault makes regarding power and resistance. Thus, in his *The Ticklish Subject*, mentioned in Chapter 2, Žižek accuses Foucault of adhering to an agonism of power and resistance because of a stubbornness to engage in a Hegelian dialectic. Žižek states that Foucault seems to believe that because "resistance is co-opted in advance [. . .] it cannot seriously undermine the system–that is, he precludes the possibility that the system itself, on account of its inherent inconsistency, may give birth to a force whose excess it is no longer able to master and which thus detonates its unity, its capacity to reproduce itself" (256). Therefore, Žižek believes that we should move beyond Foucault's exposure of a discursive and contingent fiction to a negation of the negation.[51]

For the same reasons that Chapter 2 disputed Žižek's criticism of Ranciere's dissensus, we can dispute Žižek's criticism of Foucault as merely an imposition of a dialectic by Žižek's overt Hegelianism, Enlightenment rationality, and an adherence to ideology over discourse, where we must identify that which ideology apparently conceals. For Foucault, as mentioned in the prior section of the chapter, there is an agonism between power and resistance that perpetuates a normative power by any form of resistance that utilises the taxonomies imposed by the power it resists. Thus, for Foucault, we remain stuck in a cycle of power/resistance which perpetuates a normative and disciplinary power as well as a resistance to that power. As Žižek eloquently puts it:

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[51] As Fabio's and Feldner's book *Žižek': Beyond Foucault* (2007) which supports Žižek has it, by paraphrasing Marx: "[B]y unmasking reality as contingent discursive fiction, poststructuralist criticism has only deconstructed the world in different ways. The point, however, is to identify the Real of what seems to be mere discursive fiction, and to change it" (Fabio and Feldner 2007: 28).

> For Foucault [. . .] the relationship between prohibition and desire is circular and one of absolute immanence: power and resistance (counter-power) presuppose and generate each other–that is, the very prohibitive measure that categorise and regulate illicit desires effectively generate them. (Žižek 2000: 251)

Žižek, ever the dialectician, believes, however, as mentioned above, that "the very inherent antagonism of a system may well set in motion a process which leads to its own ultimate downfall" and "this is the fundamental feature of the dialectic-materialist notion of 'effect': the effect can 'outdo' its cause" (Žižek 2000: 256). Foucault, as stated above, believes otherwise and offers an ethics of freedom as a means of self-constitution as a resistance that does not adopt existing taxonomies and thus does not engage in the tautology of power and the resistance of identity politics. For Foucault, change occurs through immanence within practices of freedom, not through metaphysical ideals or the transcendence of the 'effect outdoing the cause'.[52] However, Žižek' critiques Foucault's offering of an ethics of freedom too: "In his attempt to break out of the vicious cycle of power and resistance, Foucault resorts to the myth of the state 'before the Fall' in which discipline was self-fashioned, not a procedure imposed by the culpabilising universal moral order" (251-2).[53] For Žižek, any view of an autonomous subject by Foucault is contradictory to Foucault's belief that discourse and power constitute subjects and thus also create an attachment to the taxonomy within that constitution that is utilised within identity politics as a means of resistance. Therefore, Žižek deduces that Foucault's introduction of ethics late in his career is merely a way to avoid a dialectic means of breaking the circle of power and resistance believing that: "Without allowing that disciplinary procedures can produce an unmasterable excess, Foucault is forced to ground resistance in a subject whose identity and desires mysteriously precede and escape construction by disciplinary norms" (Armstrong 2008: 21).

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[52] As Fjeld puts it regarding Ranciere's understanding of politics and police: "Because of the incommensurability of the connections [between police and politics], there is no internal contradiction that already carves out a path of resolution or that already privileges a certain constellation of connections as the outcome of a dialectical process" (Fjord 2016: 154). Instead, there is a gap created by dissensus where, in the synergy in this thesis, practices of equality and freedom can ontologically unfold.

[53] By 'before the Fall', Žižek means, as Armstrong puts it in her essay cited above, "a time in which self-discipline was an autonomous mechanism rather [than] a vehicle of subjection to disciplinary norms" (Armstrong 2008: 25).

For Foucault, identity politics and liberation are insufficient because freedom is seen as an ideal to be reached rather than a practice that can be enacted now. Yes, as stated above, we need a certain amount of liberation to enact practices of freedom, but liberation only takes us so far and infers that there is something, an essence, that needs to be liberated: "Liberation paves the way for new power relationships, which must be controlled by practices of freedom" (Foucault 1984b: 283-4). To quote Ortega Y Gassett again and apply him to Foucault's understanding of freedom:

> Freedom is not an activity pursued by an entity that, apart from and previous to such pursuit, is already possessed of a fixed being. To be free means to be lacking in constitutive identity, not to have subscribed to a determined being, to be able to be other than what one was, to be unable to install oneself once and for all in any given being. The only attribute of the fixed, stable being in the free being is this constitutive instability. (Ortega Y Gasset 1941: 203)

It is this constitutive instability that Foucault, influenced by Nietzsche, just as Ortega Y Gassett was, seeks to explore within an ethics of freedom. It is this instability, reminiscent (but not the same) of the four oscillations of instability described in *The Order of Things*, that can erase the face of modernity's invention, *man*.[54] This is why Foucault incorporated an ethics of freedom, not because of the criticisms of his understanding of power. As Foucault writes in the 'The Subject and Power' and Armstrong quotes in her aforementioned essay (Armstrong 2008: 24):

> Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political "double bind," which is the simultaneous individualisation and totalisation of modem power structures. The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our days is not to try to liberate the individual from the state, and from the state's institutions, but to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualisation linked to the state. We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality that has been imposed on us for several centuries. (Foucault 1982a: 336)

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[54] A constitutive instability in this context comes about by emancipatory practices of freedom. Whereas, the four oscillations of instability came about, according to Foucault, by modernity's invention man, as relayed in the second section of this chapter.

Therefore, "it is not a theoretical insufficiency," as Armstrong puts it, that stops Foucault from dialectically spinning out of the tautology of resistance and power, "but his conception of freedom which commits him to an agonistic rather than a dialectical understanding of the relationship" (Armstrong 2008: 24-5). In other words, there will always be an agonism between practices of freedom and power because there will never be total ontological freedom. This indirectly lies in congruence, through the need to be governed that we addressed in Rancière's work, with the agonism between the *demos* and the police, the prior of which, supplements, in this thesis's synergy, Foucault's lack, as Wendy Brown puts it, of a "political body" in an oeuvre where subjects are only "governed or resist being governed as individual subjects or as disciplinary bodies" (Brown 2015: 73). Eagleton goes a step further and states:

> As with Nietzsche, Foucault's vigorously self-mastering individual remains wholly monadic. Society is just an assemblage of autonomous self-disciplining agents, with no sense that their self-realisation might flourish with bonds of mutuality"" (Eagleton 2004: 393).

Eagleton's critique is contested in the engagement with *parrheisa* in chapters 7 and 8. However, this does not detail how we can answer Žižek's other criticism that Foucault's ethics do not explain how a subject of a productive power and regime of truth can break out of that subjectivity in an exceedance of their production. Without this possibility, there is no effective resistance against power and normative discourses. Armstrong offers Deleuze's (1988a) description of Foucault's ethics as a means "of rethinking productive power as simultaneously objectifying and subjectifying" (Armstrong 2008: 26). We can see that this indirectly links us to Rancière's practices of equality where Rancière speaks in a 1981 interview of Gauny's "strength to live out his dream and its contradictions: to be a worker without being one" (Rancière 2017c: 22). A simultaneity of objectification and subjectivation involves the techniques of the self that Foucault borrows from the Greeks and indirectly links to an understanding of Gauny as a double: both worker and poet. In other words, a subject may exceed their production by the self-reflection instigated through a governing and 'care of the self' *epimeleia heautou* (that we shall examine in Chapter 6) as it intermingles with and thus alters how knowledge, truth, and power form one's self. We can recall the quote above of Foucault's statement that freedom is the ontological condition of ethics. Foucault continues this statement, however, with the following: "But ethics is the form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection" (Foucault: 1984b: 284). It is this reflection that informs a creation of oneself within a self-constitution. Furthermore,

unlike Armstrong, this thesis will argue in Part 3 that it is through 'dissensus', in Rancière's understanding of the term, that an ontological gap unfolds for auto-subjectivities to emerge within the rupture of a police logic of space and time. As Rancière states regarding Gauny, he invented "an economy of freedom" (Rancière 2017c: 21) not materialism, so that he may have the time to be an autodidact and to think and reinvent himself within a dissensus of space and time. Rancière and Foucault both see their separate views of emancipation as something that stems from immanence, not the transcendence of suppositions that some academics such as Žižek adhere to. This is because Rancière and Foucault offer practices and the multiple relations they are involved in rather than ideals of equality and freedom in the dialectic confrontation of one force over another.

To briefly sum up, by engaging with Foucault's archaeology and genealogy and by introducing his ethics of the self, this chapter has shown how a practice of freedom was not an ethical turn for Foucault but a continuation of his prior work on the complexities of relations of knowledge, truth, and power and how they intertwine in the production and self-relation of the subject. Now that we have this foundation of understanding, we can turn to the next chapter to address the Greco-Roman ethics that Foucault draws his ontology of freedom from in search of an aesthetics of existence to enable new subjectivities.

Chapter 6 - An Aesthetics of Existence: The Care of the Self

Foucault's 1979 - 1980 lecture series *On the Government of the Living* focussed on confession as practiced by early Christianity. These lectures illustrate Foucault's shift from a focus on knowledge and power, as he states in the first lecture, to "government by the truth" (Foucault 2014a: 11). Foucault gives 'the government by the truth' a neologism which he forges from a Greek adjective used only once before, he tells us, by the grammarian, not the philosopher, Heraclitus: *alēthourgēs* (truthful) (7). Through his creation of *alēthourgia* as a fictional substantive, Foucault crafts the neologism alethurgy, meaning the "manifestation of truth correlative to the exercise of power" (6). These lectures are the first time, as Gros points out, that Foucault explores "regulated procedures which tie a subject to truth" (Gros 2005: 509)–"the relations between *autos* and alethurgy" (Foucault 2014a: 50)–and thus they directly lead Foucault, Gros informs us (Gros 2005: 513), to define his area of research as subjectivity and truth, as the following lecture course of that title illustrates. This research worked through the dynamic of ancient Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman sexuality in regard to a focus on subjects constituting themselves rather than being constituted by knowledge and power as they are in Foucault's prior research drawn from the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and Modernity.[1] Through this work on subjectivity and truth, Foucault attempts to illustrate that morality as an ethics of the self, a constitution of the self, was dissipated by a morality of codes and a system of rules that evolved from a knowledge of the self. This knowledge initially manifested in Christianity as confession, leading to the pastoral power that Foucault described in *Security, Territory, Population*, as mentioned in Chapter 5. This Christian technology of confession morphed, Foucault believed, into a need for contemporary subjects to feel morally obliged to know themselves and to confess the truth about themselves as taxonomic subjects within a political pastoral power made manifest in modern state apparatuses and governmentality. Foucault thought that over and above this onto-theologically rooted morality, what was needed, as he stated in a 1984 interview echoing Nietzsche, was "the search for an aesthetics of existence" (Foucault 1984f: 49). He believed that this aesthetics could act as a means to constitute oneself within the connectivity of subjectivity, truth and power and therefore, could create a form of effective resistance against normative practices. It is this aesthetics of existence, that Foucault searches for in his work on an ethics of freedom, and a care of the self,

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[1] Sex played the dominant role within Foucault's research of a subject's relation to truth. However, there were other domains within the Greco-Roman relationship to truth such as "writing, the medical relationship to the self, etc" (Gros 2005: 512).

that this chapter critically examines whilst, as we build up to the synergy in Part 3, highlighting aspects both analogous to, and in need of supplementation from, Rancière's practices of equality. Therefore, this chapter's engagement with Foucault's aesthetics of existence and a care of the self is interlaced with an illustration of the homology of practices of freedom and equality as forms of emancipation. As such, the chapter links Rancière's tactical use of a bi-univocality as a counter univocality to Foucault's act of offering historical fictions as a counter memory. It also shows that Foucault's agonistic understanding of the relationship between freedom and power indirectly resonates with the continual tension between the *demos* and the police that Rancière cites in his belief that no society will ever be equal. In doing so, it illustrates that, just like Rancière's practices of equality, Foucault's practices of equality flow into the understanding that only individuals, not society as a whole, can achieve emancipation. It also demonstrates how it can be useful to see Foucault's ethical politics as political in the same sense as Rancière's use of politics as dissensus and thus, how Foucault's politics (transgression) and aesthetics (transformation) are indirectly inline with Rancière's formulation of politics and aesthetics as mutually dependent on each other via the simultaneity of transgression and transformation. Lastly, this chapter also shows that Foucault's practices of freedom are best understood, although Foucault does not state as much, like Rancière's practices of equality, as a presupposition.

Whilst Foucault's inaugural series of lectures at the Collège de France in 1971 known as *The Will to Know* are the first by Foucault to involve the Greeks, his 1981 lecture course *Subjectivity and Truth* offers the first series of lectures where the focus lies on Greco-Roman antiquity as a means to address subjectivity and truth within a care and techniques of the self. Therefore, in this chapter, it is to this text that we turn, along with *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, and the second and third volumes of History of Sexuality: *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*, respectively. However, we shall not be using the posthumously published fourth volume, *Les Aveux de la chair* (*Confessions of the Flesh*) (2021 [2018]), as it lies beyond the scope of this thesis. This is because the last two of its three chapters–'*Être vierge'* (Being Virgin) and '*Être marié'* (Being Married)–contain an onto-theological focus on the constraints of sex through monasticism and marriage and thus fall outside of our ontological interest, and because its first chapter–'*La formation d'une expérience nouvelle*' (The Formation of a New Experience)–is a detailed exposition of the continuum between the Greco-Roman ethics based on the mode of

experience of *aphrodisia* and the Christian morality based on the 'experience of the flesh':[2] "the topography [*cartographie*] of the parting [*partage*] of the waters" (Foucault 1988: 241) between paganism and Christianity, as Foucault is translated as writing in a 1982 text quoting Peter Brown.[3] As we shall only touch lightly on this *cartographie* in passing through an engagement with this chapter's core readings, there is no need to engage with the first chapter of *Les Aveux de la chair*.

The first section of this chapter examines how a care of the self and its focus on action was subsumed by a hermeneutics of the self and its stress on interpreting inner thoughts. The second addresses Foucault's understanding of Greco-Roman sexuality as an ethical substance that can be used to form new subjectivities. The third turns to Foucault's research on Stoicism and defends his ethics against the classicist Pierre Hadot's criticism (Hadot 1999) of Foucault's particular understanding of Stoicism as a schematic offering that could possibly lead to sybaritism. This defence aids this section's unpacking of Foucault's ethics as not being a reinvented Stoicism or a modern cult of the self. The fourth and last section of this chapter draws from the prior three sections by opening up a development of Chapter 5 by engaging with Foucault's understanding of the individual's reconfiguration of their relations with truth within practices of freedom. This leads to Chapter 7 and Foucault's shift from Stoicism to the Cynics and a focus on *parrhesia*.

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[2] As a parenthetical aside, It is worth mentioning that for Foucault, as he states in *Subjectivity and Truth*: "Christianity and paganism are not well-formed wholes, perfectly clear cut individualities [. . .] paganism is in no way an unchanging, unitary, and stable system [. . .] it would be imprudent to talk of a single Christianity, as if one Christianity existed" (Foucault 2017: 17).

[3] In the lecture on the 14th of January 1981 in *Subjectivity and Truth*, 'the topography of the parting of the waters' is translated as "the cartography of this "watershed"" (Foucault 2017: 37). The editor, Gros, informs us in a footnote to this quote that "Peter Brown takes the expression "watershed" from a passage in W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965) p. 389: "this water-shed between the Ancient World and the European Middle Ages" (Gros in Foucault 2017: 44, Note 8). For more details on these two different translations, see the 22nd of November 2014 note on Elden's blog, https://progressivegeographies.com/2014/11/22/a-minor-note-on-michel-foucault-and-peter-brown-from-a-watershed-to-the-parting-of-the-waters/ (accessed 30-04-20). For a concise overview of *Les Aveux de la chair*, see Elden's review (Elden 2018).

6.1 Subjectivity and Truth: The Hermeneutics of the Subject and a Care of the Self

In the first lecture of two at Dartmouth College in November 1980, 'Subjectivity and Truth' (Foucault 2016a),[4] Foucault's aim was to show that the hermeneutics of the self in Christianity was not present in Greco-Roman ethics. Rather, it was, as he stated in the second lecture, 'Christianity and Confession' (Foucault 2016b), a Christian invention. According to Foucault, antiquity's philosophical focus on techniques and a care of the self dissipated within a hermeneutics of the self made manifest by Christianity's practice of confession. Foucault names these two different dynamics of the self as the "gnomic self" and "gnoseologic self," respectively. The latter term etymologically stems from *gnōthi seauton* (know yourself) and the prior term stems from *gnṓmē* which means thought and opinion, but Foucault defines it here as "the unity of will and knowledge" (Foucault 2016a: 36). This is because, for Foucault, the aim of a "Stoic technology" was to be a subject of both knowledge and will (Foucault 2016b: 61). Taken together, they represent a dichotomy of morality: "a personal ethics," as Foucault puts it in the 1984 interview 'An Aesthetics of Existence', and a Christian ethos of "the will of God" and "obedience," manifested "as obedience to a system of rules" (Foucault 1984f: 49). As *gnṓmē* was dissolved by *gnōthi seauton*, there was a shift from a constitution of the self to a discovery of the self. As Foucault believed that the "idea of a morality as obedience to a code of rules" (49) was disappearing or had already disappeared after modernity's death of God, he called for a search for an aesthetics of existence to fill this void: "most of us no longer believe that ethics is founded in religion, nor do we want a legal system to intervene in our moral, personal, private life" (Foucault 1983b: 255). Foucault writes:

> Recent liberation movements suffer from the fact that they cannot find any principle on which to base the elaboration of a new ethics. They need an ethics, but they cannot find any other ethics than an ethics founded on so-called scientific knowledge of what the self is, what desire is, what the unconscious is, and so on. (Foucault 1983b: 255-6)

It is within this Nietzschean-sounding search, in a shift from a morality rooted in ontotheology and Christian hermeneutics, that Foucault carries out a genealogy of western subjectivity and ethics with the intention of understanding why, in the lecture series *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, the care of the self was dissolved by a hermeneutics of the self. In the first lecture of this series, Foucault tells us that the famous Delphic inscription of *gnōthi seauton* is usually

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[4] Not to be confused with Foucault's 1980 - 1981 Collège de France lecture series of the same title.

seen as the original expression regarding the relation between truth and the subject rather than *epimeleia heautou*, care of the self. However, Foucault informs us that when *gnōthi seauton* appeared in philosophical discourse, it did so through Socrates (Foucault 2005 :4), and it was also from Socrates that the philosophical idea of the care of the self comes.[5] Foucault states that in some texts *gnōthi seauton* is subordinated to the precept of *epimeleia heautou* and in other significant texts, is subsumed within the generic matrix of a care of the self as one of its forms (4). Whilst the care of the self is a matter of self-reflection and transforming oneself, it is also shown to be, Foucault states, "an attitude towards the self, others, and the world" (10). Therefore, it is not the case, as some critics have stated, such as Johanna Oksala (2005) (through a Levinasian lens), that Foucault's ethics of freedom does not involve an ethics of the other and thus has no ethical meaning.[6] While Foucault stated, regarding the Greeks' viewpoint on the care of the self, in the 1984 interview 'The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom', "Care for others should not be put before the care of oneself. The care of the self is ethically prior in that the relationship with oneself is ontologically prior" (Foucault 1984b: 287), this does not mean that there is not a relationship with the Other, especially if we take in to account the socio-dynamic of the Stoicism that Foucault drew from. As Foucault tells us in *The Care of the Self*, philosophical doctrines, Stoicism especially, that promoted an austerity of comportment, denounced social isolation and insisted on the importance of carrying out one's social obligations (Foucault 1986a: 42).[7] Therefore, the care of the self appears to be "an intensification of social relations" (53), and it is this care of the self, Foucault hypothesises, that is the main thread in the thousand year history of subjectivity from the fifth century BCE., to the fifth century CE (Foucault 2005: 11). Accordingly, Foucault asks why the care of the self has

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[5] Socrates, is well known for asking people in the street if they are taking care of themselves, but Foucault notes that Socrates' philosophical question of a care of the self is derivative, stemming from a long pre-philosophical tradition of *epimeleia heautou* (Foucault 2005: 31-2): "[T]his requirement to care for the self, this practice—or rather, the set of practices in which the care of the self will appear—is actually rooted in very old practices, in ways of acting and types and modalities of experience that constituted its historical basis well before Plato and even Socrates. That the truth cannot be attained without a certain practice, or set of fully specified practices, which transform the subject's mode of being, change its given mode of being, and modify it by transfiguring it, is a prephilosophical theme which gave rise to many more or less ritualised procedures" (46).

[6] "A reflexive and critical relationship to one's self can be constitutive of an aesthetical style of living, but only a relationship to the other can give it an ethical meaning" (Oksala 2005: 205). In contrast, see Benda Hofmeyr's *Ethics and Aesthetics in Foucault and Levinas* (Hofmeyr 2005) for a reading of Foucault's ethics as more relevant today and more responsible towards the Other than the ethical metaphysics of Levinas.

[7] Stoicism is, after all, a means for an individual to not only be in harmony with themselves but also with other people–perhaps this is why later Stoics (arguably) stressed the 'ethics' of Stoicism (see below).

124

been jettisoned for know yourself when ancient texts seem to show that it was the prior that framed the latter, and why a hermeneutics of the self emerged hand in hand in with a Christian culture of confession. He believes the reference point of this change, if you like, the landmark, so to speak, within modern philosophy, occurs in the seventeenth century's 'Cartesian moment', the moment that both requalified 'know yourself' and discredited the 'care of the self'.

Foucault states that by placing the impossibility of doubting one's own existence as self-evident through *cogito ergo sum*–"we cannot doubt of our existence while we doubt" (Descartes 2002: 10)–Descartes made *gnōthi seauton* "into a fundamental means of access to truth" (Foucault 2005: 14). However, this is not just Descartes' doing, according to Foucault, but the advent of truth in the 'modern age' being seen as something only assessable by knowledge (*connaissance*), where the self becomes an object of both scientific knowledge and self-knowledge susceptible to the later techniques of power and knowledge that Foucault writes of in his earlier work.[8] With spirituality, however, truth is only assessable through transformation and aesthetic knowledge. In the 'modern' understanding of truth, the subject has no need to change to be able to know the truth through reason and thus has no need for the transformation given by a care of the self. If philosophy is, Foucault states, "the form of thought that asks what it is that enables the subject to have access to the truth and which attempts to determine the conditions and limits of the subject's access to the truth," spirituality is "the search, practice, and experience through which the subject carries out the necessary transformations on himself in order to have access to the truth" (15). Thus, according to Foucault, spirituality is the postulation that access to truth only happens through a transformation of the subject and therefore, truth is not something to possess but something to carry out as a practice where one does not have access to an objective truth via practices, as truth 'is' the actual practices themselves. This transformation can occur through working on oneself, which the Greeks named *áskēsis*,[9]

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[8] In fact, whilst Descartes is known as the father of modern philosophy due to his shift away from the onto-theology of the Middle Ages, he, and those that came after him, according to the Russian philosopher Lev Shestov, were tied to the knowledge of the self: "Leibniz, Spinoza, Kant, and all the German idealists followed the way traced by scholastic thought" (Shestov 1966: 249). As Foucault states in the fifteenth lecture of *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*: "The transition from spiritual exercise to intellectual method is obviously very clear in Descartes" (Foucault 2005: 294). "It is clear that, with regard to what took place in the seventeenth century with Descartes, Pascal, and Spinoza of course, we could find again this conversion of the knowledge of spirituality into the knowledge of intellectual knowledge" (309).

[9] As the classicist Pierre Hadot puts it, *áskēsis* must not be understood as "asceticism, but as the practice of spiritual exercises" (Hadot 1999: 82).

125

through techniques of the self and in the first two centuries CE., through a care of the self. Once this truth is reached through transformation, the philosophers of antiquity believed, especially the Stoics, the subject will be transformed again, this time into a state of equanimity: "the truth gives the subject tranquility of the soul" (16).

To be ataraxic, to have a tranquility of the soul, one must have cured one's soul of all ills. In the summary of *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault states that we should "remember the principle, familiar to Epicureans, Cynics, and Stoics, that the role of philosophy is to cure the diseases of the soul" (Foucault 2005: 496). Here the soul is meant in the Stoic sense of soul (*psuchê*) as a part of *pneuma*–a vital essence or creative force.[10] However, Foucault tells us that Plato, in his *Alcibiades*,[11] thinks of the self as the soul, but not as the soul as a substance that *psuchê* defines but as "the soul-subject" (57): the subject that acts and rules the body. If we think of the soul in the sense that Foucault describes the 'modern soul' in *Discipline and Punish*, as detailed in Chapter 5, as a correlative of a certain technology of power over the body–an internal self in sync with other concepts known as psyche, subjectivity, personality, conscious, etc., an immanent, if you like, rather than transcendent soul–we can think of the 'modern soul' as a 'soul-subject' too, but within the semantics of a subject of power and knowledge that acts and rules the body which is trapped in the prison of the soul. In doing so, the 'unlearning' that Foucault cites as applicable in Stoicism for the unwell soul, the self, then becomes applicable to the unlearning of subjectivities imposed by the 'modern soul' on the contemporary subject by a productive power and a discursive knowledge made manifest in normative discourses and institutions:

> The practice of the self must enable one to rid oneself of all one's bad habits and all the false opinions one may get from the crowd or from bad teachers, as well as from parents and associates. To "unlearn" *(de-discere)* is an important task of the culture of the self. (Foucault 2005: 495)

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[10] For the Stoics, human existents have four levels of tension containing *pneuma*: "She will have *pneuma* as *hexis* giving cohesion to her bones, for instance; *pneuma* as *phusis* by virtue of being alive in the most basic biological sense; *pneuma* as *psuchē* giving her the animal faculties of impression and impulse; and *pneuma* as *logikē psuchē* giving her the rational power of judgement that can intervene between receiving impressions and acting on impulses" (Sellars 2014: 105).

[11] According to some translators and commentators, *Alcibiades* is not Plato's work–"Until the nineteenth century Alcibiades was assumed to be the work of Plato, but the ascription to Plato is now a minority view" (Hutchinson 1997: 557)–and Foucault discusses this in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* (Foucault 2005: 72-3).

If we select the quote by Seneca quoted in Foucault's *The Care of the Self* where Seneca states that an individual must put all aside to "be able to make himself vacant for himself (*sibi vacare*) [. . .] in order to "develop oneself," "transform one self," "return to oneself"" (Foucault 1986a: 46), we can see a similarity to *de-discere*. However, whilst an idea of a vacancy for the self might make us start to think of an escape from power and thus the death of the normative subject that leaves an existent as a *tabula rasa* vacant for self-constitution, this is not what Foucault or Seneca meant. Rather, their meaning was to make time for *epimeleia heautou*: "caring entirely for the self, attending to oneself" (Foucault 2005: 263). For Foucault, the philosopher of immanence, there is no escape from relations of power, be it through a *tabula rasa* or otherwise, as a society functions by these relations according to Foucault, as we discussed in Chapter 5. Therefore, whilst Stoicism is cited, amongst other things, as a preparation for the death of *zôion* (biological life), we cannot think of the unlearning of the Stoics' *de-discere* as a metaphorical death by some kind of vacancy of the self. Instead, we can think of *de-discere* as a process of desubjugation that coexists with the objectified self in the aim to cure the 'modern soul' via a self-constitution contra a normative constitution–it is, to adopt a term Foucault uses in the introduction to *The Use of Pleasure*, a "straying afield" of oneself (Foucault 1990a: 8). Consequently, it can be seen as a partial death of our *bíos* (way of life).[12] Thus, it is through *de-discere* that we can think of an unlearning of the normative self as not creating the totality of space afforded by a *tabula rasa*, but a space nevertheless with "a new vantage point and in a clearer light" (11) in which subjectivities can be created within a transformation of the ethical substance made up of normative subjectivities. Therefore, according to the regimen of control encouraged by Stoic-influenced rhetorician and grammarian Athenaeus, whom Foucault quotes in *The Care of the Self*, the soul corrects itself in order to be capable of guiding the body.[13]

To return to Foucault's thematic, the demise of spirituality and a care of the self, the two themes, 'how to access truth' and 'practices', in other words, philosophy and spirituality, were in Antiquity, Foucault states, always joined together by all philosophers except Aristotle because

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[12] As John Sellars states in his *The Art of Living: The Stoics on the Nature and Function of Philosophy* (2009): "In antiquity the word *βίος* [*bíos*] or 'life' referred to an individual's way of life or manner of living and was distinct from the merely biological connotations of being a 'living being', for which the Greeks used *ζῷον* [*zôion*]" (Sellars 2009: 21-2).

[13] "This regimen does not require that one institute a struggle of the soul against the body, nor even that one establish means by which the soul might defend itself from the body. Rather, it is a matter of the soul's correcting itself in order to be able to guide the body [. . .]" (Foucault 1986a: 134).

he had little interest in spirituality (Foucault 2005: 17, 189)–hence the key focus on know thy self by the Scholasticism of the middle ages which was influenced by Aristotle (26).[14] Therefore, in a nutshell, when Foucault speaks of the shift away from spirituality and the care of the self, he is speaking, amongst other things, about the shift from the view of philosophy as a way of life to the view of philosophy as something that is purely academic, purely knowledge-based.[15] According to Foucault, this shift was instigated by the conflict between theology and spirituality from the fifth century CE through theologians such as Saint Augustine and later, Thomas Aquinas, within the positing of "the knowing subject" founded on a faith in "an omniscient God" (26). It is not the case, however, that Foucault is prioritising spirituality over academic philosophy or, in other words, the care of the self over knowing oneself. To the contrary, he believes that it is important that knowledge of the self and care of the self are intertwined as they once were in Greco-Roman practices, as to take care of oneself is to know oneself: "neither of the two elements should be neglected to the advantage of the other" (69). However, Foucault does not mean this in the Platonic sense which he sees as one of the instigators of subordinating spirituality where "as soon as the space of the care of the self is opened up and the self is defined as the soul, the entire space thus opened up is taken over by the principle of "know yourself"" (68).[16] Taking care of oneself is an autotelic practice which began, according to Foucault, with the Epicureans (Foucault 1983b: 260) where "the *téléologie* was the mastery of oneself" (267), which of course, one never reached. However, for the Stoics, unlike Plato, whilst trying to master oneself, one maintained a logos (discourse/truth) with oneself. This is because, for the Stoics, truth is not within oneself but in the philosophical discourses themselves that one practices, the *logoi*. As McGushin puts it in his book on Foucault's *áskēsis*, "the goal was not so

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[14] However, Aristotles' statement in 'Book II' of the *Nichomachean Ethics*, mentioned in the beginning of the last chapter of this thesis, that virtues of character arise through habit, bears a strong connection with the ethos and spirituality of a care of the self: "[V]irtue of character (*ēthos*) is a result of habituation (*ethos*), for which reason it has acquired its name through a small variation on `ethos'" (Aristotle 2004: 23). That being said, Aristotle's treatise on the soul *De Anima* (Aristotle 2016) has nothing to do with spirituality, and this seems to be what Foucault's comment pertains to.

[15] Seneca said such the same in letter CVIII when he wrote of philosophers teaching people "how to argue instead of how to live" and of students who wanted to develop "their intellect" rather than "their character" (Seneca 2004: 207).

[16] "Platonism was the constant climate in which a movement of knowledge *(connaissance)* developed, a movement of pure knowledge without any condition of spirituality, precisely because the distinctive feature of Platonism is to show how the work of the self on itself, the care one must have for oneself if one wants access to the truth, consists in knowing oneself, that is to say in knowing the truth. To that extent, knowledge of the self and knowledge of the truth (the activity of knowledge, the movement and method of knowledge in general) absorb, as it were, or reabsorb the requirements of spirituality" (Foucault 2005: 77).

much to know the truth as to become the truth" (McGushin 2007: xxix). Or as Foucault puts it in a 1984 interview, "you have become the logos, or the logos has become you" (Foucault 1984b: 286). Thus, for Foucault, as he puts it in an earlier interview: "The care of the self is the care of the activity and not the care of the soul-as-substance" (Foucault 1982d: 230-1). Therefore, discourse and a way of life do not correspond to theory and practice[17] as discourse becomes one's truth, one's practice, one's way of life: the care of the self is the care of the activity because the self becomes the logos. Plato's *Alcibiades*, however, for Foucault, was the initial introduction into philosophy of *gnōthi seauton* "as the essential condition of philosophical practice" (Foucault 2005: 170) which led to a Neoplatonist delimitation in the second century CE of *epimeleia heautou* as merely a form of *gnōthi seauton* (173). Whilst Platonism contained both an understanding of self-knowledge and a care of the self, Foucault states that it reabsorbed "spirituality in the movement of knowledge alone, of knowledge of the self, of the divine, and of essences" (78). Furthermore, we must remember that whilst Plato was a philosopher of transcendence, Foucault was a thinker of immanence. Therefore, for Foucault, we must ground ourselves in immanent practices rather than the metaphysics and transcendence of Platonic truth that seems to be forever unreachable.[18] The occident is underpinned by a normative edifice of hierarchic binaries justified by a belief in a hegemonic meta-narrative of logos (truth/essence) stemming from Plato's binary of ideal forms and appearances, and quite possibly before them, that has, for Foucault, excluded spirituality and *áskēsis* in the form of a care of the self. It seems that Foucault is saying that by intermingling *gnōthi seauton* and *epimeleia heautou* again–knowledge and exercise (*epistēmē, meletē*)–a form of resistance can be offered that, unlike identity politics, will not perpetuate the normative production of subjects and the logophilia that it is rooted in because truth takes on a different meaning, that of transformation rather than essence–albeit via different practices to those of the Greeks and

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[17] In his *What is Ancient Philosophy?* (2004 [1995]) Hadot writes: "Nor should we oppose discourse and way of life, as though they corresponded to theory and practice, respectively. Discourse can have a practical aspect, to the extent that it tends to produce an effect on the listener or reader. Insofar as way of life is concerned, it cannot, of course, be theoretic, but it can be theoretical-that is to say, contemplative" (Hadot 2004: 4).

[18] In fact, there was a whole wave of anti-Platonic thought in French, twentieth-century philosophy: Derrida wrote that the occidental binary logic of hierarchy can be traced back to Plato's, hierarchic binary of transcendent ideal forms and immanent appearances (Derrida 1997: 3); and Deleuze, whose thoughts lay in congruence with Foucault's regarding the logocentrism of the normative, stated, as quoted in Chapter 3 of this thesis: "The task of modern philosophy has been defined: to overturn Platonism" (Deleuze 1994: 59).

Romans.[19] However, it is important to ask, if we can unlearn normative subjectivities, ways of being imposed by discursive and non-discursive practices, and thus, heal the 'modern soul' in Foucault's understanding of the term, what then remains to transform?

In the eleventh lecture of *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault states that one of the uncertainties of Greco-Roman practices of the self is that it is not totally transparent as to whether one returns to one's self through *áskēsis* or if the self is something that you might eventually be able to access if you reach ataraxia (Foucault 2005: 213-4). Within a Foucauldian view, we can understand that there is nothing intrinsic remaining after 'unlearning', so to speak, as this would imply some kind of transcendental essence, the idea of which, Foucault and many other twentieth century thinkers have turned against. In other words, there is no quantification of what remains after the dissolution of the 'modern soul'; "being," as Nietzsche put it, "is an empty fiction" (Nietzsche 1997: 19). In Foucault's understanding, this would be a fiction of knowledge, power, and truth. Therefore, instead of an essence, we can think, as Foucault informs us, of the human as a form, an ever-shifting historical form that can divest itself of a normative subjectivity, although not totally, through an unlearning (*de-discere*) that leaves an ontological gap as a 'constitutive instability', to use Ortega Y Gassett's aforementioned term, for self-constituted subjectivities. What remains, however, during the path of unlearning, is the ethical substance of existing subjectivties that one is trying to emancipate one's self from. Foucault's understanding of the ethical substance derives from his engagement with Greco-Roman sexuality.

6.2 Sexuality

After the introduction in *The Use of Pleasure*, the very first thing that Foucault writes is that Greco-Roman antiquity had nothing that resembled the Christian understanding of the "'flesh' or the contemporary notion of 'sexuality'" (Foucault 1990a: 35)–the latter of which, according to Foucault, only appeared as a term in the nineteenth century (3). The nearest we can get to a definition of sexuality from antiquity, Foucault states, is from the word *aphrodisia* which Foucault defines as that "through which one can grasp what was recognised as the "ethical substance" in sexual behaviour" (37) as it was, as he states in the third lecture of *Subjectivity and Truth*, "the schema that organises the ethical perception of sexual acts" (Foucault 2017: 90). Therefore, *aphrodisia*, "at the level of the ethical substance," as Timothy O'Leary states, was "the 'material'

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[19] As Katarzyna Dworakowska puts it regarding Foucault's perspective: "ancients are not the model of the new ethos, but only its tenuous inspiration as the work on the self" (Dworakowska 2019: 178).

of sexual ethics" (O'Leary 2002: 73). The ethical substance for the Greeks was, as Foucault defines it in the interview 'On the Genealogy of Ethics', "linked with pleasure and desire" (Foucault 1983b: 264). Or, as he writes in *The Use of Pleasure*, it was "the way in which the individual has to constitute this or that part of himself as the prime material of his moral conduct" (Foucault 1990a: 26).

The ethical substance is one of four parts of ethics within a relation to the self, according to Foucault. The other three are, the mode of subjectivation (how a person practices and feels obliged to carry out this practice of a rule), ethical work (the work carried out on oneself to comply with a rule), and the telos (attaining a mode of being conducive to an ethical subject) (Foucault 1990a: 27-8). Foucault sums this up:

> [A]ll moral action involves a relationship with the reality in which it is carried out, and a relationship with the self. The latter is not simply "self-awareness" but self-formation as an "ethical subject," a process in which the individual delimits that part of himself that will form the object of his moral practice, defines his position relative to the precept he will follow, and decides on a certain mode of being that will serve as his moral goal. (Foucault 1990a: 28)

As O'Leary puts it, in the present day, the normative subjectivities imposed upon us can be seen as our ethical substance and "the aesthetic is the attitude we adopt towards them" (subjectivation), whilst philosophy becomes a technique for transformation (ethical work) and the telos is freedom in Foucault's understanding of the word as a practice (O'Leary 2002: 154). We can recall the Foucault quote above that the care of the self is the care of the activity and not the care of the soul as substance. Therefore, practices of freedom are autotelic as they are their own telos, their own end in what can be seen, as this thesis puts it, as an autophagy of the soul where one uses the 'ethical substance' of normative identities to form new ways of being. Thus, there is no self to free, there are only practices of the self. Therefore, freedom, for Foucault, like equality for Ranciere, is a practice, not an ideal. However, as O'Leary quite rightly points out, we cannot be so precisely formulaic in regard to Foucault's fourfold root of ethics that he contemporises, as an ethics of freedom was not presented systematically by Foucault.[20]

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[20] "One of the dangers of attempting any precise characterisation of a key element in an ethics which was never systematised by its author, however, is that we will either limit the possible ways of thinking about that ethics, or we will elevate more or less contingent elements to the status of essential principles. We need to remember, therefore,

Rather, for Foucault, ethics was a relation with the self, a care of the self through a stylisation of one's life that enabled a fashioning of the self through Socrates' thematic cited above as the combination of a subject of knowledge and an ethical subject: "knowledge and exercise (*epistēmē, meletē*)" (Foucault 1990a: 211). Therefore, the care of the self was not offered by philosophical discourse just as a means to transform oneself but to transform, as Foucault puts it, one's very "existence into a kind of permanent exercise" (Foucault 1986a: 49). This was an exercise that taught the existent how to live by philosophy as a way of life: *techne tou biou* (techniques of existence). As the title of 'Part Two' of *The Care of the Self* has it, *epimeleia heautou* is 'The Cultivation of the Self': "an intensification of the relation to oneself by which one constituted oneself as the subject of one's acts" (41). However, Foucault states that *techne tou biou* concerned only the so-called social elite who had the time to care for themselves (45).[21] This is perhaps one reason why Foucault turned away from the Stoics to the Cynics, whom we address in the next chapter, as they achieved a cultivation of the self in living the life of a mendicant. However, Hadot would believe otherwise. In his book on spiritual exercises (Hadot 1999), the aforementioned classicist, criticised Foucault by stating that Foucault's ethical offering within a care of the self could become sybaritic because Foucault never engaged with the holistic dynamic of all three Stoic *topoi*.

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that it is not necessary to fix, or enumerate, the set of techniques which Foucault would have considered capable of contributing to an ethics of self-transformation" (O'Leary 2002: 139-40). As Rancière states regarding concepts, they "are moving paths traced on maps of shifting relationships" (Rancière 2017e: 105).

[21] Whilst Foucault would have been sympathetic towards such inequality–only those with the time afforded by affluence could have the time to care for the self, just as with Plato only those with time could engage in politics–in his search for practices of freedom he does not address this absence of isonomy. This makes him appear to either accept or ignore the problematic that, according to the Greco-Roman world, having the luxury of time is the precondition of a meaningful care of the self and as such, those without this luxury cannot partake in this care and therefore, cannot partake in the creation of new subjectivities. This being the case, in offering freedom, Foucault seems to forget equality. Therefore, as Callinicos states, asking the underprivileged of the world to make their life into a work of art "would be an insult" (Callinicos 1989: 91). And as Eagleton strongly words it, it is "an embarrassment that the aestheticisation of the self which he [(Foucault])] so strongly recommends should take its origin from the need to sustain the political authority of a slave-based society" (Eagleton 2004: 393). However, Rancière shows, in his archival work, as we discussed in part one, how the *sans part* can work and take care of the self by filling hours normally occupied by rest with autodidactic activities. In doing so, in the context of this thesis's synergy, Rancière indirectly quells criticisms such as Callinicos's and Eagleton's by answering affirmatively to Foucault's unasked question: Can those without the luxury of time afforded by affluence engage in practices of the self? That being said, Foucault was not asking us to become Stoics and therefore, was not translating Stoicism to the contemporary and thus, to a degree his lack of addressing the fact that most Stoics were from the upper echelons of society is not as relevant as it may seem *prima facia*; in Foucault's ethics, the ability of all to practice freedom is a given.

6.3 Stoicism and a Care of the Self

Whilst the Stoic *topoi* consists of physics, logic, and ethics, as Stoics believed that one could better master the self with all three *topoi*,[22] Foucault only engaged with the ethics of Stoicism. Foucault was well aware of this Stoic belief–"The reason that one had to become familiar with physics or cosmology was that one had to take care of the self" (Foucault 1983b: 270)–but Foucault tells us that he focussed on late Stoicism and its emphasis on ethics as it was only there that we find "elements of sexual morality" (Foucault 2017: 43). Even though the late Stoic Marcus Aurelius wrote in 'Book 8' of his *Meditations* that we should constantly apply ethics, physics, and logic "to everything that happens" (Aurelius 2002: 103), in his aim to focus on the practicalities of life, according to Gregory Hays (Hays 2002: xxv-vi), the translator of the 2002 edition of *Meditations* quoted from above, he focussed on ethics, leaving logic and physics to the wayside. However, Hadot believes in his book on Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* that all three *topoi* underlie Aurelius' thinking (Hadot 1998: 72). If the late Stoics did focus on ethics, then Foucault's research would be congruent with that focus and Hadot's critique, to a degree, dissolves. However, Hadot's critique is somewhat moot, as Foucault was not offering us Stoicism or its telos of ataraxia, be it late Stoicism or otherwise, and perhaps this is why he did not mention certain key Stoic terms such as *prosochē* or *prokoptōn*.[23] Whilst Stoicism was an

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[22] Epictetus, for example, has several discourses on the importance of logic within the art of life (1.7, 1.8,1.17) because Stoics believe that logic gives us the ability to reason well, which in turn can be used in ethics and life (Gill 2014: 316, Note 1.26). As for physics, this was not physics within the contemporary understanding of the word, but as a general study of the world: "For the Stoics, physics is that part of philosophical discourse that deals with all questions concerning the physical world, from foundational ontology to the empirical sciences such as astronomy and meteorology" (Sellars 2014: 81). Through this study, the Greeks believed that they could improve ethically: "They believed they could show that the whole world (i.e., the universe) was the planned and providential work of God, that human reason if correct must think in the same way as the divine reason, and that man should therefore accept willingly all that happens" (Sanbach 1989: 69).

[23] In his book on philosophy as a way of life, Hadot describes *prosochē* (προσοχή) (attention) as "the *fundamental* Stoic spiritual attitude" (Hadot 1999: 84, my emphasis) to a vigilance and attentiveness to oneself, and William O. Stephens describes the term, attributed to Epictetus' use, *prokoptōn*, as one making progress through *prosochē* and Stoicism as a practitioner of a care of the self (Stephens 2007: 117). Foucault also does not mention *eudaimonia* ("happiness, flourishing, well-being" (Crisp 2004 :206)), which is not so much a Stoic but an Aristotelian thematic of ethics. This may well be why Foucault does not address *eudaimonia*, as he focuses on Plato over and above Aristotle. However, the understanding of *eudaimonia* did continue in the later Hellenistic philosophy that fell under his research. For a detailed comparison and contrast of Foucault's ethics and Aristotle's and the prior's lack of addressing *eudaimonia* by focussing on ancient sexual practices and by not including the intellectual virtues alongside the ethical, see 'Chapter 2' of Detel 2005.

intrinsic part of Foucault's exploration of philosophy as a way of life, Foucault drew direct inspiration, as Sellars reminds us in his book *Stoicism* (2014), "from Socrates' injunction that one should "take care of oneself"" (Sellars 2014: 154).[24] In drawing from this inspiration, Foucault also drew from the Stoics because they were the philosophers who attempted to elaborate techniques for taking care of oneself within the influence of Socrates. Also, as Foucault was a philosopher of immanence, not of transcendence, the Stoic's "materialist ontology" appealed to him "although he does not comment on this affinity directly" (154-5).[25] Furthermore, Stoicism, like Epicureanism, had a holistic view of humans that focussed on "what we are as psychophysical and psychological wholes" (Gill 2006: 10).[26]

Foucault's turn towards Cynicism was largely instigated by Stoicism's universalism which he saw as a normative–that which Hadot described as "becoming aware of oneself as a part of nature, and a portion of universal reason" (Hadot 1999: 211). As Cory Wimberley puts it: "Hadot seeks unity and conformity to the Universal while Foucault seeks to fracture universalising powers in order to seek freedom from their tyranny" (Wimberley 2009: 3). Put another way, "Hadot pursues philosophy as the attempt to evoke the Universal while Foucault exploits an aesthetic ethos to free us from the tyranny of Truth" (20). Therefore, in the light of what Foucault was trying to do, this thesis disagrees with Hadot's critique and sides with Laura Cremonesi: "Unlike Hadot, Foucault extracts spiritual exercises from their historical context and maintains only the idea of an *áskēsis*, conceived as a political and ethical task of critique against power relations" (Cremonesi 2015: 207-8). In other words, Foucault never suggested that we take Hellenic, Hellenistic, or Roman ethics (be they Stoic or otherwise) and apply them to contemporary socio-reality. And even if he had wanted to, Hadot informs us that "[n]o systematic treatise codifying the instructions and techniques for spiritual exercises has come down to us" (Hadot 1999: 84). Rather, what Foucault suggested was that we engage with how to form a much needed new ethics within a care of the self and a search for an aesthetics of existence via a creative ontology that is relevant in regard to contemporary questions:

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[24] As Foucault states in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, "Socrates is, and always will be, the person associated with care of the self" (Foucault 2005: 8).

[25] "The fundamental assertion underpinning all of Stoic physics is the claim that only bodies exist, a claim that dates back to Zeno himself. This may be seen as a direct challenge to the Platonic claim that the material world that we experience is merely a shadow of another realm where real existence lies" (Sellars 2014: 81).

[26] According to Christopher Gill, "Plato's *Timaeus* [. . .] and perhaps Aristotelian hylomorphism [seem] to have offered an important prototype for the kind of world-view" that Stoicism and Epicureanism created (Gill 2006: 29). Hylomorphism is Aristotle's theory that being is both matter and form understood as potentiality and actuality.

"Genealogy means that I begin my analysis from a question posed in the present" (Foucault in Gros 2005: 521). Therefore, it is possible, as Edward McGushin states, to see Foucault's historico-critical project itself as "etho-poetic," as Foucault's aim is not "to achieve objective historical truth and thereby produce knowledge," but to aid a transformation of "the subject engaged in historical or philosophical thinking" (McGushin 2007: xxiii). As Foucault writes in the introduction to *The Use of Pleasure* regarding his various studies, "they are not the work of a "historian"" (Foucault 1990a: 9). Thus, as McGushin puts it, "by designating his philosophical activity as *áskēsis,* and as care of the self, Foucault is demanding that we grasp it in those terms. Truth, in a care of the self, is not experienced objectively in the form of knowledge" (McGushin 2007: xxiv). As we discussed in the prior chapter, by writing 'new histories', 'historical fictions', Foucault hoped to offer a counter-memory. This tactic is indirectly similar to Rancière's tactical use of a bi-univocality in regard to the terms politics, police, and democracy as a counter univocality, if we can use that oxymoronic term. Both tactics link to the aforementioned coexistence of a subject of objectivity and of new subjectivities, as we explore in Part 3 by an exploration of Gauny's life as *amphíbios*–being a worker/poet. By offering a counter-memory, Foucault hopes to critically affect the view of existing historical fictions that are accepted as 'history' and thereby destabilise the contemporary, socio-normative reality machine and help to create the possibility of new realities that enable us to constitute ourselves as we wish to. Therefore, just because Foucault focussed on ethics with the care of the self rather than "a universalist, cosmic dimension" (Hadot 1999: 211) of ethics, physics, and logic, this does not place Foucault's ethics of freedom in danger of becoming sybaritic, or "a new form of Dandyism" (211) as Hadot puts it.[27] "Dandyism," as Camus defines it, "is a degraded form of asceticism" (Camus 2000: 29). Considering what's at stake in Foucault's *áskēsis* as an aesthetics of existence channeled as an ethico-political life aimed at a reformulation of power relations, it is anything but degraded. Furthermore, an accusation of dandyism would not have affected Foucault if the term was given the same meaning as Charles Baudelaire's dandy (Baudelaire 1964 [1863]: 26-9) which Foucault relays in his 1984 essay 'What is Enlightenment?' as one who makes of "his very existence, a work of art" as he "tries to invent himself" (Foucault 1984a: 41-2).[28]

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[27] On this premise, we could also accuse Epictetus' Stoicism of leaning towards sybaritism because it was, as Hays puts it, "a radically stripped down version" of earlier Stoicism (Hays 2002: xxv).

[28] That being said, Foucault was well aware of the kind of essentialist cult of the self that a diluted Stoicism or aesthetics could become: "In the Californian cult of the self, one is supposed to discover one's true self, to separate it from that which might obscure or alienate it, to decipher its truth thanks to psychological or psychoanalytic science,

135

Unlike Hadot, what interested Foucault was an immanent transformation of the self rather than the transcendence of the self through the universalist, cosmic dimension of Stoicism: "the goal of Stoic exercises is to go beyond the self, and think and act in unison with universal reason" (Hadot 1999: 207). This is why Foucault cast his net further than Stoic texts.[29] Therefore, Foucault's ethics are, as Chapter 5 stated, an offering of a creative ontology in an engagement with a way to escape the perpetuation of a normative taxonomy by resistances such as identity politics, by offering a conception of freedom that coexists with power within an agonistic relationship–much like the continual tension between the *demos* and the police in the need to be governed that we examined in Rancière's work. Foucault's understanding of the ongoing activity of practices of freedom incorporates the understanding, unlike dialectic and transcendent quests for freedom, that we will never be free if what we mean by this is to live without normative taxonomies and ways of being. This resonates with Rancière's belief that no society will ever be equal. The agonistic relationship Foucault offers amidst this understanding does not seek the impossibility of destroying a non-existent 'power' as an entity. Neither does it aim to adopt taxonomic categories as a means of resistance, thus perpetuating dominant power relations and contributing to the legerdemain of power's thematic of individuality. This agonism is a positive rather than a negative opposition to the normative as it seeks to reconfigure relations of power in a less dominant way through our relationship with others, our 'self', and truth. With his ethics of freedom, Foucault engages with how we experience ourselves in the relationship "between our consciousness of ourselves and the discourse of truth" (Foucault 2017: 26). For example, within sexuality, whilst there is "a field of subjective experience," there is also "with regard to sexual practice, to sexual activity [. . .] a certain knowledge that claims to be true" (26). Here we have the crux of the problem that Foucault addresses in his ethics of freedom in the arts of existence and has addressed throughout his academic career: the problem between subjectivity and truth. This is not just an individual's relationship between their subjectivity and regimes of truth, that runs through the course of Foucault's oeuvre, but, in regard to Greco-Roman philosophical texts, the truth that one can seek in modifying oneself, a 'new' fiction, if you like. This is why Foucault turns to sexuality because an ancient care of the

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which is supposed to be able to tell you what your true self is. Therefore, not only do I not identify this ancient culture of the self with what you might call the Californian cult of the self, I think they are diametrically opposed" (Foucault 1983b: 271).

[29] In the lecture series *Subjectivity and Truth* Foucault states, "there will be a certain number of, and even not bad texts that are not of Stoic origin. That is to say that ultimately we will see emerging a certain art of leading one's life

self was such an intrinsic part of sexuality. This does not mean that Foucault was mainly focussed on sex itself, however, but on a care of the self through the dynamic of sexuality.[30] However, as Foucault states in 'On the Genealogy of Ethics': "We have hardly any remnant of the idea in our society that the principal work of art which one must take care of, the main area to which one must apply aesthetic values, is oneself, one's life, one's existence" (Foucault 1983b: 271). Foucault believed that techniques and a care of the self were an intrinsic part of *aphrodisia* (the term for the ancient understanding of sexuality), the latter of which, Foucault believes to be "the basic framework of modern European sexual morality" (Foucault 2005: 2), and yet a care of the self was overshadowed by the Delphic imperative 'know yourself' to the point that the prior became virtually unknown. Therefore, a care of the self is a 'conversion' to oneself, as Foucault states in the ninth lecture of *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, and unlike Plato's focus on a knowledge of the self or Christianity's focus on a renunciation of the self, it is a return to the self, not as an object of knowledge but in the grounding of spiritual knowledge.[31] It was this Hellenic formation of the care of the self that was subsumed, Foucault tells us, into Gnosis and forgotten within the parenthesis of what came before it, Platonism and a focus on self-knowledge, and what came after it, Christianity and a focus on self-renunciation (254-58). If, as Foucault stated in his 1980 lecture 'Christianity and Confession', the normative self is "nothing else than the historical correlation of the technology built in our history" (Foucault 2016b: 76), it is by the unlearning of such a correlation and the changing of these technologies by an aesthetics of politics through "the politics of ourselves" (76) that individuals can aim to become that which they are: not an ontological space, but a liminal form that each individual can fill with the creation imbued by the autotelic ethico-poetics of a care of the self, whilst remaining in the agonism of power relations. Whilst neither Nietzsche nor Foucault specifically mention *autotelēs* (autotelism) *per se*, although Foucault's statement above that 'the end of this practice of the self is the self' is fairly overt, it is important to highlight the term *autotelēs*. An autotelic care of the self can form a resistance that takes effect now by being a practice that is antonymic to the heterotelic purpose of an extraneous telos by being an internal telos in and of itself: *autos* - self, *telos* - end. Thus, we have a double bind of immanence, where the subject becomes the

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with regard to sexual relationships that is more or less common to most of the philosophical schools in the centuries preceding or which initiate precisely what we call our era" (Foucault 2017: 43).

[30] As Foucault said in a 1983 interview: "I must confess that I am much more interested in problems about techniques of the self and things like that than sex . . . sex is boring" (Foucault 1997: 253).

[31] It is this return and conversion to the self that Nietzsche was referring to when he gave his *Ecce Homo* the subtitle of *How one Becomes what one is* (Nietzsche 2007).

amphíbios mentioned above as a practitioner of equality and freedom within the autotelic practice of a doubling of the self, while existing in the constitutive instability of the coexistence of subjectification (normative practices) and subjectivation (practices of freedom) rather than, as quoted in Chapter 5, the "political "double bind," which is the simultaneous individualisation and totalisation of modem power structures" (Foucault 1982a: 336).

6.4 A Practice of Freedom

Foucault's practice of freedom is autotelic because there is no essence preceding a subject's subjectivity that needs to be freed; instead, there is a relation to truth. Therefore, by caring for your 'self' by carrying out practices of freedom, as a by-product the force of the grip of the truth exerted by the normative diminishes and thus this care of the self cares for others within, to use a term from Foucault's *What is Critique*, a "politics of truth" (Foucault 2007: 47). In reconfiguring your relation to truth, you reconfigure your relation with others. A politics of truth is thus political in Ranciere's sense of the word as dissensus, and it is aesthetic in its dissensus as it is "the desubjectification of the subject" (47). Thus, politics (transgression) and aesthetics (transformation) in Foucault's ethics are indirectly in line with Rancière's understanding of politics and aesthetics as mutually dependent on each other: dissensual acts cause and are caused by transformation in the simultaneity of disruption and creation. As Sergei Prozorov puts it in his book *Foucault, Freedom and Sovereignty* (2007), the understanding of freedom that Foucault offers "is irreducible to any social order but rather implicated in every project of its transformation" (Prozorov 2007: 33). Like Rancière's presupposition of equality where one presupposes rather than asks for equality, Foucault's ethics carry out the kind of freedom that could never be asked for but only taken, as long as a certain amount of liberty exists. This freedom is the freedom of self-creation, instigated by the abbreviated existence imposed by the normative, the consensus, that smothers and is, to quote Prozorov, the "abduction of human existence, necessarily presupposed in any establishment of a 'nominally' free social order" (34). Therefore, just as practices of equality only emerge in a sphere of the inequality of *le partage du sensible*, practices of freedom only emerge in regimes of normative constitutions of the self where the freedom for self-constitution is limited. Thus, like practices of equality, practices of freedom are always ongoing: freedom in Foucault's understanding of the word, Prozorov states, could "never be a foundation of any social order, since it exists and manifests itself solely in acts of resistance" (35). In other words, practices of freedom stem from, as O'Leary puts it, "our 'unwillingness to comply' rather than in an essential autonomy" (O'Leary 2002: 160). Put

another way, these practices stem from, as mentioned in Chapter 5, quoting from Foucault's 'What is Critique?', "an act of defiance" and a critical attitude towards limiting the "arts of governing" and an unwillingness "not to be governed like that, by that, in the name of those principles" (Foucault 2007: 44-5). Accordingly, we can see these practices as an ongoing process in line with Foucault's late essay 'What is Enlightenment?' mentioned above which addresses Kant's answer to the question '*Was ist Aufklärung*?' (What is Enlightenment?), which Foucault also discusses in the first two lectures of *The Government of the Self and Others* addressed in Chapter 7. In this essay Foucault highlights Kant's understanding of *Aufklärung* as "*Ausgang,* an "exit," a "way out"" from "the status of "immaturity" [. . .] that makes us accept someone else's authority to lead us in areas where the use of reason is called for" (Foucault 1984a: 34).[32] Foucault describes Kant's understanding of *Ausgang*, as "a phenomenon, an ongoing process [. . .] a task and an obligation" through a change that individuals can only bring about in themselves (35). We can see Foucault's ethics of freedom in this same light too.[33] Thus, Foucault's ethics of freedom indirectly shares Rancière's belief that it is individuals alone who can achieve emancipation and not society as a whole, as society will always lack total equality and freedom as these ideals exist only in the *atopos* of deferral and dialectic dreams. As Foucault informs us regarding Baudelaire's view of the "transfiguring play of freedom with reality" and the "ascetic elaboration of the self," it cannot be produced "in society itself or in the body politic" but only in that "which Baudelaire calls art" (42). Bringing a permanent critical thinking to bear on the socio-political is not enough, we must also bring it to bear on ourselves as a product of the socio-political and thus constantly create ourselves anew within the aesthetico-political existence of practices of freedom and equality that perhaps, as a by-product, might affect society within an alternative view of politics as aesthetics and aesthetics as politics in line with Rancière's understanding of this imbrication as a simultaneity exercised as subjectivation.

We can now see the homology between practices of equality and freedom as a means of emancipation within their joint focus on the immanent, aesthetic, and liminal space of individual

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[32] "Kant gives three examples: we are in a state of "immaturity" when a book takes the place of our understanding, when a spiritual director takes the place of our conscience, when a doctor decides for us what our diet is to be" (Foucault 1984a: 34).

[33] As Foucault states in 'What is Enlightenment?': "I shall thus characterise the philosophical ethos appropriate to the critical ontology of ourselves as a historico-practical test of the limits that we may go beyond, and thus as work carried out by ourselves upon ourselves as free beings" (Foucault 1984a: 47).

change within the *autos*–the self. In Part 3 we shall explore an *autotelēs* of the self as a practice of freedom within its interaction with the autotelic aspect of autodidacticism and practices of equality and how these respective practices both intermix within a government of the self, an autarchy. The autotelism of the self also links with the ascetics of *parrhesia*, which, unlike the semantics of autotelism, which *prima facie* imply no connection with the Other, happens in "relationships of shared lives" (Foucault 2005: 406). This is because speaking freely is an interlocution and thus relational when it acts as a form of transgression. Therefore, it has a connection with Rancière's understanding of artistic communities and dissensus. Before commencing Part 3, we need to give *parrhesia* the attention it deserves. However, whilst Foucault begins his engagement with *parrhesia* in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, highlighting it as a transmission of truth rather than rhetoric–"free speech, released from the rules, freed from rhetorical procedures" (Foucault 2005: 406), we shall begin our engagement with this truth telling with the two volumes of the lecture series *The Government of Self and Others*, as it is here that a 'full' engagement with *parrhesia* commences. In these two volumes, via Foucault's auto-critique, his research moved from Stoicism's universalism to the Cynics, as stated above, within his focus on *parrhesia*. Gros, however, states that this move was because "Foucault ended up thinking that basically there could be no legitimate ethics other than one of provocation and political scandal" (Gros 2005: 532). This move may well have been, however, although Gros does not mention this and neither does Foucault, a means to address the elitism of an ancient Greek care of the self that Foucault initially failed to challenge. Either way, as Part 3 of this thesis shows, this failure to address the prerequisite of elitism for a care of the self is answered in a synergy of practices of equality and freedom by the alternative sphere of social stratification that Rancière draws examples of practices of the self from, thus showing that affluence is not a prerequisite for a care of the self. However, this is not to say that Foucault translates the elitism of the Stoics into the contemporary, believing only the affluent could carry out practices of freedom. For Foucault, these practices were a way of life that could be carried out by anyone. We now turn to the final chapter of Part 2 and to Foucault's shift from the Stoics to the radicalism of the Cynics via his engagement with *parrhesia*.

Chapter 7 - *Parrhesia* and Cynicism

This chapter examines *parrhesia[1]* and Cynicism whilst mostly drawing from Foucault's 1983 lecture series at Berkeley and his last two lecture series at the Collège de France: *The Government of the Self and Others* Volumes 1 and 2. As this is the final chapter before Part 3 of this thesis and its engagement with a synergy of practices of equality and freedom, this chapter uses *parrhesia* and Cynicism as a means to connect these practices. Therefore, at times, even though Rancière himself is dubious of *parrhesia* being "part of Foucault's essential contribution" (Rancière 2016a: 169), this chapter takes a Rancièrean reading of *parrhesia* by connecting *parrhesia* with Rancière's understanding of dissensus, democracy, and politics, and by supplementing this connection with comments on Gauny, whose emancipatory life is examined in Chapter 8. In taking this particular reading, this chapter highlights *parrhesia* not only as a means of self-relation that ruptures the subjects' connection with their normative self, but also as a means to rupture consensual reality with both the courage to speak out against consensual truths and the courage to live alternative practices as an emancipatory way of life.[2]

Initially, this chapter addresses *parrhesia* outside of its basic definition as freedom of speech with a critical comparison of *parrhesia* with *isēgoría* that unfolds how *parrhesia* is not just a spoken truth (logos) but also a lived truth through action and non-action. This leads to the second section and a focus on *parrhesia* as *ergon* (action) and how this might work within practices of equality and freedom. The third section moves on to an overview of Cynicism, and the fourth section addresses the shift in *parrhesia* from the sphere of *polis* to *psuchê* (soul) and then to *êthos*. Lastly, this chapter revisits Cynicism and uses its lived philosophy *êthos* to connect to an understanding of practices of equality and freedom as lived experiences. This leads us to Chapter 8's engagement with Gauny's way of life.

7.1 *Parrhesia*

During October to November in 1983 at the University of California at Berkeley, Foucault gave six lectures in English on *parrhesia* that were later released in the unauthorised book aptly titled

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[1] This chapter contains various styles of writing *parrhesia* (different spellings, italics, no italics, etc.) due to the use of direct quotes, as they adopt the authors' style. Outside of these quotes, this chapter will always use *parrhesia*.

[2] "[I]t is not the subject's social, institutional status that we find at the heart of *parrêsia*; it is his courage" (Foucault 2010b: 66).

Fearless Speech (Foucault 2001a).[3] In the very first of these lectures, Foucault defines and characterises the word *parrhesia* (παρρησία (*parrêsia*)) and states that we can first find it mentioned in certain plays by the Greek tragedian Euripides (484-407 BCE).[4] Foucault informs us that *parrhesia* means "free speech" and "*franc-parler*" in French and that the user of *parrhesia* is a *parrhesiastes* (11), whilst the etymology of *parrhesiazesthai*, meaning to use *parrhesia*, is defined as ""to say everything"–from "*pan*" [πάν] (everything) and "*rhema*" [ρήμα] (that which is said)" (12). Whilst *parrhesia* can be used in the pejorative sense as a bad *parrhesia* when a person just says whatever is on their mind, even if it is not true (says anything rather than everything), to do so, according to the Greeks, Foucault informs us, is to lack *máthēsis* (the relationship to others through learning). Thus, to stop just anybody speaking *parrhesia*, the Greeks stipulated that only those who are educated can use *parrhesia* correctly: "In order for *parrhesia* to have positive political effects, it must now be linked to a good education, to intellectual and moral formation, to *paideia* [(education/learning)] or *mathesis.* Only then will *parrhesia* be more than *thorubos* or sheer vocal noise" (66). As *parrhesia* could occur in a variety of situations in private and public life, the definition of *parrhesia* escapes the sole locality of political meetings and the legal formality of solely being 'freedom of speech' that belongs to *isēgoría* (suffrage and the equal right for Athenian male citizens to speak at an assembly). Thus, we can translate *parrhessia* and *franc-parler* as frank speech rather than freedom of speech. As Foucault states, *"parrhesia* is a kind of verbal activity where the speaker has a specific relation to truth through frankness" (19).[5]

The sincerity of the *parrhesiastes* is denoted by, as the title of Foucault's last lecture series at the Collège de France has it, the courage of the truth: "The fact that a speaker says something

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[3] These lectures are now also published, alongside Foucault's 1982 University of Grenoble lectures known as *Parrêsia* (2015b), in the authorised book *Discourse &Truth and Parrhêsia* (Foucault 2019 [2016]).

[4] Foucault examines the dynamic of *parrhesia* in some of these tragedies in some detail in his *The Government of the Self and Others* vol 1 (Foucault 2010). For a lecture with less detail and more of an overview of these plays, see Foucault's 1982 lecture at the University of Grenoble, *Parrêsia* (Foucault 2015b). See also Arlene W. Saxonhouse's interpretation of *parrhesia* in Euripides' work (Saxonhouse 2006).

[5] In her book on Athenian politics and philosophy, Susan Sara Monoson states: "To stress that speaking with *parrêsia* suggests a particular set of substantive features of the things spoken and a specific disposition of the speaker, I translate *parrêsia* as "frank speech" rather than "free speech." This translation keeps in focus the ease with which Greek allows speakers to distinguish between the exercise of a formal right to speak (*isēgoría*) and the practice of speaking freely (*parrêsia*), a distinction that is less crisp in English, as the term "free speech" conveys both meanings" (Monsoon 2000: 52, Note 5).

dangerous–different from what the majority believes–is a strong indication that he is a *parrhesiastes*" (Foucault 2001a: 15). Thus, another characteristic of *parrhesia* that Foucault lists is the duty of telling the truth: regardless of the danger, the *parrhesiastes* feels it is their duty to speak the truth rather than adopt "self-interest and moral apathy" (20). Therefore, someone is only a *parrhesiastes* in this context if what they say could put them in danger, and here we can think of Socrates as the *parrhesiastes* par excellence, ironically killed by Athenian democracy for speaking freely, as relayed in Plato's *Apology* (Plato 1997a) and Xenophon's *Socrates' Defence to the Jury* (Xenophon 2002).[6] Thus, the *parrhesiastes* is always someone with less power than their interlocutor when *parrhesia* acts as a "function of criticism" (Foucault 2001a: 17) rather than a demonstration of truth or a statement of what others want to hear, be it through demagoguery or sycophancy.

Even though *parrhesia* was and is necessary–"without the right of criticism, the power exercised by a sovereign is without limitation" (Foucault 2001a: 29)–this did not mean that just anyone could speak the truth and thus criticise those in power. Only male, adult, native, citizens–not just any denizens: slaves, women, underage males, etc.–could speak the truth in Athens and even then social and moral qualifications were imposed upon their freedom of speech.[7] In fact, in his Berkeley seminar, Foucault highlights the connection between slavery and the lack of *parrhesia*–"if you do not have the right of free speech, you are unable to exercise any kind of power, and thus you are in the same situation as a slave" (29)–and how those without *máthēsis* are only heard as *thorubos*–"the noise made by a strong voice, by a scream, a clamour, or uproar [. . .] the tumultuous noise of a crowded assembly when the people shouted" (65-6)– which indirectly links to Rancière's problematic of disagreement and *phōné* outlined in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Thus, we can see, for Athenians, only those who were educated academically and morally and were from a 'noble' family within a certain social sphere, could speak the truth and be listened to. Thus, free speech was limited to the same social sphere as the care of the self. However, in contrast to what we find earlier in Foucault's work where he mentions but does not address the fact that the care of the self was determined as only being for the so called

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[6] For an examination that explores possible social and political reasons for Socrates' sentence to death beyond the simple fact of his elenchus, maieutics, and use of *parrhesia*, see Saxonhouse, 2006: 100-12.

[7] "[C]itizenship by itself does not appear to be sufficient to obtain and guarantee the exercise of free speech. Honour, a good reputation for oneself and one's family, is also needed before one can freely address the people of the city" (Foucault 2001a: 31).

social elite, in the Berkeley seminar Foucault does address this qualification in regard to who can or cannot use *parrhesia*:

> There is a discrepancy between an egalitarian system which enables everyone to use *parrhesia*, and the necessity of choosing among the citizenry those who are able (because of their social or personal qualities) to use *parrhesia* in such a way that it truly benefits the city. And this discrepancy generates the emergence of *parrhesia* as a problematic issue. For unlike *isonomia* (the equality of all citizens in front of the law) and *isegoria* (the legal right given to everyone to speak his or her own opinion), *parrhesia* was not clearly defined in institutional terms. There was no law, for example, protecting the *parrhesiastes* from potential retaliation or punishment for what he or she said. And thus there was also a problem in the relation between *nomos* and *aletheia*: how is it possible to give legal form to someone who relates to truth? There are formal laws of valid reasoning, but no social, political, or institutional laws determining who is able to *speak* the truth. (Foucault 2001a: 72, Foucault's stress)

Foucault addresses who or who cannot use *parrhesia* to highlight the debate in ancient Greece on this problematisation of that which Foucault calls 'the crisis of *parrhesia*' concerning the "antinomy between *parrhesia*—freedom of speech—and democracy" (Foucault 2001a: 77), or more accurately put, between *parrhesia* and *isēgoría*.[8] When it comes to this ancient debate, however, "[w]e must take into account," Foucault informs us, "the fact that we know one side of the discussion much better than the other for the simple reason that most of the texts which have been preserved from this period come from writers who were either more or less directly affiliated with the aristocratic party, or at least distrustful of democratic or radically democratic institutions" (78).[9] Therefore, we can think of *isēgoría* as a kind of simulacrum of *parrhesia*, or,

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[8] The famous Greek historian Herodotus actually used the two terms–*demokratia* (democracy) and *isēgoría*–synonymously (Monoson 2000: 56). Within Rancière's lexical understanding, however, we would define democracy and *parrhesia* as synonyms.

[9] "[D]emokratia was very unpopular among prominent Greek scholars such as Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates (in his later works), Thucydides, Xenophon and 'The Old Oligarch '[Pseudo-Xenophon]" (Isakhan 2016: 58). This was because democracy was generally seen as a totalitarianism of the masses easily influenced by demagoguery and thus a bad form of government. Or, as Aristotle states in *The Politics*, Book IV, Chapter iv, demagogy only occurs when the tyranny of the masses rule rather than law (Aristotle 1992: 1292a7). Or as Foucault puts it, "demagogy" is "the negative, bad expression of democracy" (Foucault 2011: 59). For a challenge to the view that Plato was vehemently against all things democratic, see Monoson (2000) and Anders Dahl Sørensen (2016).

more exactly put, as something spoken through rhetoric (see below) rather than truth. In fact, *isēgoría* was solely de jure because de facto it was only the social elite who had freedom of speech, as only citizens who had the luxury of time through affluence could speak freely at political meetings, and only those with 'good bearing' were listened to.[10] Therefore, we can see that *isēgoría* was more exclusionary than it was inclusionary, not only for non-citizens (80-90 percent of the Attican adult population were excluded by the democracy of ancient Athens (Brown 2011: 51)) but also for those citizens who were unable to attend political meetings due to their need to work: "many are free, few are rich" (Aristotle 1992: 1290a30). Thus, *isēgoría* was a kind of legerdemain that allowed oligarchy to exist under the ruse of a formally available democratic participation with the *politeia*. This allowed high ranking Athenians to use this formality "to give credibility to the claim that individual citizens are meaningfully implicated in the decisions of the Assembly and therefore morally obligated to obey them" (Monoson 2000: 57). We can compare this to the current democracy of the West where people have a voice that is rarely listened to and have little time to engage in politics as they strive to deal with the same quotidian necessity as the average Athenian: work. However, governments claim the people have a say through suffrage in a so-called representative democracy and therefore, like the Athenians before them, are obligated to obey. This is why democracy in its consensual manifestation is named the police by Rancière and why he offers an alternative definition of democracy and politics within a bi-univocality that seeks to place democracy as dissensus and thus return it to its etymological roots. As the political theorist Jodi Dean writes, echoing Athens in her description of the present: "Real existing constitutional democracies privilege the wealthy" (Dean 2009: 76). Reminding us that equality and freedom are not to be treated as ideals to aspire to, she continues:

> As they install, extend, and protect neoliberal capitalism, they exclude, exploit, and oppress the poor, all the while promising that everybody wins [. . .] Nevertheless, the left continues to present our political hopes as aspirations to democracy. (Dean 2009: 76)

A prime example of a whole sector of ancient Athenian citizens who were not able to indulge in the formality of *isēgoría*, were the *autourgoi,* exemplified by Foucault in *The Government of the Self and Others* vol 1 (Foucault 2010b: 165-7). The *autourgos* (*auto* (self) *gē* (land, earth)) is someone who works their own small plot of land. Whilst the *autourgoi* of Athens are full citizens

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[10] We can recall in Chapter 2 the quotation of Rancière's statement that there is no strict democratic government, as past and current democratic societies are always controlled by oligarchies.

both working the land and sprung from the land as the progeny of Athenian mothers and thus as *autoskhthōn* (autochthons) legally allowed to speak through *isēgoría,* they have no time to attend to politics and thus *isēgoría* is a nominal free speech. This leaves a de facto *isēgoría* only to those with the time afforded to them by wealth and slaves. On the other hand, the dangers of *parrhesisa* are left to those who have no say in the consensus amidst the basic liberty afforded by democracy and the chimera of *isēgoría*: "So, in democracy operating in this way, *parrêsia* is not the element in which a common opinion is formed; it is the guarantee that each will have his own autonomy, his own identity, his own political singularity" (199). Therefore, *isēgoría* as free speech is not the same as *parrhesia* as free speech. *Parrhesia* is more than a legality; it is a form of both private and public dissent and is, unlike *isēgoría*, unregulated. However, without a framework of democracy and the liberty and formal legality of *isēgoría* afforded by autochthony, it would not have been possible to practice *parrhesia*, for average citizens would then possess, like non-autochthons, *stoma doulon* (the mouth of a slave).[11] Thus, we can think of *isēgoría* and the so called freedom of speech that many citizens have today in various nation states, as the minimal liberty that allows practices of freedom and *parrhessia* to occur. Therefore, we can state that *isēgoría* corresponds, to adopt one of Rancière's phrases quoted in Chapter 1 of this thesis, to a 'passive received equality' given to the *demos*. Whereas *parrhesia*, to adopt May's description of Rancière's understanding of a presupposition of equality quoted in the same chapter, is 'active' and presupposed by the belief the speaker has in the truth of what they speak (and what they live–see below) that goes beyond the bare liberty of the received equality of *isēgoría*, be it through a presupposition of equality or, in Foucault's work, freedom. Just as an active subjectivation of the self aims to act as a counter to the semi-passive subjectification of the subject via a normative power and knowledge, *parrhesia* counters the passive equality and freedom of *isēgoría* which cloaks the oligarchic structure hiding behind a nominal democracy. By being active in defining their own freedom and equality, an individual can aim to lose the passivity incorporated in a received equality or freedom and shift from a docile to an active body, thus moving from passivity to activity in a shift that needs to be maintained as there may be a tendency to fall back to the prior condition. Within this shift, an individual can emancipate themselves from the semantics of equality and freedom imposed by the consensus, which lies

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[11] As Ion states, quoted by Foucault from the 418 BCE play *Ion* by Euripides, the non-indigenous citizens of Athens who possess no autochthony, those who are not *autoskhthōn* (sprung from the soil) born of an Athenian mother, must keep a "servile tongue" (Euripides in Foucault 2010b: 76) and therefore have *stoma doulon* (the mouth of a slave) and not possess *parrhesia*: "his mouth will remain slave: *stoma doulon*; he does not have the right to say everything he does not have *parrêsia*" (Foucault 2010b: 76).

in favour of a normative regime that either tells its denizens that they are already equal and free or that they are heading towards these ideals.

For the elite of the ancient Greeks, *parrhesia* was, as Foucault describes it, an agonism in an agonistic society powered by a belief in the stronger controlling the weaker, an agonism in the relations of elite citizens who had political power and wished to increase that power–"the ascendancy of those who govern" (Foucault 2010b: 177). It was also used as a "true discourse" to govern people "in order to convince the citizens of the need to obey" (204-5) and thus underpins governmentality (184).[12] However, if, for those who are not elite, *parrhesia* is 'to say everything' and to risk saying everything regardless of the danger that this truth speaking might incur, then it truly is a courage of the truth.[13]

A prime contemporary example of this parrhesiastic risk would be the same example given above of the civil rights movement where African Americans presupposed equality by sitting in white only restaurants waiting to be served. Their very act of being there and the words they spoke to order food were ways to 'say everything' and thus were *parrhesia* as both actions put these people in danger: "[P]arrhesiasts are those who undertake to tell the truth at an unspecified price, which may be as high as their own death" (Foucault 2010b: 57). Thus, in this thesis we shall define this form of *parrhesia* carried out by the *demos* as dissensus in Rancière's understanding of the terms, as this type of *parrhesia* spoken outside of political meetings is never consensus, otherwise there would be no need to speak it–as the quote above from Foucault states, *parrhesia* is not the element in which a 'common opinion' is formed. Therefore, we can state that *parrhesia* is not the institutionalised, political consensus of *isēgoría* as democracy, but the courage to speak the truth of democracy as dissensus. Thus, in Rancière's lexicon, *isēgoría* would be aligned with the police and *parrhesia* would be the politics of the *demos* as dissensus. As Foucault puts it in the French edition of *The Government of the Self and Others* (*Le gouvernement de soi et des autres*) vol 1: "*Parrêsia est donc une certaine manière de dire vrai*" (Foucault 2008b: 55).

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[12] "The logos, which exercises its power and ascendancy and is delivered by those who exercise ascendancy over the city, must be a discourse of truth" (Foucault 2010b: 173-4).

[13] "The discourse, through which someone weak, and despite this weakness, takes the risk of reproaching someone powerful for his injustice, is called, precisely, *parrêsia*" (Foucault 2010b: 133-4).

Manière is translated as 'way' in the English translation–"*Parrêsia* is a way of telling the truth" (Foucault 2010b: 55)–but it can also be translated as 'manner' and 'style', the last of which is reminiscent of the aesthetic style of living in a care of the self. However, unlike a care of the self where *parrhesia* is used to teach this care by expressing and exposing the deficits of a student or friend who listens, speaking *parrhesia* is autodidactic and encourages intellectual autonomy.[14] Thus, it is not pedagogical in the sense that one is taught to be a *parrhesiastes*, as one is taught to take care of oneself, as if *parrhesia* were some kind of eristic skill (29). The dissent of *parrhesia* requires plain speech and not *tekhne*. Therefore, rather than returning to *manière* and the translations above (way, manner, style), we can adopt the word 'practice' allotted to *epimeleia heautou*, as truth telling also falls under a practice of freedom.[15] *Parrhesia* is a modality of truth-telling as a practice, or at least part of a practice, a modality and way of life (see below) that is a way as a manner or style (*manière*) and a way as a path (*chemin*) of living where dissensus is enacted when necessary, regardless of the consequences, through the courage of the truth. As Plutarch states in a quotation given by Foucault in *The Care of the Self*, we must not "regard political activity as a sort of pastime (*scholē*)" as it was for some of the nobles of Athens "in which one would engage because one has nothing else to do and because circumstances are favourable, only to abandon it when difficulties arise. Politics is "a life" and a "practice" (*bíos kai praxis*)" (Plutarch in Foucault 1986a: 87). As life practices, where life itself is a practice, freedom and equality are complementary and not internecine as they are as unattainable ideals or as the intermingling of the purported equality of *isēgoría*/democracy and the freedom of *parrhesia*, where close inspection reveals the prior to be the consensual speech of an oligarchy, of the *polis*, and the latter the dissensus of the *demos* spoken at a risk. In the median strip between a presupposition of freedom and a presupposition of equality, *parrhesia* and dissensus merge as politics in the form of a democratic existence challenging the consensus:

> So *parrêsia* consists in this: a powerful person has committed an offence; this offence is an injustice for someone weak, powerless, with no means of retaliation, who cannot really fight or take revenge, and who is in a profoundly unequal situation. So, what can

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[14] "Parrhesia implied [. . .] a claim on the part of the speaker to be capable of assessing a situation and pronouncing judgment upon it. This implication of intellectual autonomy was so much a part of the word's meaning, moreover, that we find it made quite explicit: speaking with parrhesia is equated with "telling the truth as one sees it"" (Monoson 2000: 53).

[15] "Ultimately, the notion of *parrêsia* is, I believe, always linked to a practice" (Foucault 2015b: 230).

he do? He can do one thing: he can speak, at risk and danger to himself he can stand up before the person who committed the injustice and speak. And at this point his speech is called *parrêsia* (Foucault 2010b: 134).

Politics exists when the natural order of domination is interrupted by the institution of a part of those who have no part. (Rancière 1999: 11)

Parrehessia can also be enacted by silence. Foucault briefly touches on this when he exemplifies the mute speech of *parrehessia* through the action of the ritual of hunger strikes in India and certain forms of suicide in Japan, both of which have the same meaning that indirectly sounds very much like Rancière's understanding of dissensus:

For someone who is both the victim of an injustice and completely weak, the only means of combat is a discourse which is agonistic but constructed around this unequal structure. (Foucault 2010b: 133)

[E]quality only generates politics when it is implanted in the specific form of a particular case of dissensus. (Rancière 2004a: 52)

Thus, we have an agonism in *parrhessia* that is not just between those vying for political power but between those without power and those with power. *Parrehesia*, for Foucault, is a 'critical' truth telling, a philosophical truth telling when used by those without power and political when used by those seeking ascendency within the *isēgoría* of democracy. As Banu Bargu states in his essay 'The Silent Exception: Hunger Striking and Lip-Sewing' (2017):

Unlike democratic parrhesia, which is embedded within an agonistic political sphere structured by an equal right to speak (predicated on having citizenship status), the parrhesia of the powerless is largely based on enactment, involving acts of resistance that include hunger strikes and self-killings, which Foucault also cites, albeit in passing. (Bargu 2017: 20)

However, citizens also resort to extreme means in varying degrees, as having the right to speak (*isēgoría*) and being heard are not always the same thing. Thus, citizens and non-citizens alike can possess the restive exteriority of *stoma doulon* (the mouth of a slave).[16] We can also see

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[16] For examples, we can think of many silent acts of *parrhesia* of varying intensity: actions of the aforementioned civil rights movement, such as sitting at the front of the bus; acts of the British women's suffragette movement that started

alternative ways of life as a parrhesiatic silence: "[P]arrêsia may [. . .] appear in ways of doing things, it may appear in ways of being" (Foucault 2010b: 320).[17] We can see *parrhesia* through the non-action of Socrates that Foucault highlights, such as Socrates' non-verbal refusal to arrest someone in his capacity as a *bouleutḗs* (member of the council of Athens) in his younger years during the oligarchy of Athens at the time by the 'government of the Thirty'. Or, when he was a *prytanis* (chief official) in a democratic Athens and he did not accept the charge against the generals of the battle of Arginuses of leaving the bodies of the dead on the battlefield. He did so, because he knew that the charge went against the law of Athens which "did not recognise this kind of collective responsibility" (317). In both cases, Socrates did not speak his refusal but showed it by not participating in the first and voting against the second, therefore risking his life through manifesting, albeit by non-action and action respectively, *parrhesia*–thus showing that *parrhesia* is a dangerous practice not only amidst oligarchies but also democracies. In later life, however, Socrates chose to engage with consensual politics indirectly by encouraging people to adopt a care of the self. In situations such as those mentioned above, the silence of actions and non-actions, or "discreet *parrêsia*" (319) as Foucault names Socrates' unspoken *parrhesia*, speak louder than the words that are not heard by the *polis* or heard only as *thorubos* or *phōné*. Now we can understand why Foucault's focus was on *parrhesia* as a critical way of engaging with the consensus, as *parrhesia* is not only logos (discourse) but also *ergon* (action, activity, work).[18]

7.2 Finding the Reality of Philosophy: Plato, Logos, and *Ergon*

The word *ergon* makes up part of the etymological root of the term 'synergy' used in this thesis to express the aim of bringing together practices of equality and freedom. The term derives from

in the late nineteenth century and led to the militancy in the early twentieth century of participants chaining themselves to the railings of prominent buildings and being forced fed when they went on hunger strike in prison; the self-immolation of Vietnamese Buddhist monks protesting against their government; and the early twenty-first century knee taking of American athletes during the national anthem as a stance against racial inequality and the police brutality experienced by African Americans often causing their death. We should, however, be aware of the need to make a distinction between authentic and disingenuous expressions of dissensus for other parties, such as those killed by police brutality. The latter of which, can equate to 'virtue signalling' aimed at enhancing a person's image.

[17] "Philosophical *parrêsia*, which is identified not just with a mode or technique of justice but with life itself, consists in practicing philosophy, caring about oneself, exhorting others to care about themselves, and doing this by examining, testing, putting what others do and do not know to the test" (Foucault 2010b: 326).

[18] Book I of Plato's *Republic* gives a much wider range of definition for *ergon*. However, for our purpose, the definitions action, activity, work, will suffice.

sunergos meaning 'working together': *sun*-together + *ergon*-work. In the lecture on the 16th of February 1983 in *The Government of the Self and Others* vol 1, Foucault discusses Plato's understanding, as read from a letter attributed to Plato known as 'Letter VII' (Plato 1997b),[19] that philosophy is not just logos but also *ergon* (which in Foucault's reading is initially translated in French as *l'action*). In contemporary parlance we could name logos and *ergon* as theory and practice,[20] and we can think of Plato's *Republic* as an example of Plato wanting to put his theory into practice with the ideal city. Therefore, we are reminded of the famous quote from Marx's 'Theses on Feuerbach': "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it" (Marx 1964: 174). However, as we know, Plato was not looking for change with the type of social revolution that Marx wanted, but with philosopher-kings.[21]

'Letter VII' reports on Plato's initial and unsuccessful trip to Syracuse to instruct the new ruler, Dionysius the Younger, as a philosopher-king in an aim to make philosophical logos become action (*ergon*) through the hope of the newly instructed Dionysius changing the totalitarian regime inherited from his father, Dionysius the Elder: Dionysius must learn to govern himself so that he may govern others well.[22] Therefore, we should not be surprised when Foucault states that Plato's letter answers the following question: "under what conditions can philosophical discourse be [. . .] *ergon* in the field of politics?" (Foucault 2010b: 230). In other words, how can philosophy, philosophical logos, become a reality through action, *ergon*? The first condition for philosophical discourse to become reality, according to Plato's letter, Foucault informs us, depends on the listeners: "For philosophy not to be pure and simple discourse but actual reality,

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[19] Foucault states: "It is now generally accepted that letter VI, the great letter VII, and also letter VIII are genuine letters, or at any rate come from circles very close to Plato himself, whereas others are certainly much later and were not written by Plato or his immediate circle" (Foucault 2010b: 210). In contradiction to this, the editor of a collection of the complete works of Plato writes that "Letter VII [is] the least unlikely to have come from Plato's pen" (Cooper 1997: 1635). That being said, whether 'Letter VII' is apocryphal or not, has no real bearing on this thesis.

[20] *Praxis* can also be translated as action. Technically speaking, however, Aristotle connected *ergon* with work and the outcome of that work, unlike *praxis* that he describes in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II. Chapter iv. 1105b: "With regard to virtues, knowledge has little or no weight [. . .] So it is correct to say that it is by doing just actions that one becomes just, and by doing temperate actions temperate; without doing them, no one would have even a chance of becoming good" (Aristotle 2004: 28).

[21] Plato's purported letter states: "[T]he ills of the human race would never end until either those who are sincerely and truly lovers of wisdom come into political power, or the rulers of our cities, by the grace of God, learn true philosophy" (Plato 1997b: 1648).

[22] "He must ensure that he is in harmony, in *sumphónos* with himself, just as the cities he has to govern must be in symphony with Syracuse and with each other" (Foucault 2010b: 269).

151

it should not be addressed to all and sundry but only to those who wish to listen to it" (29). In other words, philosophy cannot be forced on people by rhetorical or physical violence, or any other such means. We can think here of Jacotot's belief that whether someone learns or not is a matter of autodidactic will and not compliance to the imposition of rhetoric expressed by institutions of schooling as stultification. As Foucault put it: "The game of rhetoric is to seize hold of the listener's will in spite of itself, as it were, and to do what it wants with it. Philosophy, however [. . .] can only exist by being listened to" (236). As Plato states, quoted by Foucault:

> Is not the first duty of someone advising a sick man who is following a bad regime to get that man to change his way of life? If the sick man wishes to obey, he will give him new prescriptions. If he refuses, I hold that an upright man and real physician should not agree to further consultations. (Plato in Foucault 2010b: 231)

Thus, philosophical logos can only be heard by those who wish to listen, much like the voice of the *demos*, for philosophy too can be a voice of dissensus. However, any discourse, as Foucault informs us, that merely rages against the consensual machine, would not be a philosophical discourse and thus, would not find a philosophical reality: "The first test of reality of philosophical discourse will be the listening it meets with" (Foucault 2010b: 235). Therefore, philosophical discourse is not, or at least should not be, a demagoguery for the oppressed by a so called enlightened thinker, but an offer for individuals to think critically for themselves. For unlike rhetoric, *parrhesia* can speak to the individual (304).

How else does philosophy, according to Plato's letter, become reality other than by being listened to? Foucault states that according to this letter it is by "a set of *pragmata* (practices)" (Foucault 2010b: 239) and that these practices involve "a way" within "the practice of daily life" where the subject shows that they are "*eumathes* (able to learn), *mnēmōn* (able to remember), and *logizesthai dunatos* (able to reason)" (241)[23] by applying discourse to life by *ergon*. In order to speak the truth, as Foucault tells us in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, we have to live the truth (Foucault 2005: 406-7). Thus, we return to a care of the self, where these practices are directed at the work on oneself: "The reality of philosophy is this work of self on self" (Foucault 2010b: 242). Therefore, we have two conclusions from Plato regarding how philosophy as logos can be become philosophy as reality, as *ergon*: by its logos being listened to and by it being

practiced through a group of practices. Thus, for Plato, technically speaking, philosophy cannot be learnt by tutelage or the words of a book but by practice where only "an *endeixis* an indication" (249)[24] of the way initially needs to be shown "to those," as Plato states in Letter VII, "who could with a little guidance discover the truth by themselves" (Plato 1997b: 1659). Thus, Foucault informs us, according to Plato's letter, the third way that philosophy becomes a reality is through acquiring its knowledge by "continuous practice" (Foucault 2010b: 252). Therefore, we have here a certain quasi-autodidactism involved in learning philosophy by *pragmata*: practices incorporated in a "practice of the self on self" (254). So, we can see an alignment of sorts with Plato's letter and Jacotot's autodidactic methodology. However, in learning by practices, we become our *own* ignorant schoolmaster in a practice of self on self within *bíos kai praxis*. Thus, we engage, as mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, with a self-tutelage that gives us both an authority and instruction over our 'self'. Does this mean then that Plato rejects the written and spoken word as a means of teaching?

According to Foucault, Plato does not believe the written word is secondary to the spoken word (logos) as Derrida famously stated he did (Derrida 1981: 65-119), but rejects both the written *and* spoken word under the banner of logos as insufficient for teaching arts of existence because we can only learn these arts by a practice, by *ergon* not logos, by a quasi-autodidactism, not by traditional pedagogical instruction. [25] For Plato, Foucault tells us,

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[23] Plato's Letter VII reads: "This is the state of mind in which such a man lives; whatever his occupation may be, above everything and always he holds fast to philosophy and to the daily discipline that best makes him apt at learning and remembering, and capable of reasoning soberly with himself" (Plato 1997b: 1658).

[24] The word *endeixis* has a long history. In the discourse on Aristotle's understanding of the soul attributed to the Neoplatonist Simplicius, *endeixis* is defined as "allusion" (Sorabji 2013: 8) and is seen as a "coded language" used to teach about the metaphysical because the latter is ineffable (Rappe 2000: 210). Foucault's definition of *endeixis* as an indication is similar. It is a signpost of sorts. As Sara Rappe's definition has it, *endeixis* conveys "the idea of hinting at or of suggesting a reality that is then left indeterminate" (209). Whilst for the Neoplaotinists this reality was the metaphysical, when Rancière and Foucault use *endeixis* themselves (even though neither specifically state they are doing so), it is to allude to new indeterminate but immanent realities involving practices of equality and freedom, respectively–see below. As such, unlike the Roman physician Galen who R.J Hankinson states saw *endeixis* within the context of "therapeutic indications" (Hankinson 2009: 232)–namely, an indication of what was causing an ailment, and this could even be from the life habits of a patient, Rancière and Foucault are offering indications of a cure for the ailments foisted upon a normative subject of a consensual reality.

[25] As such, Foucault hypothesises that Plato's *Republic* is not to be taken as meaning that Plato literally wanted this to be the format for the ideal city (Foucault 2010b: 252). For Plato, Foucault believes, philosophy does not manifest as reality in this way, as philosophical knowledge cannot be passed on through written or spoken discourse–logos.

"philosophy is not passed on through *mathémata* [(knowledge)]" but through living with philosophy (Foucault 2010b: 248). Thus, *parrhesia* is more a way of life than a way of speaking.[26] Therefore, philosophy becomes reality through the *ergon* (action) of practices: "Philosophical discourse will get from political reality the guarantee that it is not just logos, not just words given in a dream, but that it really has to do with the *ergon*, with what constitutes reality" (279). If philosophy as a way of life is 'taught', it is taught only through *endeixis*, "structures of indication" (249) (and this is what we mean by *quasi*-autodidactic) that give signposts to aid the practitioner in finding the way. But what is *the* way? Rather than turning to Plato, Foucault, or Rancière for an answer, we turn to Epictetus who states in *Discourses* Book 4. Chapter I. 113, that through a practice of the self we are "on the way to emancipation," and it is this 'on the way', according to Epictetus, "that is true freedom" (Epictetus 2014: 229).[27]

Through the separate structures of *endeixis* that both Rancière and Foucault give to aid our adoption of practices of equality and freedom, there is, to adopt Rancière's title of the section of *Le Philosophe plébéien* that contains Gauny's letters, the traces of a path (*Les traces d'un chemin*). It is by these traces that we can orientate ourselves to being 'on the way to emancipation', or, as we shall rephrase it, 'always on the way', as 'the way' does not consist of intermittent activities aimed at emancipation but is autokinetic–see below. It is with *endeixis*–the traces of a path–that we find our own way within an auto-emancipation through our own respective emancipatory needs within practices of equality and freedom in our own individual and autodidactic practice.[28] This is an *autotelēs* that does not only ask the diagnostic ontological

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Rather, philosophy becomes reality only through practices: "[T]he reality of philosophy in politics, is understood to be something completely different from giving men laws and proposing the constraining form of the ideal city" (253).

[26] "Far from remaining at the mere level of words, then, *parrhesia* represents the practice through which the subject can modify himself in virtue of his access to the truth, which means that *parrhesia* is fundamentally a form of life, a mode of behaviour" (Mascaretti 2014: 146).

[27] The full quote is: "And say while you're training yourself day after day, as you are, not that you're acting as a philosopher (for you must concede that it would be pretentious to lay claim to that title), but that you're a slave on the way to emancipation. For that is true freedom" (Epictetus 2014: 229). In the classic 1928 W.A Oldfather translation, this is translated as: "And every day while you are training yourself, as you do in the gymnasium, do not say that you are pursuing philosophy (indeed an arrogant phrase!), but that you are a slave presenting your emancipator in court; for this is the true freedom" (Epictetus 1952 283).

[28] This is a view that is in line with both Foucault's and Rancière's respective antipathies towards a didactic emancipation, as neither Rancière nor Foucault were prescribers of solutions, and the particular didactic intellectuals Rancière opposed were clarified in Part 1 of this thesis. As Foucault states in an interview: "I have absolutely no desire to play the role of a prescriber of solutions. I think that the role of the intellectual today is not to ordain, to

question of who am I as a normative subject and how am I such, but also the creative ontological question of who can I be. In this sense, both Rancière *and* Foucault are ignorant schoolmasters, as no one can tell the Other 'the way' to their emancipation; they can merely offer the traces of a path. Practices of equality and freedom are autotelic by having a purpose in themselves as they become a way of life within the ongoing 'way' of emancipation and an interminable *parrhesia* in its various forms: action, non-action, spoken, silent. Therefore, as an emancipation of the self from the self–the parrhesiastic/dissensual self from the normative/consensual self–these practices do not possess an exogenous but an endogenous telos through a transformation that takes, like the care of the self of Stoicism and Epicureanism, a priority over and above a transformation of consensual politics. As stated in Chapter 6, bringing a permanent critical thinking to bear on the socio-political is not enough, we must bring it to bear on ourselves as subjects produced by a normative knowledge, power, and regimes of truth. As Foucault states in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, "there is no first or final point of resistance to political power other than in the relationship one has to oneself" (Foucault 2005: 252). In other words, to be free, Foucault states, referring to Seneca's undertaking of freedom, is to escape from "*Servitutem sui:* servitude to the self" (272). By suspending the order of things by the transgression of *parreshia* as dissensus and dissensus as *parrhesia*, we can channel the disorder–the erasure of our normative 'self' to which we serve–into the transformation of new subjectivities through an *autopoesis* (self-creation) that is ongoing. It is ongoing so that these new subjectivities do not solidify into identities but continue to be erased like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea. In doing so, we not only lie in congruence with Foucault's nominalism that asks not what power 'is' but 'how' it operates, but also with Rancière's nominalism within his belief that only the individual is a real being and society a fiction. Thus, within this congruence, the aim is to disrupt the 'fictions' of consensual history[29] and regimes of truth by practices of freedom and equality contra the normative discursive and non-discursive practices that Foucault interrogates and Rancière denotes as a police logic.

Being 'always on the way' to emancipation is the path of an aesthetic revolution of the self. By a transformation and transgression that are never a complete segue, the self is 'always on the way' and is thus autokinetic due to emancipation's dependency on movement to avoid the

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recommend solutions, to prophesy, because in that function he can only contribute to the functioning of a particular power situation that, in my opinion, must be criticized" (Foucault 2001b: 288).

[29] As Paul Veyne, Foucault's colleague stated, paraphrased by Thomas R. Flynn, "there are no "natural" objects at all. Indeed, history as it has been traditionally construed "does not exist"" (Flynn 2005: 35).

dangers of stasis in the auto-constitution of the self.[30] Therefore, to adopt Aristotle's 'doctrine of the mean', an aesthetic revolution fits somewhere in-between a consensual world and a social revolution and thus, is distanced from both, as Rancière puts it, "the order of domination" and "the disorder of revolt" (Rancière 1999: 12). An aesthetic revolution of the individual exists in-between the past of subjectivities that we have lived and any deferral of ideals to the future; it exists in the present moment and therefore, is constantly inaugural. Practices of equality and freedom happen in the present for the present, and the end is the practices themselves as a way of life. As these 'practices' counter a normative 'production' of the self, they are ongoing as there will always be a normative to counter and therefore, there is no end result: political revolutions end, aesthetic revolutions of the self continue within the modification and re-negotiation of practices of equality and freedom. We are 'always on the way' to emancipation when we live by practices of equality and freedom. Thus, this is an emancipation that can never be reached in its totality because there is no totality to reach. There is always something or part of one's self to be emancipated from in a creative renewal. Therefore, the 'always on the way' to emancipation that this thesis proffers through a synergy of practices of equality and freedom, is an act of *askesis* that distances us from ideals, be they revolutionary or normative.

It is with the idea of distance and *askesis* that we now move on to the Cynics and living practices as a way of life in the present for the present, rather than as a deferred projection of a dialectic synthesis or a telos-bound state of being. Even though it is true that Cynicism declared *eudaemonia* as its goal (Dobbin 2012: xiii), it was less a means to achieve a state of virtue and

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[30] This form of being kinetic, however, is not to be confused with Aristotle's understanding of *kinēsis* (movement) in Book IX (Θ), chapters 1-6 of *Metaphysics* as a movement towards actuality within the fulfilment of a pre-existing potentiality: an external telos. In other words, whilst practitioners of practices of equality and freedom remain in a state of movement within the kinetic-dependent, constant transgression and transformation of the self, which is named autokinetic above to avoid any connection with Aristotle's *kinesis*, there is no external and futural telos because there are no ideals to actualise and no actuality to reach, only practices to be lived in an internal and present moment telos. This being the case, they are more in line with what Aristotle sees in Book IX of *Metaphysics* as the opposite of *kinēsis*, *energeia*: a state in which the movement is perpetually achieved, rather than on its way towards an end. However, unlike *energeia*, practices of equality and freedom do not revolve on the axis of potentiality (*dunamis*). Therefore, they do not, as Jill Frank explains Aristotle's understanding of potentiality, "exist in the present, as a possibility" (Frank 2005: 49). A presupposition of equality and freedom does not lie dormant with potential; presuppositions of equality and freedom are not ontological principals of potentiality. Furthermore, unlike Aristotle's understanding of a practice where the end is statically defined and remains what it is, such as *eudaemonia*, for example, freedom and equality as practices are modified and re-negotiated within their synergetic and emergent needs.

more a means to live a virtuous life by the adoption of lived qualities such as *parrhesia*, *autarkeia* (self-sufficiency), and *karteria* (endurance, perseverance), all of which were promoted by *askesis* (xvi-x). In Book VI. 104-105 of his *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Diogenes Laertius quotes Antisthenes from the latter's *Heracles* as stating much the same: ""Life according to Virtue" is the End to be sought" (Antisthenes in Laertius 1925: 109). Thus, living a virtuous life is an end in its own right and exists as a practice rather than a destination.

7.3 The Cynics I

The Cynic Crates called Cynicism "practising philosophy without frills" (Crates in Dobbin 2012: 68), and the Roman poet and satirist Decimus Junius Juvenalis (Juvenal, as he is known in English) stated the only difference between a Cynic and a Stoic is a tunic (Juvenal 1928: 255). Whilst, like all satires, there is some truth here, and Stoicism is heavily influenced by Cynicism in their congruence of viewing virtue as a way of life, there were extreme dissimilarities between these two philosophies that far outweighed any similarities–the social standing of the respective practitioners being the most obvious example. Unlike the Stoic philosophers, the founder of Cynicism, Diogenes of Sinope,[31] was the anti-normative philosopher par excellence through living his life like a street dog by defecating, urinating, and eating wherever he saw fit, hence, perhaps, the epithet given to the Cynics of dog philosophers.

Unlike the Cynics, the Stoics did not seek to completely break with normative practices/conventions–Stoicism was, in an extremely crude kernel, a toned down Cynicism.[32] Writing as a Stoic, Seneca stated in 'Letter V', "one's life should be a compromise between the ideal and the popular morality" (Seneca 2004: 37-8), "[o]therwise we shall repel and alienate the

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[31] As the aforementioned Antisthenes was an influence on Diogenes, the biographer Diogenes Laertius states that Antisthenes was the originator of Cynicism and that is from him that the name Cynicism came from as Antithenes used to teach outside the Cynosarges (white dog) gymnasium (Laertius 1925: 13). However, as Diogenes was the first to live the Cynic life that he is now known for, he is seen as the originator of Cynicism and Antisthenes as merely an influence (Dobbin 2012: xxi). Furthermore, Diogenes was not only the founder of Cynicism, but also the teacher of Crates of Thebes, who in turn, was the teacher of the founder of Stoicism, Zeno of Citium, who was a Cynic under Crates' tutelage before he was a Stoic.

[32] This was especially the case when Stoicism was introduced to Rome. Two philosophers from Greece who helped with this introduction, Panaetius and Posidonius, purged it of any offensive aspects of Cynicism that it retained: "Cynicism faced a more hostile reception among the Romans with their comparatively conservative culture than other Greek schools of thought" (Dobbin 2012: xxxii).

very people whose reform we desire" (37). We can see a similarity to this Stoic principle in Foucault's ethics of freedom where people exist as both objectified subjects and self-constituting existents within an aesthetic rather than social revolution. Gauny also existed within a compromise where he was both a worker and not a worker: a worker-poet. However, Seneca also wrote in the same letter, quite obviously going against the Cynics: "Avoid shabby attire, long hair, an unkempt beard, an outspoken dislike of silverware, sleeping on the ground and all other misguided means to self-advertisement [. . .] Inwardly everything should be different but our outward face should conform with the crowd [. . .] Philosophy calls for simple living, not for doing penance [. . .]" (37). Whereas, Foucault states, as Daniele Lorenzini informs us, quite a bit before his engagement with the Cynics, that we should adopt certain Cynic-like traits:

> [A]lready in 1971 Foucault outlines a sort of 'paradigm' of political resistance very close to a Cynic one: 'It is good to be dirty and bearded, to have long hair,[33] to look like a girl when one is a boy (and vice-versa)', Foucault says, because we have to 'unmask our rituals', we have to 'put "into play", exhibit, transform and overturn' the systems that peacefully govern us, in order to make them appear as what they are – that is, as 'purely arbitrary things'. (Lorenzini 2015: 231)

Diogenes the Cynic also differed from Plato, as Foucault informs us in *The Government of the Self and Others*, vol 1. Whilst Plato sought to advise Dionysius the Younger, Diogenes strove to always show his opposition to power, as the famous story of him telling Alexander the Great to stop blocking the sun infers. Therefore, Diogenes does not have moments of using *parrhesia* when necessary but makes *parrhesia* "his very way of life" (Foucault 2010b: 287) and thus lives a discursive life.[34] Plato's type of philosophical discourse, however, according to Foucault, "tells the truth in relation to political action, in relation to the practice of politics, in relation to the political personage" (288). Thus, for Plato, "[p]hilosophy and politics must exist in a relation, in a correlation; they must never coincide" (289). The Cynics, on the other hand, unlike Plato who wants a relationship between philosophical *parrhesia* and political action, want philosophical *parrhesia* and politics to coincide in an open and therefore, public "confrontation of challenge"

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[33] This could well have been the influence of the late 1960's too with the fashion of long hair for men.

[34] As Sanbach states: "Cynicism was hardly a philosophy; it was more an attitude and a way of life" (Sanbach 1989: 21).

(292).[35] As Diogenes Laertius states, "the most beautiful thing in the world" for Diogenes was "Freedom of speech" (Laertius 1925: 71). Now we can start to understand more clearly why Rancière sees Gauny as a Parisian Diogenes in his discursive lifestyle of confrontation with nineteenth-century capitalism and industrialisation by enacting dissensus contra consensus as a way of life, albeit a less extreme way of life than that of Diogenes',[36] as Gauny existed in-between social revolution and inequality, in-between work and rest, and, as Seneca recommended, in-between ideals and consensus.

Returning to Plato, according to Foucault, for Plato, philosophical *parrhesia* and politics should not meet in a public confrontation but in the "Prince's soul" (Foucault 2010b: 292). Therefore, there is a polarity regarding Plato's and Dionysius separate approaches that personifies the two poles in Western thought that can be quantified in a question: Should philosophical discourse aim to form politics, or should it be used to publicly challenge, criticise and confront politics–thus aiming to make it change through those challenges? As we know, Rancière's bi-univocality gives politics an 'other' meaning and a 'second voice'[37] by defining it as dissensus. Thus, for Rancière, politics is a public challenge to consensual politics and democracy which Rancière sees as misnomers. However, for Plato, Foucault tells us, philosophy must not define what politics must do but must define what the politician/ruler must be: "[P]hilosophy will derive its reality from its relation to politics by [being able] to define—effectively or not, this will be the test—the politician's mode of being" (295). For Plato, *parrhesia* must be used so that a sovereign can learn to govern themselves well so that they may govern others well. Therefore, a philosopher should speak to the ruler's soul, so that they may speak to their own soul. Thus, philosophers do not give political advice but speak the truth from their own soul whilst addressing an individual, and thus, unlike rhetoric which affects only the listener, this speech has an effect both on the speaker and the listener: it is a psychagogy, a guidance of the soul through a *tekhnê* of discourse and a relation to the truth.[38] Therefore, philosophy did not focus

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[35] As Diogenes' sun-blocking episode personifies with its *parrhesia* which sounded much like a metaphor of Plato's cave allegory: stop casting shadows (creating a consensual reality) and blocking the light (the truth).

[36] Vagrancy was illegal at the time in France.

[37] The etymological root of univocal is the Latin word *univocus*: uni (one) vox (voice/sound). As such, literally speaking, through its etymology, bi-univocal means two voices.

[38] Philosophical discourse "will tell the truth of reality and at the same time express the soul of the person who utters it, what his soul thinks. What defines the mode of being of this philosophical language, as opposed to rhetorical language, is the relationship to the speaking subject and not the relationship to the individual being addressed" (Foucault 2010b: 315).

on politics, it focused on "the subject in politics" (319). Accordingly, both Plato and Diogenes keep a distance from directly involving themselves in consensual politics and do so by expressing their respective resistances through different forms. Both forms, as Foucault says of Socrates' *parrhesia*, are "a break with political activity strictly speaking" (325). However, for Foucault, Diogenes and the Cynics utilised a form of *parrhesia* that differed from the political and philosophical *parrhesia* we have addressed above: freedom of speech in regard to democracy and Plato's understanding of a transformation of the soul through his attempt to facilitate a transformation of Dionysius' soul. To address this difference in the shift from *polis* to *psuchê* (soul) and then to *êthos*, we need to turn to the second volume of *The Government of the Self and Others*, *The Courage of the Truth*. In this volume, Gros informs us in the 'Course Context' that Foucault offers us "a highly original [. . .] presentation of ancient Cynicism" (Gros 2011: 350), one in which the transcendent realm of "the other world (*l'autre monde*) and the other life (*l'autre vie*)" offered by Plato is opposed by the Cynic stress on an immanent "other life (*vie autre*)/other world (*monde autre*)" (355).

7.4 The Courage of the Truth

In the first lecture of *The Courage of the Truth*, Foucault returns to the term he first mentioned in *On the Government of the Living* quoted in the beginning of Chapter 6 of this thesis: alethurgy. He defines this neologism in this first lecture as "the production of truth, the act by which truth is manifested" and reminds us that it "is the framework in which" he is "studying the notion and practice of *parrhêsia*" (Foucault 2011: 3). Therefore, Foucault's grand project, so to speak, the genealogy of the production of truth within the formation of the subject, links his later work to his earlier archaeological work on discourses and the production of truth within knowledge, and his work on power, as *parrhesia* revolves on the axis of the government of the self *and* others and thus, as Foucault states above, underpins governmentality. Therefore, it would not be correct to believe that Foucault's ethics of the self leaves behind his earlier work. In fact, it is the complete opposite because for Foucault, his work is not reducible to just one of these "elements" (9). What does he mean by this?

Foucault states in the first lecture of *The Courage of the Truth* that *parrhesia* is "a modality of truth-telling" "rather than" a "technique [like] rhetoric" (Foucault 2011: 14) and that there are three other modalities of truth-telling: the truth-telling of prophecy by the prophet (15-16), the truth-telling of wisdom by the sage (16-19), and the professor/technician who teaches (23-5).

160

However, it is not necessary to engage in the difference between these modes of veridiction that Foucault describes, as the key difference is that *parrhesia* puts its speaker in danger, as already mentioned above, and therefore, for Foucault, unlike the other three modalities, *parrhesia* relates to the domain of *êthos* (25).[39] Foucault describes the aforementioned shift of *parrhesia* from *polis* to *psuchê* to *êthos* sequentially as "*alêtheia* and truth-telling" in the form of freedom of speech in the polis, "*politeia* and government" as Plato's aim to transform Dionysius's soul pertains to politics and government, "and *êthopoiêsis* (the formation of the *êthos* of the subject)" (66). For Foucault, these three are irreducible and have a mutuality that underpinned "the very existence of all philosophical discourse from Greece to the present" (66). In other words, the question of one of these poles is never raised without referring to the other two–i.e, "the production of truth (*alêtheia*)" is never raised without referring to "the exercise of power (*politeia*), and moral formation (*êthos*)" (68), and this is the case from whichever of these three poles that we begin. Thus, Foucault, through Greek terminology, refers us back to the key focus of his work: knowledge/truth, power, ethics:

> "It seems to me that by examining the notion of *parrhêsia* we can see how the analysis of modes of veridiction [(knowledge/truth)], the study of techniques of governmentality [(power)], and the identification of forms of practice of self [(ethics)] interweave. Connecting together modes of veridiction, techniques of governmentality, and practices of the self is basically what I have always been trying to do" (Foucault 2011: 8).

Therefore, unlike his early career, we can see, in line with O'Leary (O'Leary 2002: 142), that Foucault now places himself and his work firmly in the philosophy camp:

> This is the parrhesiastic discourse and standpoint in philosophy: it is the discourse of the irreducibility of truth, power, and *êthos*, and at the same time the discourse of their necessary relationship, of the impossibility of thinking truth (*alêtheia*), power (*politeia*), and *êthos* without their essential, fundamental relationship to each other. (Foucault 2011: 68)[40]

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[39] However, Foucault does mention that the modalities of wisdom and *parrhesia* had a tendency to conjoin in ancient philosophy (Foucault 2011: 28) and that in medieval Christianity there was a coming together of the modalities of prophecy and *parrhesia* (29).

[40] Jakub Franěk's interpretation states that Foucault's last lecture series addressed not Socrates' but his own "philosophical apology, as an attempt to defend himself against the charges of moral and epistemological nihilism,

Foucault states that there was a shift of *parrhesia* to the sphere of *psuchê* (soul), as the political assemblies of Athens were 'technically' open to any speaker regardless of their character and for all the obvious reasons the social elite wanted to end this–hence their criticism of democracy mentioned above. Therefore, *parrhesia* shifted to an indirect engagement with politics by *êthos* because consensual politics de facto disallowed *parrhesia* for the *demos*. Thus, the only way to engage with consensual politics was where a person took care of themselves and transformed themselves by *êthos*. In doing so, they spoke the truth of their 'self' to their 'self, as well as to others and thus indirectly attacked consensual politics, much like Socrates did.

In an aim to live a true life–an other life, a life outside of the consensual life that suffocates us, we speak *parrhesia* to our 'self'. To speak and live *parrhesia* is to extract one's 'self' from a consensual way of being and from normative taxonomies of identity. Thus, today, it would be to extract one's 'self' from neoliberal ideals cited as the 'good life' and the accruement of debt deemed necessary to obtain such a life that entraps the *sans-part* within the hegemony of a neoliberal, capitalist, work ethic that thwarts resistance–"debt encumbered homeowners don't go on strike" (Harvey 2019, no pagination)–as existents operate as human capital and entrepreneurs of themselves.[41] To be parrhesiastic is also to extract one's 'self' from an understanding of normative narratives such as hetero-marriage and procreation as the quasi-imperatives that bio-power promotes them as.[42] Therefore, to be parrhesiastic is to critically disrupt the particular truth that political or economic hegemonies hide behind to justify their egregious actions in the name of freedom and equality, be they hegemonies of neoliberalism, communism, national socialism, nominal democracy, or otherwise. With *parrhesia*, it is possible to create new truths for the self to connect with contra consensual truths. In the case of this thesis, this would be the truth of practices of freedom and equality that happen now contra a so called democratic political truth that denotes freedom and equality as ideals so that they may be deferred to justify their absence. Or contra the truth of neoliberalism, where freedom and

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which were raised in response to his earlier work" (Franěk 2006: 113). However, it seems more the case that Foucault was exploring means of emancipation rather than defence.

[41] "Individual success or failure are interpreted in terms of entrepreneurial virtues or personal failings (such as not investing significantly enough in one's own human capital through education) rather than being attributed to any systemic property (such as the class exclusions usually attributed to capitalism)" (Harvey 2005: 65-6). In other words, an individual looks to themselves and their failures as the problem rather than to society.

[42] As Rancière states in an interview, citing his source as the second-century Roman author Aulus Gellius, the etymological root of proletariat, *proletarius*, "is an old Latin legal term, completely out of use now, which means 'he who makes babies'" (Rancière 2016a: 29).

equality are specific economic forms within a free-market capitalism of entrepreneurship, an entrepreneurship which occurs in a deregulated economy that purportedly gives an economic freedom and equality to all, but de facto is geared towards the advantage of the affluent few within an equal treatment of unequals. With *parrhesia* it is possible to aim to semantically give equality and freedom a second voice as practices that are active rather than ideals that are passive and deferred,[43] just as Rancière aims to semantically give politics and democracy a second voice as forms of dissensus, or Foucault's work aims to give a voice to a counter-history to oppose modernity's 'History' which is seen as consensual truth or consensual fiction, depending on your point of view. In this sense, truth and fiction are the same thing and perspective decides which is which: "there is no pre-discursive" (Foucault 1970: 67).

Whilst "true life" as McGushin puts it, "is an "outside," an *other* which does not inhabit the world of everydayness but remains outside of it as a permanent challenge to it" (McGushin 2007: 149), we can never totally extract ourselves from the framework of the consensual social space and time in which we exist; we can suspend but we not transcend the distribution of the sensible. Therefore, an effective change cannot occur by a political *parrhesia*, as *parrhesia* can be silenced in the *polis* by those who govern or co-opted by a new regime of consensus. The message that Socrates gives us with his way of life, Foucault states, is that change comes via a non-political *parrhesia*, an ethical *parrhesia* (Foucault 2011: 90) and thus an aesthetic revolution that engages politics indirectly. This is why, in the *Phaedo*, just before his death, Socrates tells one of his followers, Crito, to give a cock to Asclepius the Greek god of medicine as payment for a cure. The standard interpretation of this is that Socrates meant a payment for the cure from the sickness of life: death. However, Foucault adopts the interpretation by the philologist Georges Dumézil who states (Dumézil 2016), Foucault informs us, that it is a payment for a cure from the sickness of "the common opinion," a cure which allowed Socrates during his lifetime to "make up his mind through opinion founded on the relation of self to the truth" (Foucault 2011: 105). Therefore, the disease is not life but, we could say, the normative imposed on life which enslaves us, the 'common opinion' that Seneca stated we should not be seduced by. Thus, an unexamined life is a diseased life, a life that allows itself to be seduced and suffocated by a consensual narrative and a normative subjectivity, an abbreviated life where one does not take care of the self but remains in an existence that is not 'always on the way' to emancipation but stagnant within the prison of the 'modern soul', as Foucault puts it,

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[43] As David Harvey states, if people "can be persuaded to support almost anything in the name of freedom, then surely the meaning of this word should be subjected to the deepest scrutiny" (Harvey 2005: 184).

where an internal self is in sync with technologies of knowledge, power, and the practices of the quotidian. Therefore, as stated in Chapter 6, practices of equality and freedom seek a cure for the modern soul via a straying afield from the consensual and normative self, a straying afield that is 'always on the way' to emancipation through truth. This is not a truth that is reached theoretically, however, but through *ergon*, through *praxis*. As Kerem Eksen puts it:

> [P]raxis, with its fundamentally transformative power, plays the leading role. The self's field of practices is not a passive material on which the truth reached through theory will be applied, but the very scene in which this truth is discovered, produced, experienced and enacted. This, I think, is what Foucault means when he describes *ascesis* (in a way that may irritate a modern ear) as a "practice and exercise of the truth." (Eksen 2014: 206)

Neither is this truth reached through the purification proffered by "the Pythagoreans" that continued through to "modern philosophy" (Foucault 2011: 125) where one must reach some kind of monastic-like purity to reach the truth.[44] Rather, as Foucault believes, this is a truth reached through the transformation that the courage of the truth leads us to. It is by a care of the self, not by a care of the Platonic soul, but the care of *bíos* which, Foucault states, is "the starting point for a whole philosophical practice and activity, of which Cynicism is, of course, the first example" (128). This care of self, rather than knowing oneself, knowing one's soul, is first seen, Foucault tells us, in Plato's *Laches* which has courage as its thematic that unites *parrhesia* and care (129). Whilst it is not necessary here to engage with Foucault's exegesis of *Laches*, it is interesting to note that Foucault interprets Plato's *Laches* very differently than the text *Alcibiades* that we engaged with in Chapter 6. The *Laches*, unlike the *Alcibiades*, Foucault states, revolves on the axis of *bíos* rather than *psuchê* (soul)–"One goes towards the metaphysics of the soul (Alcibiades), the other towards a stylistics of existence (Laches)" (161)– and connects care and *parrhesia* through the nexus of courage where he explores "how the care of the self [. . .] was not replaced but taken up, inflected, modified, and re-elaborated by the principle of truth-telling that has to be confronted courageously" (163). It is with this care of the self, this care of *bíos*, this aesthetics of existence that was elaborated by the courage to both speak and live *parrhesia*, that we return to the Cynics as the first example of this practice (*praxis*), this activity (*ergon*).

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[44] In regard to 'modern philosophy', Foucault is referring to the Cartesian approach from *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* that we briefly touched on in the last chapter: the 'Cartesian moment'.

7.5 The Cynics II

Unlike Plato, the Cynics did not engage in metaphysics as a manifestation of truth but focussed on life as its manifestation and thus on a terrestrial existence. Whilst *parrhesia* has been applied to other philosophies, such as Stoicism for example, *parrhesia* always seems to occupy, as Foucault notes, "the foreground in depictions of the Cynic and Cynicism" (Foucault 2011: 166). Even though it predates Stoicism, Cynicism takes us to an extreme Stoicism, to a "radical asceticism" (167). It is a mode of being that attempts to strip away all superfluity and to reveal the truth through a way of life in which *bíos* becomes alethurgy: truth made manifest "in one's acts, one's body, the way one dresses, and in the way one conducts oneself and lives" (172).

Foucault cites early Christian orders, the nineteenth-century political movements, and also art–"the artistic life" (Foucault 2011:187)–as mediums for Cynicism. Art, Foucault states, refers not only to stripping existence down to its very basics, but also to the actual life of an artist and how it differs from most lives and authenticates the work of art as art itself (187-8).[45] However, the aspect that piques our interest is one of the three revolutionary and militant modes of 'political movements' that Foucault cites as "bearing witness to the true life by one's life itself" (184):[46]

> This style of existence specific to revolutionary militantism, and ensuring that one's life bears witness, breaks, and has to break with the conventions, habits, and values of society. And it must manifest directly, by its visible form, its constant practice, and its immediate existence, the concrete possibility and the evident value of an other life, which is the true life. (Foucault 2011:184)

Now while Foucault states about all three mediums listed above–religious movements of the Middle Ages, political practices from the nineteenth century onwards, and modern art–that he is giving "superficial surveys" and that these surveys "are notes for possible work" (Foucault 2011: 189), bearing witness to one's life is the dynamic in the nineteenth century that Gauny's life illustrates. Thus, we can make a connection with the work Foucault never had the time to carry out, when we connect Gauny's *bíos* with Cynicism and therefore, *parrhesia*, which we do in Part

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[45] For an understanding of Foucault's views on how art became modern via his engagement with visual art from the seventeenth century onwards and his understanding of art as a means to oppose the consensus, see Tanke's *Foucault's Philosophy of Art: A Genealogy of Modernity (Philosophy, Aesthetics and Cultural Theory)* (2009).

[46] The other two modes are "secret sociality" and "established organisation" (Foucault 2011: 184).

165

3 and have touched on earlier in congruence with Rancière's citation of Gauny as a Parisian Diogenes–like the Cynics, Gauny's way of life and cenobitic economy were a manifestation of truth, a life lived as truth. Therefore, we can adopt, as a description of Gauny, a description by Foucault of the Egyptian Christian Maxiumus after Foucault had explored Gregory of Nazianzus' description of Maxiumus as a Cynic who possessed *parrhesia*:

> [F]rom the moment of embracing asceticism until the present, in his body, his life, his acts, his frugality, his renunciations, and his ascesis, has never ceased being the living witness of the truth. He has suffered, endured, and deprived himself so that the truth takes shape in his own life, as it were, in his own existence, his own body. (Foucault 2011: 173)

In Chapter 4 of this thesis, the revenants Rancière brings back from the archives were described as being formed by the flesh of words contained in the archival skin of the 'paper lives' of *atypical* workers. This is because truth must be lived so that it becomes part of the very body, the very life of the parrhesiaist, so that life becomes an *autarkēs*, 'self-sufficiency'. This is not an economic autarky, although there are elements of that with Gauny, but an *autarkēs* within a way of existing–a way, as the etymological root of *autarkēs* denotes, for the self (*autos*) to suffice (*arkein*)–a way of creating one's 'self', a way of relating one's self to truth with words, (non)-actions, and *bíos* as a form of armature against the consensual way of being that assails us: "Virtue," as Antisthenes said according to Diogenes Laertius, "is a weapon that cannot be taken away" (Antisthenes in Laertius 1925: 13). By understanding this, we understand that Foucault does not want to proselytise Stoicism or Cynicism, but to show that they are wells to draw from, or if you like, weapons to aid a creation of new forms of ethics and new ways to be. Therefore, what Foucault *"definitely does not"* do, as Katarzyna Dworakowska puts it, is "yield to the temptation of the myth of Greece" (Dworakowska 2019: 179). Thus, we can see that Foucault's stress on the Cynics is to do with a stress on *ergon*/*praxis* over logos, on a way of life rather than a way of theory as in the theory of Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies, for example, or, to a degree, Stoicism or an ancient Greek way of life. This is why Gauny's *bíos* is a relevant exemplification of someone not only living a practice of equality, but also a practice of freedom, as Gauny lives a way of life outside, to a certain extent, consensual life–albeit not as heteroclitic as the Cynic path, as unlike the Cynics, Gauny and his peers did not celebrate poverty but

sought solace from their poverty through artistic creation and autodidactism.[47] Having lived through the insecurities of political and economic revolutions and their aftermath, Gauny et al. saw the middle-path of an aesthetic revolution as the only alternative to the horrors of social revolution and that which they revolted against. Therefore, to remember Gauny's life through the archives is to follow not so much a tradition of doctrines or to impose a biography upon his work, but to follow what Foucault names, in referring to the Cynics, "a traditionality of existence" that recalls "elements and episodes of lives–of the life of someone who really existed or of someone who existed mythically" (Foucault 2011: 209).

Unlike what we know of Gauny's life, the 'traditionality of existence' that illustrates the lives of Cynics is expressed though anecdotes known as *khreiai*.[48] Through these anecdotes, Foucault states, the figure of the philosophical hero emerges (and here we are brought back to courage– the courage to live a true life) where, if Diogenes Laertius is correct, physics and logic are expelled from Cynic philosophy and only a way of life remains (Foucault 2011: 205). Whether Gauny emerges as a philosophical hero or not–revenant as hero–is a subjective matter. For now, it is important to state that it was not only living philosophy as a way of life that was stressed in Cynicism, but also the lives, rather than any theories, of past Cynics, or Socrates himself. However, the biographies of these lives, whilst of real figures of history, are littered with fictional events, such as Diogenes supposed meeting with Alexander the Great,[49] that make the *khreiai* appear as idealised myths that heroise the subject, which, to a 'degree', all positive biographies do. With this philosopher as hero *êthos* that denoted poverty as virtue to the point that one depended on the charity of others to survive, Cynicism became popular, as the second century CE satirist Lucian informs us in 'The Runaways' (Lucian 1962: 69). As Foucault quotes: "cobblers, joiners, and wool carders" (Lucian in Foucault 2011: 203) sought the toleration and even welcome given to the *parrhesia* of philosophers. However, for Lucian, which Foucault does not make totally clear, many merely played the part of a philosopher by wearing the Cynic

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[47] There are many examples of Gauny's angst towards poverty and work. In one example, Gauny writes in a letter to Ponty, "*nous somas perdue dans les misères de l'existence*' (Gauny's emphasis) (we are lost in the miseries of existence) and "*profondément parias*" (deeply outcast), and he writes of "*douleurs qui s'élèvent, en sanglantées et rayonnantes, à travers nos labours de chaque jour*" (pains that rise, bloody and radiant, through our daily labours) (Gauny 2017: 214), and of "*[t]oujours en latte aves le temp*" (always struggling with time) (215).

[48] Diogenes of Laertius' biography of Diogenes the Cynic is a prime example of the use of *khreiai*.

[49] In his book on Cynic philosophers, Robert Dobbin states that this story can be traced back to the historian and student of Diogenes, Onesicritus, who probably created this story because he wanted to put together the two people he admired the most: Alexander and Diogenes (Dobbin 2012: xxix).

apparel so they could collect from house to house the food and money that true Cynics would be given (Lucian 1962: 71), and thus escape their own work which was "petty, laborious, and barely able to supply them with just enough" (69). Therefore, not everyone who donned the Cynic cloak sought a revolutionary life, but merely an easier life. In this sense, we can see how the thematic of a true way of life within a nineteenth-century political *êthos* connects to Cynicism with the commonality of the *sans part* and with certain workers who played the part of comrades (just as past workers played the part of Cynics) to enjoy the help of the charity of workers' groups by seeking an easier rather than a revolutionary life. As we examine in Chapter 8, this was not the case with Gauny, who just like the Cynics who travelled throughout the city speaking words of dissent against consensual life, spoke words of dissent on his evening walks so that the workers of factories and workshops might hear him as they headed home. In this sense, Gauny was more of a Diogenes (minus the insults that Diogenes 'meted' out, the verb 'mete' stems from the Greek *medesthai* (care for)) than a Socrates, as the latter sought to engage in conversation with passers-by and in doing so, according to Rancière, was stultifying.[50] Thus, we can see that a focus on a way of life, rather than a philosophical logos, as a means to be 'always on the way' to emancipation, seems to be something that Foucault and Rancière share. Living the truth by practices was in fact, proffered by the Cynics as being available to all and a quicker way than that of logos: "the quick way to virtue, short-circuiting the lengthy and theoretical teaching" (Foucault 2011: 206).[51] However, quicker does not necessarily

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[50] Socrates is generally not seen as stultifying. However, in a 2003 interview, Rancière compares him unfavourably with Jacotot: "Socrates wanders the streets, prompts his interlocutors to speak and deduces the truth that he teaches from the words uttered by his interlocuters. Everything in Jacotot, however, wants to show that Socrates isn't the figure of the emancipator, but of the stultifier par excellence, of the one who stages a scene wherein the student must be confronted with the lacunas and aporias of his own discourse. According to Jacotot, no method is more stultifying than that–if by stultifying we understand the method that inculcates, in the mind of the speaker, the sense of his own incapacity. At bottom, stultification is the defining feature of the method that gets others to speak, only to lead them to conclude that what they say is inconsistent, and that they'd never know that their ideas are inconsistent had someone else not shown them the path that allows them to see their own insufficiency for themselves" (Rancière 2017j: 175). In Plato's *Meno* (Plato 1997c), in what seems to be an indirect contradiction to this, Socrates, through questioning, which for him is not teaching, helps one of Meno's slaves to work out a geometrical theorem. However, as Rancière states in the same interview: "The whole political question of the transmission of knowledge in Jacotot can be understood as a radical critique of the famous scene in Plato's *Meno* in which the slave boy supposedly discovers all the truths of geometry on his own. But what the slave boy discovers in fact is his own incapacity to discover anything unless he's guided by a good teacher who sets him on the right path" (Rancière 2017j: 175).

[51] In Book VI. 104-105 of his *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Diogenes Laertius states the same: "[I]t has been said that Cynicism is a short cut to virtue" (Laertius 1925: 109).

mean easier, as it was quicker due to its "radical break with family, property, social comforts and social conventions" (Dobbin 2012: xxxviii). Foucault:

> [T]here is the other, short way, which is the difficult, arduous way which rises straight to the summit over many obstacles and which is, as it were, the silent way. Anyway, it is the way of exercise, of askesis, of practices of destitution and endurance. (Foucault 2011: 207)

There is the long way of discourse, of logos, and the quick but arduous way of *ergon*/*praxis*, of askesis, of everyday exercise and habits where, as Aristotle states in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, the habits that we form, form us: "we become just by doing just actions, temperate by temperate actions, and courageous by courageous actions" (Aristotle 2004: 23). This is something we shall explore in Part 3: tying subjectivity to *praxis* as a means to counter the productive subjectification of discursive and non-discursive practices. As Rancière puts it in an interview, "you are first and foremost what you *do*" (Rancière 2016a: 119, Rancière's stress), and this is what Aristotle means when he cites *ethos* (habituation) as *êthos* (virtue). As Hofmeyr puts it regarding Foucault's ethics: ""ethos," translates into action, ethical action" (Hofmeyr 2005: 77), and it is this action that in turn, forms our *êthos*. In adopting an Aristotelian focus on forming the self through praxis, albeit through Foucault's and Rancière's respective understandings, we can also adopt Aristotle's rejection of prioritising either the community or the individual by, as Frank puts it in her book on Aristotle mentioned above, a "nontotalising commonality" (Frank 2005: 12). This is a commonality that can help unite an ethics of the self and a politics of dissensus with a formation of subjectivity through *praxis*. As the Italian philosopher Roberto Esposito puts it, "freedom is the internal exteriority of community [. . .] a community that opens itself to the singularity of every existence" (Esposito 2013: 56).[52]

Cynics thought much the same as Aristotle when it came to the formation of the self, believing "that attitudes followed behaviour" (Aune 2008: 52). Therefore, they emphasised "lifestyle rather than philosophical theory" (51) and "orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy" (52).[53] Thus, as Foucault points out, as Cynicism was not learnt through logos but by living a Cynic life, it is very difficult

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[52] The work of Esposito, amongst others, will be engaged with in future research on practices of equality and freedom within communities.

[53] As the Roman emperor and philosopher Julian put it in his *Orations*. VI. 189A: "Plato chose to achieve his aim through words, whereas for Diogenes deeds sufficed" (Julian 1913: 27).

to study or find written theoretical works of Cynicism (Foucault 2011: 208).[54] This is apt, however, because to offer specific instructions on how to exist, an ideology of sorts, would be to not only go against everything Foucault's (and Rancière's) philosophy stands for and against the lessons that certain revolutions have taught us, but would also be to go against Cynicism as well. However, the Cynics allegorised the stories of Diogenes or his father (reports vary) devaluing the currency as a Cynic devaluation of consensual values. This devaluation is somewhat akin to the later Nietzschean project of 'the revaluation of all values' in Nietzsche's *The AntiChrist: A Curse on Christianity* (Nietzsche 2004) and what, to a degree, Foucault sought with his ethics of freedom, or indeed Rancière, with his bi-univocality, and both thinkers with their alternative histories. Thus, we can see that the Cynics in their horizon of a devaluation of values, act as a kind of nexus for Foucault's and Rancière's respective practices of freedom and equality within their devaluations of the normative/consensus and, as stated in Chapter 1, their use of Diogenes: the Diogenes of Gauny within a cenobite economy and the Diogenes of Foucault through a militancy which aspires to change the world. However, this does not mean that these practices lie in full congruence with Cynicism. As Foucault states, Cynicism should be viewed as taking the idea of an *alēthēs bíos*, a true life, an unconcealed life, to the extreme: "With regard to the question of the true life, what is involved is much more a sort of carnivalesque continuity of the theme, than of a break with the received values of classical philosophy" (Foucault 2011: 228).

Cynic values were an understanding of a true life, "the unconcealed life, the independent life, the straight life, and the sovereign life, master of itself" (Foucault 2011: 251). This is what, Foucault tells us, Cynicism, in a carnivalesque way, was. Therefore, for Foucault it was a philosophical eclecticism of sorts that rather than forming a consensual philosophy from different features of prior philosophies, had the opposite effect, which Foucault describes as "a strangeness [. . .] an exteriority, and even hostility and war" (233). Cynicism seems to have eviscerated philosophy, laying its internal organs out for display on the streets of Athens in an extreme exteriority, that like any extremity, takes the chance of eventually becoming banal– which it eventually did with the commonality of Diogenes-like figures roaming the urban landscape, be they true Cynics or not. Perhaps we can call this 'exteriority' a dissensus of philosophy itself, an anti-philosophy, if you like, or at least, an anti-consensual philosophy, whilst still existing within philosophy, much like social dissidents who remain both in and outside of

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[54] "The literature produced by early Cynics has largely perished, and our knowledge is largely confined to sayings and anecdotes of doubtful historical value" (Aune 2008: 48).

society where practitioners like Gauny are both a worker and not a worker–just as Cynicism was both a philosophy and not a philosophy. In this sense, it has much in common with Foucault's and Rancière's battle against descriptive ontologies of political philosophy–ontologies of identity. Therefore, when Foucault states that Cynicism exteriorises the philosophical life in relation to philosophy itself–philosophical discourse and practice–we can see a strong connection, and perhaps even a first movement, albeit in an exaggerated form of a logic gone too far, towards practices of freedom and equality and a move away from descriptive ontologies and a deferral of equality and freedom. We can see a movement towards a creative ontology that happens 'now' in the present by *praxis* as a way of life. However, Cynicism was a way of life that remained the same: there was no 'constitutive instability' that led to newly constituted subjectivities. There are other differences and also commonalities between practices of equality and freedom and Cynicism.

Much like Cynicism, practices of freedom and equality, as shown above, seek an 'other' life (*vie autre*) and an 'other world' (*monde autre*), albeit not the other world of Cynics, which Foucault describes in an unnumbered footnote that uses part of his unspoken lecture notes, as the telos of "a city of sages in which there would no longer be any need for Cynic militancy" (Foucault 2011: 315). Cynicism was lived as a public life, as the ancients believed that any true life should be aided by the gaze of friends (252) who, by being aware of the unconcealed life of others and commentating on those lives, reflect on their own life. We can see the same *êthos* with Seneca's letters, which Foucault states are very close to the *hupomnemata* (journal) of the type of Stoic notes personified by Marcus Aurelius' personal notes (posthumously published as the book *Meditations*). A missive, for Seneca, is read by the author once they have written it and through this reading, as well as the writing, it acts upon the author as well as the addressee (Foucault 1997: 214). Stoic notes and letters are called, as the title of the Foucault essay we've just quoted from, a 'Self Writing'. We can also see Gauny's letters to his friends and other Saint-Simonians as a form of self-writing and as a means for this group of emancipators to aid each other in a 'soul service' that requires the frankness of *parrhesia*. Therefore, we can not only rewrite the 'fictions' of consensual history and regimes of truth, but we can also rewrite the self. However, whilst *parrhesia* is a commonality between Cynicism and practices of equality and freedom, Cynicism's embrace of poverty, rejected by both the Greeks and the Romans, is not. Gauny said it best, when he said: A need for less is a powerful force. To live from little, is a

great means of defence.[55] The Cynics embraced a life of poverty to such an extreme though, that it would make the little that Gauny lived from appear a rather opulent defence. Cynicism, Foucault states, "is not an acceptance of poverty; it is a real conduct of poverty" (Foucault 2011: 258). Thus, whilst there can be a certain detachment from wealth in a movement from a normative narrative, there also needs to be a detachment from a Cynic understanding of poverty. Ancient philosophy, be it Cynicism or otherwise, was a pool to draw from for Foucault, not something to strictly adhere to. Therefore, we can leave the Cynic focus on poverty and "*bíos kunikos* [. . .] a dog's life" (Foucault 2011: 243) to one side.

The Cynics pushed an other life to the extremities of radicalism and absurdity where it became, as Foucault puts it, "the scandalous manifestation of the other life" (Foucault 2011: 269) within a "voluntary destitution, of begging, and ultimately even of dishonour" (270). Cynicism was, as Foucault words it, a means to turn a philosophical life into a "combative endurance" (284). "The Cynic," as he further states, "is a philosopher at war. He is someone who wages philosophical war for others" (299). It is through a type of combative endurance that practices of equality and freedom engage in a quiet war and an aesthetic revolution: the endurance of autodicatism for example within the hours meant for rest, or the endurance of being always on the way to emancipation through the simultaneity of transgression and transformation.[56] However, these practices are not the overt militant way of being that Foucault describes Cynicism as: "a militancy addressed to absolutely everyone" (284). There is no call, be it Marxist or otherwise, either by Foucault or Rancière, for the workers of the world to unite. Their respective practices are instead, combative endurances that turn away from a consensual reality by a way of life, not towards consensual reality by a way of death that the militancy of political revolutions can at times adopt–although the dangers of the confrontational aspects of *parrhesia* can be a way of death too: dissensus can be dangerous. As Torben Bech Dryberg writes in his book *Foucault on the Politics of Parrhesia*: "The political ethos of parrhesia is readiness to challenge norms and rules, popular opinion and political authorities" (Dryberg 2014: 66). However, that does not mean that practices of equality and freedom are a devaluation of *all* values, but presuppositions

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[55] "*Un besoin de moins est une force de plus. Vivons de peu, c'est un grand moyen de défense*" (Gauny 2017: 125, Gauny's emphasis).

[56] As Foucault states in a 1982 interview in English: "[T]hat's why I really work like a dog [. . .] because my problem is my own transformation [. . .] This transformation of one's self by one's own knowledge is, I think, something rather close to the aesthetic experience. Why should a painter work if he is not transformed by his own painting?" (Foucault

as a way of life that create an other life in the present moment of these practices within the perspective of an other world: a world that ethico-poetically turns away from a world without ontological isonomy and freedom, towards an autophagy of the 'modern soul' and an ecdysis of the taxonomic skins that suffocate us, leading to new techniques of 'ethical subjectivation' by practices of the self. In being 'always on the way' to emancipation, this way of life can avoid the repetition of a consensual regime brought on by stasis. Therefore, it is a practice rather than a state of being. As McGushin puts it:

> [T]he problem of being human always requires new responses and new forms of life. This means that the diagnostic and poetic truths we produce and activate here and now, to the extent that they are true—that they respond to and transform our present modes of being—will form the basis of future problematisations and will have to be resisted and transformed yet again later. (McGushin 2007: 288)

We shall turn to Foucault's understanding of problematisation in Chapter 9. For now, we can summarise this chapter. *Parrhesia* was offered by Foucault as both a form of dissent and a way of life as a means to shed normative subjectivities and create new subjectivities in conjunction with a care of the self, thus returning us full circle to the core of Foucault's work: a historico-critical ontology that is both a form of being critical in its diagnosis and a form of being creative in its ontology–thus enabling a certain distance from the taxonomy of our normative subjectification. Linking Rancière's understanding of dissensus and disagreement, and bi-univocal understanding of politics and democracy with *parrhesia*, helped clarify the latter as a dissensual tool to be used against the rhetoric of the consensus and against the objectivity of our normative self: "*Parrhesia* is a form of criticism, either towards another or towards oneself" (Foucault 2001a: 17). Likewise, this linkage reveals dissensus in Rancière's understanding of the term, as parrhesiastic, even though Rancière does not use the word *parrheisa* himself and diminishes the importance of *parrhesia* as a contribution to Foucault's work. Therefore, we can see that within these two clarifications, a presupposition of equality is brought into the picture of Foucault's ethics as well as opening up the practice of freedom as presuppositional, which is something that Foucault does not overtly do himself. Furthermore, each practice helps clarify the other as autotelic and as simultaneously transgressive and transformative in a dissensus of the consensus and self-identity: politics as aesthetics, aesthetics as politics. In their individual

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1990b: 131). And in another 1982 interview he states: "The main interest in life and work is to become someone else that you were not in the beginning" (Foucault 1982d: 9).

ventures towards an aesthetic revolution for the individual, the separate practices of equality and freedom both confirm each other in their commonalities within their indirect attack against politics via the practices of one's life. Therefore, they have much to offer each other within a synergy that can facilitate ethico-political and ethico-poetic subjects: subjects who are always on the way to emancipation within self-constituted subjectivities and new fictions that lead them awry and help elaborate an anomalous life. It is to this synergy that we now turn, using the ethico-poetic life of Gauny as an exemplification of a lived synergy of practices of equality and freedom.

Part 3 - Practices of Equality and Freedom

Chapter 8 – The Traces of a Path: The Emancipatory Life of Gauny

As the title states, this chapter is an engagement with the traces of a path of emancipation via the life of Gauny who, as a paper revenant from the nineteenth century, has shadowed this thesis in a much closer form than the Ancient Greeks, Hellenists, and Romans of Foucault's research. In this *revenir* (coming back) as an exemplar of someone living a dissensual life within an aesthetic revolution of the self, Gauny was not introduced in depth until Chapter 4. In that chapter, the reasons behind Rancière's archival work were detailed as well as his understanding of the use of aesthetics in Gauny's emancipatory existence. The Chapter also explained the historical background of Gauny's life and two of the prominent socialist movements that emerged in early nineteenth-century France, one of which Gauny belonged to. Lastly, it stated Rancière's archival findings that most French, nineteenth-century workers sought a reprieve from both poverty and work rather than the ordeal of yet another political revolution, and this was why some, such as Gauny, turned to an aesthetic revolution. Therefore, Chapter 4 was a primer for this chapter where Gauny's dissensual life is used as a medium for practices of freedom and equality to (e)merge in a synergy. The nexus that initially seems to connect these practices within Gauny's life is Cynicism, aspects of which manifest in their ontological conflicts with the consensus. This expression of Cynicism can be seen in Foucault's exploration of the Cynics in his last lecture series and in Rancière's exploration of the life and work of Gauny who was influenced by the Cynic Diogenes. The nexus of these two practices, however, that this thesis puts forward, is not so much Cynicism, but the act of Cynicism (amongst other philosophies) that we call *parrhesia*: *parrhesia* as dissensus in action and non-action, and in written and spoken words.

By presenting Gauny's life as an exemplification of practices of equality and freedom, this chapter demonstrates how the ideas of practices of equality and freedom engaged with in this thesis so far can become lived experiences. This is not a definitive 'how' but a mapping of the traces of a path that these practices leave for individuals to use to form an auto-emancipation. To ontologically map these traces is to live an 'other' way and to take an 'other' path. Therefore, just as the Cynics are taken as a point of departure as we distance ourselves from their telos of a city of sages, a belief in poverty as a virtue, and their lack of a constant liminality, Gauny's life and the traces of an emancipatory path in this chapter will also lead to a point of departure

where our 'self', to paraphrase Augustine, becomes a problem and a question to our self.[1] Thus, through the medium of Gauny's *bíos*, this chapter establishes the *endeixeis* (indications) of indeterminate realities and lives that can only be discovered and lived heuristically by a questioning of the self within an autotelic auto-emancipation. Whilst Gauny does not fit perfectly into a synergic mould of the epitome of practices of equality and freedom (although there is no epitome of these practices to speak of, apart from a presupposition of equality and freedom), as he believed in a transmigration of the soul and thus adhered to a certain humanism in his belief in an essence to the human form, practices of equality and freedom both combine in his life as a means to aesthetically rupture a normative reality. The first section of this chapter expounds Rancière's understanding of an aesthetic revolution of consensual space and time in Gauny's life and the second section offers this thesis' interpretation of Gauny as a *parrhesiastes*, thus drawing from Foucault's practices of freedom. The third section details Gauny's cenobite economy and offers it as a form of a care of the self. The fourth and last section aims to defuse any misconceptions of a synergy of practices of equality and freedom being purely for the individual. It does so, by not only offering *parrhesia* as dissensus as the nexus of practices of equality and freedom but also, in line with Foucault's understanding of *parrhesia* and Rancière's understanding of dissensus, of the individual and the community.

8.1 An Aesthetic Revolution: An Equality of Space and Time

Gauny carried out a dissensus of consensual time "in which all moments," as Rancière writes in his essay 'Fictions of Time', "are equal" (Rancière 2016b: 36). Gauny, as Rancière tells us in *The Nights of Labor* and reminds us in 'Fictions of Time', dreams at work in moments of an aesthetic gaze upon the beautiful which ruptures the hierarchy of work and leisure.[2] To the contrary, in his suburban abode, "he devotes to the leisure of writing the time that should be devoted to rest" (34). It is this taking of time that is vital in an aesthetic revolution when we consider that life for nineteenth-century workers was a habituation of a cycle of work and rest that aimed to deny them the time to question their impoverished existence: "Manual labour" is, as the political activist and philosopher Simone Weil puts it, "[t]ime entering into the body" (Weil

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[1] Augustine is translated in some translations of his *Confessions* 'Book X' 'Chapter 33' as stating "I have become a problem to myself" (Augustine 1912: 169), (Augustine 2001: 237). However, this can also be translated as "I have become a question to myself" (*mihi quaestio factus sum*) as Arendt translates it in *The Human Condition* (Arendt 1998: 10). The above paraphrase exploits the semantic spectrum of *quaestio* by combining both translations.

[2] As detailed in Chapter 3 of this thesis. For Gauny's account of this, see p.61 of *Le Philosophe plébéien*.

2003: 181).[3] This cycle dissuaded many from devoting time to autodidactism and creating an emancipatory way of life within an aesthetic revolution, as Gauny et al. did. Therefore, Rancière states, in the aptly titled 'From Politics to Aesthetics?': "I showed that at the core of the emancipation of the workers was an aesthetic revolution. And the core of that revolution was the issue of time" (Rancière 2008: 14).[4]

In 'From Politics to Aesthetics?', Rancière informs us that the aesthetic revolution of the 'aesthetic regime' (see Chapter 3 of this thesis) and of the nineteenth-century workers that his archival research brings us, was "not a matter of art and taste" but "a matter of time and space" (Rancière 2008: 13-14). Therefore, whilst his work ties into a close assimilation of aesthetics as described by Kant as "a priori forms of sensibility" (13), Rancière tell us that his

> research does not deal with time and space as forms of presentation of the objects of knowledge. It deals with time and space as forms of configuration of our 'place' in society, forms of distribution of the common and the private, and of assignation to everybody of his or her own part. (Rancière 2008: 13)

This is what the *le partage du sensible* is, an assignation to every 'body' of their own place and part within a distribution (a sharing out and a division) of time and space. Therefore, it is a descriptive ontology that taxonomically assigns words, things, and people to their consensual place in space and time.[5] Thus, in *The Nights of Labor*, as Rancière tells us in 'From Politics to

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[3] Or, as Émile Souvestre writes of Gauny in an essay on Gauny, Ponty, and Jules Mercier: "*Son esprit écrasé par le temps comme son corps par l'espace; il faut aller au travail ou il faut dormir!*" (Souvestre 1839: 248) (His mind crushed by time as well as his body by space; it is necessary to go to work or to sleep!).

[4] One could add, however, that it was a matter of, as Jeanne-Fernande Perrot wrote of Gauny's belief, under the pseudonym of Thilda Harlot, individual will: "*affaire de volonté individuelle*" (Harlot 1937: 83). In this case, it would be the will to take time for autodidactism and other acts of dissensus. This is a belief that indirectly ties in to Jacotot's understanding of will as the key to autodidactism. Perrot (1871-1970) was an art critic, feminist, activist, and journalist. Whilst she is someone worth exploring in her own right, via both her life and works, she is also an interesting connection to Gauny, as Gauny used to visit her grandmother's house to read his work out loud to other workers who in turn read their work out loud (70). Her mother, Amelie Ragon, was also the sole executor of Gauny's work following his death in 1889 and published his volume of poetry *Les Fleurs* in 1893 (87). Perrot deposited Gauny's work at the municipal library of Saint-Denis. There are eight boxes of his work in total, according to Rancière (2017a: 23).

[5] As Hallward writes in the 'Introduction' to his 2002 interview with Rancière–'Politics and Aesthetics an Interview' (2003)–regarding Rancière's work: "In

177

Aesthetics?', he "restaged the birth of the so-called 'worker's movement' as an aesthetic movement: an attempt at reconfiguring the distributions of time and space in which the practice of labour was framed [. . .]" (Rancière 2008: 13). This can be seen in the illustration of Gauny's disruption of the typical understanding of what happens during a worker's labour and rest time. Thus, it is to an aesthetic rather than a social revolution that Rancière turns to whilst focussing on the dissensus of the distribution of time as the kernel of this revolution and therefore, turning from both the etiology of a descriptive ontology and the representative regime to the creative ontology of dissensus and the aesthetic regime:

> In order to reframe the space-time of their 'occupation', the workers had to invalidate the most common distribution of time: the distribution according to which workers would work during the day and sleep during the night. It was the conquest of the night for doing something else than sleeping. That basic overturning involved a whole reconfiguration of the distribution of experience. It involved a process of dis-identification, another relation to speech, visibility and so on. (Rancière 2008: 14).

According to Rancière, in nineteenth-century France we had both the workers' aesthetic revolution, which involved an individual change of perception of a consensual space and time to a dissensual perception, "and a wider 'aesthetic revolution': the revolution simultaneous with the French Revolution that overthrew the representational regime of the arts" (Rancière 2008: 14), as mentioned in Chapter 3. The workers' aesthetic revolution rejected the hierarchy of social stratification put in place by the consensual ontology of space and time: *le partage du sensible*. Both revolutions connected politics and aesthetics where a poetic disruption of consensual reality enabled the speech of the *sans-part* to be heard as logos and not merely *phōné*: "The proletarians of the 1830s were people seeking to constitute themselves as speaking beings, as thinking beings in their own right" (Rancière 2003b: 196). Through Rancière's work, we can surmise that only an aesthetic revolution can possess a form of dissensus that is always inaugural because according to Rancière, unlike social revolutions, dissensus offers no didactic deferral of a transcendent equality supposedly possessed by and terminating in a telos (Rancière 2010a: 140). However, whilst there appears to be a heavier focus on aesthetics than

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most of his otherwise varied projects he seeks to overturn all imposed forms of classification or distinction, to subvert all norms of representation that might allow for the stable differentiation of one class of person or experience from another (workers from intellectuals, masters from followers, the articulate from the inarticulate, the artistic from the non-artistic, etc.)" (Hallward 2003: 191).

politics, Rancière writes in 'From Politics to Aesthetics?': "I never switched from politics to aesthetics. I always tried to investigate the distribution of the sensible which allows us to identify something that we call politics and something that we call aesthetics" (Rancière 2008: 23-4).[6] Thus, Rancière is emphatically asserting that it is the dissensus of the *le partage du sensible* via aesthetics and politics that underpins his research. Therefore, Gauny is a revenant brought back from the aesthetic revolution of the nineteenth century by Rancière to exemplify a dissensus of space and time and hierarchical practices as a means of enabling a democratic existence. This existence is enacted by artistic practices not merely concerned with writing, be it poetry or otherwise, but with aesthetic practices enabled by living a presupposition of equality: "Aesthetics is not the philosophy or the scene of art or of the beautiful. "Aesthetics" is a reconfiguration of sensible experience" (Rancière 2010b: 15). In this understanding, living aesthetics as a way of life is to live a life of dissensus, and if there is any nexus between politics and aesthetics, it is, as Rancière tells us, "dissensus, the very kernel of the aesthetic regime" (Rancière 2010a: 140). Gauny carries out his dissensus and an aesthetic revolution as a way of life linking both politics and aesthetics, just as his heroes Diogenes and Socrates did within their respective lives.[7]

Gauny believed that Cynic philosophy was a living work of art[8] and thus, both dissensual and creative. As Rancière writes in 'The Politics of Aesthetics': "Artistic practices are 'ways of doing and making' that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making [. . .]" (Rancière 2004a:13). Thus, Gauny lived his life as a dissensus of the prosaic life that workers were expected to live within the consensual distribution of time and space sutured by the taxonomy of identity. Thus, he stepped out of this exclusionary space and time and out of Plato's *Republic* where workers only have time to work and rest. Therefore, Gauny created his own fiction, his own ontology of space and time as he traversed the city in his somnambulistic freedom during days with no work, dreamed within the time allotted to work, and wrote at home during the time meant for rest. This is what an aesthetic revolution is: "a revolution abolishing the division and the hierarchy of temporalities which is at the very core of the social hierarchy"

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[6] Or, as Rancière states in a 2002 interview: "I've never imagined my work developing from politics to aesthetics, especially since it has always sought to blur boundaries" (Rancière 2003b: 203).

[7] *[D]ans la philosophie grecque Gauny privilégie une tradition bien particulière: le socratisme populaire qui s'incarne dans le cynisme avant de se prolonger dans le stoïcisme. Socrate et Diogène sont ses héros.* (Rancière 2017b: 122) ([I]n Greek philosophy Gauny privileged one very particular tradition: the popular Socratism that embodies cynicism before extending to Stoicism. Socrates and Diogenes are his heroes).

(Rancière 2016b: 40). Some, however, might raise the objection that by continuing to work, Gauny was benefiting the very regime that oppressed him. However, as Rancière puts it: "The movement here is that of a spiral that, in the very resemblance of the circles in which the same energy is consumed for the benefit of the enemy, achieves a real ascent toward a different mode of social existence" (Rancière 1989: 82). To expand on this 'spiral of ascent' towards an 'other' life, we now turn to this thesis' interpretation of Gauny as a *parrhesiastes* and thus, how his way of life utilised not only a practice of equality but that which Foucault called a practice of freedom.

8.2 Gauny the *Parrhesiastes*

It was not just *the depravities of the world* that made Gauny long for self-emancipation as he did; there was another reason: the influence of ancient Greek philosophy introduced to him by his friend Jules Thierry in 1830 (Rancière 2017a: 15). As this was the same year that Gauny began to write, this introduction to philosophy was surely the catalyst for the beginning of his need to write. It was also through this philosophical influence that Gauny adopted two personas: "the man of the city Diogenes, and the man of the desert Saint John the Baptist" (Rancière 1989: 120-1). Gauny, as a Parisian Diogenes, had the time, afforded by a cenobite economy, to go out to the streets to metaphorically sleepwalk through the affluent, urban landscapes of daytime Paris–Gauny partook, as did Diogenes, according to the prior, in a wakeful somnambulism[9]–and, as a Parisian Saint John the Baptist, to seek the deserts of inequality in the evening Parisian streets of workshops where he spoke of emancipation:

> The Baptist, the man of the desert, takes his stand beyond the balances of rectified reason. [. . .] he finds the strength to make his word heard from the recesses of desert places–thanks first of all to passers-by, who are already discontented with the laws ruling the city and who instruct other passers-by, the latter leading an ever-growing crowd to the monologue-became-sermon of the anchorite [. . .]. (Rancière 1989: 120-1)

This dual influence seems to mirror Rancière's subjectivation which incorporates politics and aesthetics: dissensus and transformation as one, where we have, as quoted above, the 'we' of the 'aesthetics of politics' and the individuality of the 'politics of aesthetics'–the 'I' of the

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[8] "*une œuvre d'art vivante*" (Rancière 2017b: 123).

[9] "*un somnambulisme éveillé*" (Gauny 2017: 154).

individuality of Diogenes of Sinope and the 'we' of the universal emancipation of Saint John the Baptist that mirrors a presupposition of equality as universal. Therefore, by adopting these personas, Gauny was living both a political and aesthetic life in the bi-univocality of their meaning that Rancière's oeuvre denotes:

> Diogenes represented the right of the individual. Saint John embodied the unchaining of humanity. The one was the expression of the citizen making himself his own master; the other was the torch of revolutions. Together they summed up the universal emancipation being engendered in the world and perpetuated by the disciple and the apostle. (Rancière 1989: 120-1)

As Rancière wrote in *Le Philosophe plébéien*: In the figures of Diogenes and Saint John the Baptist are manifested the two poles of thought of the joiner.[10] And in a section of 'Chapter 2' titled '*Diogène et saint Jean le Précurseur*', Gauny gives us a poetic description regarding Saint John and tells us of the savage grandeurs of his discourse and of the flames in his mouth[11] as the crowds gathered around Saint John whenever he gave sermons. In his evening walks through the regions of Paris where the proletariat were leaving work, however, Gauny would not stop to give sermons on a metaphoric mount hoping crowds would gather around him as if he were some kind of quixotic Saint John the Reformer. What he would do, as he walked, is talk out loud "to himself, only a little louder than usual" (Rancière 1989: 97). In this regard, Rancière quotes Gauny writing about himself in the third person as his own double (this carpenter, he writes, or this man, the revolt, the cenobite[12]) which Gauny did, according to Rancière, to create his new individuality.[13] This doubling of the self resonates with Foucault's understanding of the modern subject's coexistence as both subject and object and the Greco-Roman subject's coexistence within *tekhnai peri ton bion* (techniques of life).[14] In existing as his own double, in talking out loud to himself during his somnambulistic walks, Gauny also doubled himself as a somniloquist verbalising dissent:

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[10] "*Dans les figures de Diogène et saint Jean-Baptiste se manifestent les deux pôles de la pensée du menuisier* [. . .]" (Rancière 2017b: 123).

[11] "*les grandeurs sauvages de son discours,*" "*flammes dans la bouche*" Gauny 2017: 157).

[12] ""*ce menuisier,*" écrit-il, ou bien "*cet homme,*" "*le révolte,*" "*le cénobite*"" (Rancière 2017a: 24).

[13] "*sa nouvelle individualité*" (Rancière 2017a: 24).

[14] These were techniques operating between new codes of behaviour and existing value systems amidst a shifting political field of widening complexity and extensiveness that forced individuals to come up with new ways of conceiving a relationship with themselves and others (Foucault 1986a: 95, 2017: 254).

The democrat traverses the city, talking to himself. The sentences of his monologue capture the curiosity of passers-by. Each one grasps some truth in it. Without stopping, he touches the wound of their existence that impoverishes the master's interest . . . at these remarks tossed into the air, the crowd surrounds the revolutionary, who, without addressing himself to anyone, seems to be haranguing a multitude. (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 97)

Thus, Gauny was dissensual in his walks on weekdays without work in his self-employed capacity as a floor-layer, that ruptured the consensual time and space of his identity and vocational position, and in his evening walks that possessed the type of passer-by who would listen to his somniloquies: "The workshops are going to close, the yards are going to come to a standstill. The cenobite begins his evening walk" (Rancière 1989: 98). Were his walks during the hours meant for work the walks of Diogenes and the evening walks where he spoke words of dissensus, the walks of Saint-John? Rancière tells us, as stated above, that the personas represented both poles of Gauny's way of life (Rancière 2017b 123)–the solitary cenobite, and the preacher of a universal emancipation–so this would make sense. However, *perhaps* both personas joined Gauny on his walks as he had a strong need for them to bolster his urge to help others and to override his need for a solitary life, the very life that denied him an eloquent speech: "Our floor-layer, unfortunately, is not an orator. How could he be, when the solitude where he nurtures his rebellion simultaneously deprives him of all conversation that would exercise his eloquence?" (Rancière 1989: 97).

How can Gauny as a poet not be eloquent in his speech? Was it because Gauny wrote in rhyming couplets rather than the free verse of other nineteenth-century poets, such as Rimbaud for example, that could transpose into everyday speech and thus, his prosodic skill did not translate into a prosaic skill?[15] This does not seem to be the case, as Gauny's other written works are almost a form of free verse poetry themselves within their imagery. Therefore, we can only psychologically speculate that it seems that the dream-like words of somniloquies were the preferred medium of Gauny's emancipatory speech, due to some kind of glossophobia caused by his introversion and, as Rancière states, his lack of practice regarding the 'spoken' word. Via the political and aesthetic medium of his somniloquies, Gauny hoped to cause ripples of dissent

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[15] For an example of his couplets, see Gauny's poem from his *La Forêt de Bondy* in *The Nights of Labor* (Gauny in Rancière 1989: 420).

against the tide of inequality that swept the lives of human beings into the abbreviated existence we call proletarian: "The voluptuousness of emancipation is a fever from which one cannot be cured and which one cannot help but communicate" (Rancière 1989: 83). However, these evening walks were not the didactic peripatetics of Aristotle, who walked to and fro whilst teaching, but a non-didactic 'courage to speak the truth', to adopt Foucault's phrase. As to what was done with Gauny's words by those who heard them was, much like Jacotot's methodological understanding, a matter of autodidactic will. For Gauny was not a teacher, a lecturer, or a prophet. Gauny was a poet whose artistry was, to paraphrase Tanke's comments above regarding poetic forms, opposed to that of the stultifying master's lessons, as we can only discern that he credited those who heard his words with the ability to reframe them into their own terms and their own lives. Therefore, as far as we can tell from the information we have, Gauny's words were not protreptic but a truth-telling. As Rancière writes: "The wind blows where it wills, and surely some building-trade workers will be found who will hear and understand [. . .]" (97).[16] As Gauny was unaccustomed to public speaking, as Foucault says of Socrates who defended himself in court without any legal experience (Foucault 2010b: 312), we can also say of Gauny, that he spoke a truth-telling without *tekhne*. All of this points to a reframing of Rancière's interpretation of Gauny by seeing Gauny as a *parrhesiastes* like Diogenes who Gauny admired so much. This helps us now understand why Gauny's metaphoric somniloquies were so plain, even though he was a poet, as the dissensus of *parrhesia* requires plain speech, unlike the rhetorical flourishes incorporated in the politics and free speech of *isēgoría*, the speech of those in power: "*Parrêsia* opposed rather than supported the practice of a rhetoric that obscures and distorts the truth for the sake of individual benefit" (Saxonhouse 2006: 92). As Foucault states in the lecture series *The Government of Self and Others*: "Rhetoric is the instrument for restoring inequality to a society on which an attempt to impose an egalitarian structure had been pursued through democratic laws" (Foucault 2010b: 369).[17]

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[16] As Foucault states in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*: "[L]istening is the first moment of the process by which the truth which has been heard, listened to, and properly taken in, sinks into the subject so to speak, becomes embedded in him and begins to become *suus* (to become his own) and thus forms the matrix for *ethos*" (Foucault 2005: 334). Or, as Tanke puts it: "The *parrhesiast* attempts to find the most direct form of possible transmission, so that the person who receives it, who 'must be impregnated by it,' will be able to exploit it as an active principle of subjectivity" (Tanke 2009: 185).

[17] And in a prior lecture from the same series, he states: "Rhetorical language is a language chosen, fashioned, and constructed in such a way as to produce its effect on the other person. The mode of being of philosophical language is to be *etumos*, that is to say, so bare and simple, so in keeping with the very movement of thought that, just as it is

When we address the meaning of Gauny's evening walks, we can see Gauny as a *parrhesiastes*, and thus his resemblance to Dionysius the Cynic becomes stronger. Therefore, we can see Gauny's cenobitic economy (detailed below), or his strolls during work hours, as acts of a mute *parrhesia*. This is because these practices, whilst technically mute, speak the truth of emancipation by action as much as the words that were spoken as *etumos* (bare, simple)[18] during Gauny's somniloquous walks or were written in his work and letters. Thus, outside of his written and spoken words, Gauny adopts, to use Foucault's term regarding Socrates, a discreet *parrhesia*. Or we could say, a discreet dissensus as *parrhesia* or *parrhesia* as dissensus, as the two are one and the same in the synergy this thesis offers. Therefore, like Rancière's bi-univocal terms that we explored in part one of this thesis, Gauny adopts a second voice against the univocal voice of consensual reality and its distribution of space and time. This voice is that of *parrhesia,* and Rancière indirectly says as much in an interview in *The Method of Equality*:

> In *The Nights of Labor* I show a form of appropriation, the appropriation of a kind of speech that is not public speech or poetic speech or novelistic speech. It's a speech regime that is a regime of dis-identification. That's different from the rhetorical appropriation of words by which politics traditionally declares itself. (Rancière 2016a: 73)

By his actions and non-actions, speech and written words, Gauny reveals himself as a *parrhesiastes*, for these four modes of *parrheisia* became his very way of being.[19] Through his cenobite economy and somnambulistic walks outside of the time and space allotted to his identity as an artisan, Gauny lived the truth of a presupposition of equality and freedom. With his personas of Diogenes and Saint John, Gauny indirectly adopted the militancy and the *alethes bíos* (true life: the unconcealed life which hides no part of itself) of Foucault's Diogenes whom we mentioned in Chapter 1. It is with this *alethes bíos* and somniloquous (excuse the

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without embellishment, in its truth, it will be appropriate to what it refers to. It will be appropriate to what it refers to and it will also be true to what the person who uses it thinks and believes" (Foucault 2010b: 314-5).

[18] The use of *etumos* relates to Foucault's use of this word in the footnote above as 'bare' and 'simple'. *Etumos* literally means 'true' and is the root of the word 'etymology': the 'true' definition of a word according to its origin.

[19] We can recall two Foucault quotes from Chapter 7 of this thesis: "[P]arrêsia may [. . .] appear in ways of doing things, it may appear in ways of being" (Foucault 2010b: 320). "Philosophical *parrêsia*, which is identified not just with a mode or technique of justice but with life itself, consists in practicing philosophy, caring about oneself, exhorting others to care about themselves, and doing this by examining, testing, putting what others do and do not know to the test" (326).

neologism) truth speaking spread amidst the streets of Paris that Gauny's solitary and cenobitic life becomes communal on a larger scale than isolated cenobite monasteries or the solitary phalansteries of Fourierists.[20] However, as he walked and talked in an oneiric state through those Parisian streets, Gauny must have looked more like Plato's reputed description of Diogenes as "A Socrates gone mad" (Laertius 1925: 55)[21] than the Diogenes Gauny himself described. But it is not to Plato's description but to the intersection of Gauny's Diogenes with Foucault's Diogenes and *parrhesia* as dissensus that we turn to. We do so, as mentioned in Chapter 1, within an offering of *amphíbíos* as a life that lives *both* emancipatory practices: practices of equality and practices of freedom, as both cenobite and *askētēs* within a synergy of the respective, aesthetic revolutions of Rancière and Foucault–a revolution against consensual space and time and a revolution of the self by a self-constitution, although both revolutionary acts blend into each other. With these practices, Gauny is not only a *parrhesiastes* in his dissensual (non-)actions and words, but because he is living his truth, he is also taking care of himself. For what else would his cenobite economy and autodidactism be if not a care of the self as a means to work on and transform himself? By his minimalist economy, autodidactism, and dissensual walks, he used the life of Socrates and Diogenes as an *endeixis* (indication) of a way to live in the semi-autodidacatism of practices of the self on the self as *bíos kai praxis*, which, as mentioned in Chapter 7, illustrates an indirect alignment with Jacotot's understanding of autodidactism. By living with practices of equality and freedom, *parrhesia* is adopted as a way of life where the only identity one accepts is that of *parrhesiastes* within the subjectivation of an auto-emancipation that aims to live by, as much as possible, as mentioned in Chapter 7 regarding the Cynics, *autarkeia* (self-sufficiency) and *karteria* (endurance, perseverance). However, unlike the Cynics, practices of freedom and equality do not call for a total break with all aspects of the consensus, just as they do not call for a social revolution. To do so would be to be didactic and thus to step away from an aesthetic revolution of the self to a revolution of the masses, or a prolonged anticipation of such a revolution *à la* Althusser. Thus, one is not only *amphíbíos* by living practices of equality and freedom, but also by existing as both an objectified

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[20] The phalansteries were buildings designed by the Fourierists as a utopian commune. However, they failed because most workers wanted to participate in a reprieve from poverty rather than a social experiment of equality. As Émile Vallet a member of the French Icarian social movement founded by Étienne Cabet and an occupant of an Icarian commune at Nauvoo in Illinois, America wrote in 1884: "Why not be honest and admit frankly that we made a mistake [. . .] Human nature does not agree with the principles of communism, or the principles of communism do not agree with human nature" (Vallet in Rancière 1989: 401).

[21] This is not something that Plato wrote but purportedly stated when asked what he thought of Diogenes the Cynic, according to Diogenes Laertius in his biography of Greek philosophers.

185

and self-constituting self, just as Gauny existed as a worker and not a worker within two lives: that of a consensual and dissensual life, the prior supporting his biological life, his *zôion*, or "bare life" as Giorgio Agamben terms it (Agamben 1998),[22] which operates within that which Foucault names the bio-political, the latter, his *alethes bíos* operating in that which Rancière names the aesthetico-political. Therefore, whilst practices of equality and freedom allow an individual to transform the system that lies within them as a normative subject–the 'modern soul'–they do not call for a social revolution but for practices in-between the polarities of a police logic and social revolution, thus outside of a belief in the consensus or the demagoguery of telos-bound ideals of equality and freedom. Even though *parrhesia* becomes a way of life as *alethes bíos*, a life as dissensus within practices of equality and freedom, one must also live a consensual life that involves the quotidian necessities to exist. For example, Gauny detested the railways and their workshops, as briefly mentioned in Chapter 6. However, in the period of high unemployment during the French subsistence crises of 1846-1847, a crisis that occurred all over Europe between 1845-1850,[23] Gauny obtained the post of "railyard watchman" at the Lyon Railway through the patronage of one of the leading Saint-Simonian figures, Prosper Enfantin (Rancière 1989: 232-3). Ironically, this position pleased Gauny the most as it gave him more free time than any prior job he had worked in before. Thus, by conforming to the consensual job at the railway, Gauny was able to utilise his free time there for his autodidactic studies and writing activities in the dissensual 'spiral of ascent' Rancière mentions above. To be *amphíbíos*, is to not only live practices of equality and freedom as a way of life but also to exist in a consensual framework whilst being dissensual. Even though the framework takes away the time needed to engage in consensual politics, as stated in the last chapter, regarding Socrates and Diogenes, living a dissensual life is to break with politics in the consensual understanding of the word. It is to not directly address, through the language games of *isēgoría*, the consensual politics that Rancière names a police logic. It is to indirectly address this logic by using a second voice, a voice of politics as dissensus, a voice of *parrhesia* in disagreement with consensual reality by living an other life in other worlds and in doing so, affecting subtle changes in socio-reality by withdrawing from its consensual way to be.

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[22] As Byung-Chul Han states: "Work itself is a bare activity. The activity of bare laboring corresponds entirely to bare life. Merely working and merely living define and condition each other" (Han 2015: 18). This fits into Agamben's definition of bare life as a politicised biological life.

[23] For a concise overview of the European subsistence crisis of 1845-50, see Ó Gráda, Paping, Vanhaute, 2006. 'The European subsistence crisis of 1845-1850: a comparative perspective'. IEHC 2006 Helsinki Session 123.

Whilst practices of freedom and equality are dissimilar to Aristotle's ethics in that they are not prescriptive, there is a strong congruence between, as stated in Note 15 in Chapter 6, a care of the self and Aristotle's statement from the *Nicomachean Ethics* regarding *ēthos* and *ethos*. Namely, that virtue of character (*ēthos*) is a result of habituation (*ethos*) and therefore, the practices that we form, form us. Even if we do not want these practices to transform us, they do so in a kind of automatism once they become habituated: take care of your practices and they will take care of your 'self'. In *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault quotes Seneca quoting his teacher Attalus' analogy that walking in the sun can get you sunburnt even though that is not the purpose of your walk (Foucault 2005: 337). Thus, practices become, as Foucault puts it regarding truth, "embedded" in us through habituating ourselves to them by acts such as the daily Stoic exercise of writing adopted by Marcus Aurelius (323) for example, or indeed, by Gauny in his daily habit of reading and writing, or his habits of various types of perambulation. The ontological gap for a self-constitution within practices of equality and freedom is the constitutive instability created by a parrhesiastic (dissensual) life, a constantly liminal and thus ecdysial existence within the ontological space of *alēthēs bíos*. This is a life where truth takes on the meaning of immanent transgressions and transformations rather than a transcendent essence, as it does in the dominant fictions of a normative and police logic.[24] However, liminal not only means transitional but also means to exist on both sides of a boundary, and this is where Gauny existed within a lived exemplification of subjectivation where one sheds consensual skins as one creates oneself anew whilst existing in a consensual and dissensual life. The word liminal etymologically stems from the Latin word *limin*, which means 'threshold'. To live a liminal existence is to be always on the threshold of other lives and other worlds that never crystallise into a totality of equality or freedom but remain in the kinesis of liminality through the autotelic practices of equality and freedom that oppose, if we use the Greek etymological meanings of the following terms, the 'orthodoxy' of the production of a normative

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[24] This Foucauldian view of truth that this thesis adopts is an extremely Nietzschean view of the movement of becoming over and above the stasis of being, where truth is not a static essence but an ever-shifting movement of transgression and transformation. This is understandable, as Foucault stated that his biggest influence from Nietzsche was through the latter's understanding of truth "mostly from the texts of around 1880, where the question of truth, the history of truth and the will to truth were central to his work" (Foucault 1983c: 32). However, we must keep in mind that unlike Nietzsche's ontological offering of *Werden* (becoming), Foucault does not invest in the eternal return, the will to power, or the *Übermensch* (over-human). That being said, there is a certain resonance with the *Übermensch* in Foucault's oeuvre in the sense of an overcoming of the normative self, a self that Foucault hoped would contribute to the end of Modernity's *man* through the horizon of a new human form that could erase what it meant to be *man* by disrupting universal subjectivities.

self with the formation of the self by 'orthopraxy': practices of the self contra the *orthos* (right, true) *doxa* (opinion) of the consensus and normative way of life as 'natural', as true.[25]

Orthoxpraxy stems from the Greek words *orthos* (straight, right, true) and *praxis* (action). Thus, as a compound noun *orthopraxia* means 'right practice', and the medical term *orthopraxia*, dependent on the definition of *orthos* as 'straight', means a correction of deformities of the body. As Rancière writes in his *The Edges of Fiction*: "Time theft and the destruction of lives are everywhere written on bodies" (Rancière 2020: 132). It is through the *orthopraxia* and *endeixis* of practices of equality and freedom that one can shed the belief in, and 'deformities' of, the normative subjectivities imposed upon the body by discursive practices (knowledge formations) and the disciplinary techniques which Foucault describes in *Discipline and Punish* that spread to society through institutions such as schools, factories, etc., and take docile bodies to produce normative subjects by power. As C.G. Prado puts it in a chapter on Foucault and truth: "Power, in shaping subjects, determines what they come to hold true, and power, in the imposition of discipline and practices, *produces* truth" (Prado 2006: 80, Prado's emphasis). However, we can adopt new practices as a means of 'rehabilitation', to use Gauny's phrase,[26] from a life that has adhered to the consensus and existed within normative subjectivities. By doing so, we can create new truths with fictions, as we explore in the next chapter, and even though self-transformation is a priority over and above a transformation of consensual politics, we can 'indirectly' change, via the automatism of practices of equality and freedom, as Foucault puts it in an interview, "the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth" (Foucault 1980a: 75).[27] This does not involve, as Foucault states in his 'The Subject and Power', "a

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[25] As mentioned in Note 24 of Chapter 7, for the Roman physician Galen, e*ndexeis* were therapeutic indications of what ailed us, whilst for Rancière and Foucault, the e*ndexeis* that they respectively offer us with practices of equality and freedom (although neither of them use the term e*ndexeis* in respect to their offerings) are the traces of a path that can lead to indeterminate worlds and lives that offer a 'cure' for the ailments of a police logic and normative subjectivities imposed on us from birth as the right opinion of the consensus, and thus projected as normal, as orthodox.

[26] Gauny writes of "*un besoin de vie, un moyen de réhabilitation*" (Gauny 2017: 31) (a need for life, as a means of rehabilitation).

[27] However, we must remember that practices of equality and freedom are *both* seen as presuppositions in the synergy that this thesis offers, and as such, are autotelic. To wander from an autotelic path would be to fall into the metaphysical traps of a normative and police logic that aims to justify a lack of equality and freedom by deferring them within the understanding of transcendence, essence, and telos, as we have discussed above. As such, whilst practices of equality and freedom affect not only the existent, as stated above, but the society in which they exist, the latter effect is a by-product rather than an external telos.

skeptical or relativistic refusal of all verified truth" (Foucault 1982a: 330) but rather, a questioning of "the regime of knowledge" posited as the truth (331). Neither does it involve escaping power: "power is increasingly constricting–we cannot escape power relations–but novelty of thought and practice can change the structure of power relations" (Prado 2006: 134).

The understanding of *orthopraxia* contra *orthodoxia* can be indirectly linked to a line from one of Gauny's poems quoted by Émile Souvestre in an 1839 article about Gauny, Ponty, and Jules Mercier, aptly titled '*Les penseurs inconnus*' (The Unknown Thinkers). The line we take from the poem Souvestre quotes is, rather than bending, let us break like an oak tree.[28] In breaking with, rather than bending oneself into the deformities of the disciplinary body of the normative self and the 'modern soul', one can transform oneself and thus transgress inequalities of consensual space and time and the lack of ontological freedom of normative subjectivities. Thus, we can reconfigure Gauny's belief in metempsychosis (the transmigration of the soul–a fashionable belief, as stated above, at that time in nineteenth-century France) which Gauny's friend Ponty believed made Gauny accept the existing order (Rancière 2017a: 19). We can do so by steering away from the idea of transcendence by taking the literal meaning of metempsychosis from its Ancient Greek etymological root as 'a change in the soul': *metempsukhōsis*, *meta* (expressing change), *en* (in), *psukhē* (soul). We can thus adopt and invert Gauny's belief into an immanent migration of the body from that which Foucault named the 'modern soul' within the destruction of the normative objectivities imposed upon us, if we adopt Marcus Aurelius' Stoic understanding of "destruction" as "transformation" (Aurelius 2002: 133). In doing so, we also invert Plato's metaphysics and its intrinsic hierarchies and reinforce immanence rather than transcendence and the deferral of equality and freedom. We can recall that Chapter 5 of this thesis described Foucault's understanding of the 'modern soul' as an immanent soul within a correlative of a certain technology of power over the body where the soul is the prison of the body. Therefore, by practices of equality and freedom, we can transform ourselves not within a transmigration of the soul but within an immanent migration of the self/body to an 'other' way of being and a new truth via an immanent *metempsukhōsis*, an immanent change in the soul to different ways of existing through a connection of *bíos* and *parrhesia:* life and truth as *alethes bíos.*

In the biology that we call a body we can change what form we take as a subject by adopting new practices and begin a decolonisation of the self and the body from certain technologies of

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[28] "*Plutôt que de ployer, cassons-nous comme un chêne*" (Gauny in Souvestre 1839: 252).

power. Thus, we can turn from a normative ontology of objectification to a creative ontology that enables us to modify power relations and discourses of the normative to escape the prison of the 'modern soul' and migrate to the liminality of other truths and other lives. As Epictetus states in Book 3. Chapter 23. 1: "Tell yourself first all what kind of person you want to be, and then act accordingly in all that you do" (Epictetus 2014: 193). As Ponty wrote in a letter to Gauny regarding palingenesis, which we shall also appropriate as a self-transformation rather than how Ponty meant it as a transmigration of the soul, we are only free when this existence that we are trying to peel off will be reshaped.[29] Within the liminality of a dissensual life, life as a *parrhesiastes*, our existence is always being reshaped as our subjectivities are used as the ethical substance to reshape and thus transform our 'self' and our life anew. Therefore, as Foucault was quoted as stating in Chapter 6, the care of the self is the care of the practices that we use to form ourselves anew. Or, if you like, it is a care of the soul as the correlative of practices. Therefore, like the *tekhnai peri ton bion* (techniques of life) Foucault writes of, Gauny was able to exist within a doubling of the self as both subject and object of his transformation and as both worker and non-worker, as both body and soul: a worker-poet always on the way to emancipation via an ascesis of the self by the self and a change of the soul. These practices were able to emerge for Gauny with the time created by his care of the self in the practice of his cenobite economy. As Rancière writes: "living another life means, first, inhabiting another time" (Rancière 2020: 132).

8.3 Gauny's Cenobitic Economy: A Care of the Self

Gauny describes Diogenes and Saint John the Baptist as two great cenobites of antiquity.[30] Unlike the life of cenobitic monasticism, however, Gauny carried out his economy in a non-communal life, as did Diogenes and Saint John who metaphorically and literally represent for Gauny, an individual revolution of the self. For fifty years, as his manuscripts from 1830 to 1880 attest, with the aid of a cenobitic economy, Gauny, the artisan-poet and plebeian philosopher, always made the time to write. Living his life in economic austerity was due to the necessity to financially survive the days without work that Gauny utilised for dissensual practices. Gauny was not committed or contracted to work every day as he was a self-employed joiner: "a floor-layer on a piecework basis, working his own hours in houses without master, overseer, or

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[29] "*nous ne sommes libres que lorsque cette existence que nous essayons d'éplucher ira se refondre* [. . .]" (Ponty in Gauny 2017: 249)

[30] "*Deux grands cénobites de l'Antiquité* [. . .]" (Gauny 2017: 151).

colleagues" (Rancière 1989: 78). It is by adopting piecework that Gauny suggests a person can better develop this independent and laborious existence[31] towards an emancipatory life.[32] For piecework (*le travail à la tâche*), according to Gauny, promotes the displacement of work and the adventure of the situation.[33] Therefore, he gives suggestions of piecework professions to take up, such as a tiler (*carreleur*) or floor layer (*parqueteur en bâtiment*), telling us that piecework can mutate our destiny.[34] By living this austere life and its mutations of destiny, Gauny was able to afford and enjoy the temporary freedom of a day meant for work spent wandering the city as a form of dissensus, as detailed above. Thus, for Gauny, the key point of his economy was rebellion:

> The method of temperance that is explained here goes to war with tyrants; because these savings are resources of protest, of resistance, of assistance, of association, of propagation, of force, of intelligence, of travel, of combat, of victory and of liberty![35]

Gauny was not the first and will not be the last philosopher to live frugally to create time for his philosophical practices. Pythagoras and Epicurus are but two examples of many ancient Greek philosophers who did so in a time when it was common for philosophers to break away from quotidian life. In fact, it was probably from Pythagoras that Gauny got the term cenobite.[36] More

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[31] "*mieux développer cette existence indépendante et laborieuse*" (Gauny 2017: 59).

[32] This is not to infer a similarity with the self-employed of today who may or may not see self-employment as a neoliberal practice. However, in an interview in *The Method of Equality*, Rancière states how we are now nearer to the artisans he portrayed in *The Nights of Labor* now we've passed the "factory model" of "mass production": "We are today finding ourselves faced with all these forms of a return to a kind of artisanal labour–working from home, small businesses, family labour, child labour. At the very heart of capitalism today we are tending to revert to forms that look like the ones I evoked" (Rancière 2016a: 108).

[33] "*le déplacement du travail et l'adventure de la situation*" (59-60).

[34] "*Celui qui ne craint pas de subir les incertitudes d'un travail à la tache, mérite les jouissances qu'offrent les mutations de ce destin* [. . .]" (Gauny 2017: 60) (One who does not fear to suffer the incertitudes of piecework, deserves the enjoyment of the mutations of this destiny).

[35] "*Le procédé de tempérance qu'on explique ici fait la guerre aux tyrans; car ses épargnes sont des ressources de protestation, de résistance, d'assistance, d'association, de propagation, de force, d'intelligence, de voyage, de combat, de victoire et de liberté!*" (Gauny 2017: 140).

[36] Pythagoras's communal followers at Crotona, because they shared "the goods of life in common," were the first to be called cenobites "*Coenobitae*" (Iamblichus 1818: 13) stemming from the Greek *koinos* (common), *bíos* (life). As Rancière writes: "A science is needed, and the singular genius of the floor-layer creates it and gives it a name-cenobitic economy–a modern transposition of the rule of Pythagoras's companions [. . .]" (Rancière 1989: 84). Pythagoras may well have also influenced Gauny's belief in a transmigration of the soul along with the work of Pierre-

recent philosophers have also lived frugally outside of a communal life so that they had time to write–Baruch Spinoza, is but one example that comes to mind.[37] However, Gauny is 'perhaps' the first to write of his own particular economy so fastidiously when the economy is, unlike the economies of Pythagoras and Epicurus, not spread amidst a community. That being said, his cenobite economy was communal in the sense that many by necessity unknowingly shared aspects of his economy without seeing it in the philosophical vein and way of life that Gauny did. Anyone who has experienced any periods of poverty in their life can attest to the commonality of very quickly learning how to calculate the most austere way to live. For Gauny, however, this economy was a means to possess himself in a life of emancipation rather than possess material objects, just as his hero Diogenes aimed to possess himself: "Diogenes the Cynic incarnates the moment when rebel individuality is formed by the invention of that strange science "of possessing everything without having anything, by attacking ownership with renunciation" [. . .]" (Rancière 1989: 120-1). As Rancière writes regarding Gauny's coenobite economy:

> Cenobitic economy is not the "spiritual point of honor" of political economy. In the order of consumption as in the order of production, the problem is not to possess "one's own" object but to possess oneself, to develop strengths that can no longer be satisfied by any of the bribes that exploitation offers to servility. (Rancière 1989: 85)

In *Le Philosophe plébéien*, Rancière gives us sixteen pages of 'Extracts' from Gauny's 'Cenobite Economy'.[38] In these pages, Gauny lists the bare necessities for a nineteenth-century French worker and how much these necessities should cost per day, week, and year. Above all, Gauny stresses the importance of a secure and economical abode (Gauny 2017: 128) and lists the price for rent as well as food, shoes, clothes, laundry, lighting, and heating. Regarding rent, he suggests living, as he does, in the suburbs as it is cheaper. He tells us that we can find a small room with a fireplace quite easily in the suburbs for 50 Francs a year (127). However, we

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Simon Ballanche. However, there were also other French influences at this time regarding transmigration. In his book *Pythagoras and the Doctrine of Transmigration* (2009), James Luchte informs us of "Alphonse Louis Constant (Eliphas Levi), a nineteenth-century French occult philosopher, who writes in his *History of Magic*" of "the doctrine of transmigration" (Luchte 2009: 39).

[37] Spinoza, unlike Gauny, had wider vocational choices as he was offered many academic posts and even a pension from the King of France at the time, Louis XIV, which he turned down because it came at the price of dedicating a book to him (Nadler 2018: 368). However, Spinoza kept away from any academic posts and chose a life of simplicity and austerity over one of good favour, so that he had the time to write and live the life he saw fit.

[38] This treatise, Perrot tells us, comes from Gauny's manuscript *Le Portique* (Harlor 1937: 90).

must make sure, he tells us, that the journey from our suburban abode must not be too far from our place of work (presumably in the centre of the city) because the journey would involve the fatigue of long walks and the loss of time,[39] and we already know the importance of time for Gauny.

Gauny goes on to the topic of food and states that we can eat well enough for 60 centimes per day (there were 100 centimes in a Franc). Bread, he writes, echoing the belief of nineteenth-century French culture, is the nutritional base and one can purchase two kilos of bread in the market for 5 centimes lower than the standard price (Gauny 2017: 129). He also states that two meals a day are sufficient and healthy.[40] Therefore, for Gauny, breakfast, lunch, dinner, are sybaritic terms.[41] Gauny then goes on to give us the price of fruit, cheese, milk, vegetables, seeds, salad, and onions (130), as Gauny was, under the influence of Pythagoras and Saint John the Baptist, an ethical vegetarian.[42] Lastly, in his section on food, Gauny suggests making soup and tells his wine-loving compatriots that it is better for their mental health and more austere to drink water rather than wine (132).

When it comes to clothes, the most important thing for Gauny, as his metaphoric somnambulism suggests, was shoes. Gauny believed that someone in his position had to be a good walker by necessity[43] and that walking was good for meditation and contemplation (Gauny 2017: 133). Gauny then goes into the details of the price of shoes and their repair (133) and then gives us the cost of shirts, trousers (winter trousers and summer trousers), a pea-jacket, and a ferry hat (135-7). He then informs us that we should get the laundry done once a month to save work every week and that we can be more austere by ironing the laundry ourselves (137-8). However, Rancière states in the book length interview *The Method of Equality* that Gauny stated: "[T]here's no need to spend money on the ironing because at the end of the day an

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[39] "*des fatigues pédestres et des pertes de temps*" (Gauny 2017: 128).

[40] "*[d]eux repas par jour sont assez pour être sobre et bien portant* [. . .]" (130).

[41] "*Déjeune, dîner, souper sont donc des termes de sybarite* [. . .]" (130).

[42] In *Le Philosophe plébéien*, Rancière states that Gauny followed the vegetarian principals of the French author and promoter of vegetarianism well known for his *Thalysie, ou, La nouvelle existence* (1840-1842), Jean-Antoine Gleizes (1773-1843) (Rancière 2017a: 27). In a section of Gauny's book written by Rancière as editor, titled '*Les Socrate de la plèbe*', Rancière tells us that in Gauny's original writings of cenobitic economy, of which Rancière only gives us sixteen pages, "*Gauny consacre plusieurs pages, non reproduites ici, au "meurtre des animaux"*" (Rancière 2017b: 120) (Gauny dedicated several pages, not reproduced here, on "the murder of animals").

[43] "*bon marcheur par nécessité*" (Gauny 2017: 133).

unironed shirt is part of the free man; in itself it points to a rebuff, a rebellion. The rebel doesn't need an ironed shirt" (Rancière 2016a: 118).

Gauny's cenobitic economy then takes us to the subject of heating and lighting, the latter of which Gauny writes of in meticulous detail. We must remember that in Gauny's time lighting was by oil, and Gauny describes for us how the particular style of lamp he prefers works and states that the system of oil lamps defeats the irregularities of the light of the candle and the distractions of snuffers.[44] Of course, Gauny was in much need of a lamp for his evenings of reading and writing, and to carry out these activities at home in the winter, he states that the stove or the fireplace is ample heat for one room (139).

And so, there we have Gauny's cenobite economy, an economy that aesthetically *goes to war with tyrants* and affords Gauny the freedom of traversing the city as an act of dissensus. With each step through the city on days meant for work, Gauny stepped outside of the consensual space and time of an artisan and thus became an aesthetic revolutionary rupturing the spatial-temporal consensus of the then prevalent work day of 12 to 14 hours.[45] Therefore, in each step outside of the constraints of his consensual identity, Gauny went against that which Foucault would state in his 'The Subject and Power' is the "form of power that applies itself to immediate everyday life, categorises the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognise and others have to recognise in him" (Foucault 1982a: 331). Thus, Gauny's walks were not the pleasure-seeking walks of the ambulatory dandy the *flâneur* (although these two strollers do share the dream-like state of their walks) whom the poet Charles Baudelaire wrote of (Baudelaire 1964 [1863]). They were more like the *dérive* (drifting) adopted by the situationists and defined as "the 'technique of locomotion without a goal'" (Fillon in Plant 2000: 58) in a psychogeographic induced pleasure. This was a technique of walking outside quotidian reasons for movement such as leisure or going to work,

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[44] "*les irrégularitiés de lumière de la chandelle et les distractions des mouchettes*" (Gauny 2017:139). We have to bear in mind that at that time it was rare for someone who was economically challenged to have a window, and candles were not cheap (Lyons 2001: 52-3). As such, the availability of oil-lamps in the 1830s and 1840s (paraffin after the 1850s (53)) were a welcome item for readers such as Gauny. However, to use a lamp to read may have be seen as extravagant by families from the working-class as they normally used them just for family meals in the evening (53).

[45] "The 12 to 14-hour working day was standard in France until the later decades of the century [. . .]" (White 2014: 20). On top of these hours, especially before the advent of public transport, workers also had long journeys to and from work.

where people "let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there" (Debord in Plant 2000: 58-9) in the possibility of creating situations allowing a momentary emancipation from the normativity of the everyday. However, unlike the *dérivers* who participated in small groups in the aim of arriving at objective conclusions (Debord 1956), Gauny walked alone.

8.4 The Individual and the Community

We are apart as individuals but together as a community through the *le partage du* sensible–"*séparés, on est ensemble*" (Mallarmé 2006: 116) (Rancière 2009b: 51), as quoted in Chapter 1–according to Rancière, and by relations of power, according to Foucault. These producers of spatial-temporal socio-reality and our taxonomic identities, define our way of being together. They are both, as Chapter 1 of this thesis quoted Rancière stating regarding *le partage du sensible*, a "system of relations between ways of being, doing, seeing and thinking that determine at once the common world and the ways in which everyone takes part within it" (Rancière 2015: 7). With the dissensus of *parrhesia* and the *parrhesia* of dissensus, we can not only transform ourselves but transform how we exist together. By becoming emancipated spectators, a term we explored in Chapter 1, we can engage in the community by becoming both an artist of our lives and our community as we reconfigure consensual space and time and normative subjectivities. Gauny exemplifies this with his evening walks of *parrhesia* and his letters that connect him to other autodidacts who suffered the struggles of a worker's life.

There are many extant letters both to and from Gauny with other kindred spirits, and some correspondence continued for many years. For example, Perrot informs us that Gauny wrote to the author, journalist, and feminist, Suzanne Voilquin for a period of thirty years (Harlor 1937: 79). Just as the Stoics would write to each other for support and growth, Gauny et al. did too. Gauny's letters and evening somniloquies of *parrhesia* were both individual and communal acts of dissensus where a community of people shared the commonality of similar experiences of inequality and a lack of freedom as a dissensual community, an "aesthetic community," as Rancière puts it in *The Emancipated Spectator* (Rancière 2009b: 57). Some also shared the commonality of living an autodidactic path of emancipation, aiding each other with a *parrhesia* that was both spoken and written. Thus, their auto-emancipation was both an individual and communal affair that created other worlds rather than utopias. As Chapter 3 briefly stated, Rancière calls these worlds heterotopias. While Foucault's understanding of heterotopias as

'other' spaces of the urban landscape, as mentioned in Note 1 of Chapter 3, differs from Rancière's semantic offering of heterotopias as disruptions of consensual space and time, we can take a quote from Foucault's 1967 lecture on heterotopias and apply it to Rancière's understanding. Foucault states that heterotopias lie somewhere in between socio-reality and utopia and exist as "counter-sites" which "simultaneously" represent, contest, and invert socio-reality (Foucault 1986b: 24). In other words, whilst Rancière's heterotopias must exist in and of consensual reality (there is no outside of the police or power relations) and thus to a degree represent aspects of it, at the same time, they are communal counter-sites against the dominant fiction/regime of truth of the consensus and lie somewhere between consensual reality and social revolution in the *betweenness* of an aesthetic revolution. Therefore, we can see that whilst auto-emancipation, by its very definition, is an individual affair of transformation and transgression, as are its accoutrements such as autodidactism, the other lives that auto-emancipation creates are still tied into other worlds, as was the life of Gauny by certain acts such as his somniloquistic *parrhesia* and letter writing. Thus, the solitude involved in being a worker-poet, an artist of one's own life, is, as Rancière writes of artwork in his *The Emancipated Spectator*, "a false solitude" (Rancière 2009b: 56).

In the same lecture, Foucault also mentions heterochronies as "slices of time" that begin "to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time" (Foucault 1986b: 26). Whilst Foucault is speaking of the heterochrony of cemeteries in the urban landscape, we can take this term and utilise it as an understanding of 'other' times that accompany 'other' worlds and lives as dissensual, such as Gauny's metaphoric somnambulism outside of the time and space of the identity imposed upon him by the consensus as artisan. With politics as aesthetics and aesthetics as politics, as quoted in Chapter 2 of this thesis from *The Emancipated Spectator*, something which Gauny himself was as he wandered through the affluent streets of Paris, we can "construct different realities, different forms of common sense–that is to say, different spatiotemporal systems, different communities of words and things, forms and meanings" (Rancière 2009b: 102). Against a police logic obsessed with logos and discourse, the non-identity of subjectivation can exist as heterotopias and heterochronies amidst aesthetic and polemic communities. Through the reality of individuals, there can be a transformation of the self by autotelic practices of freedom and equality existing as *living attitudes* of an emancipation that is always on the way. By a self-tutelage in both an authority over and instruction of the self with a dissensus of a consensual way of existing, thinking, and perceiving, communities can be formed. Not by some grand revolution devoted to a utopia (telos)

or idealised past (*arche*),[46] but by the day to day lives and practices of equality and freedom with the *heuriskein* (finding, discovering) of paths of emancipation, of *hodós*, the ancient Greek for both 'way' as in a path and 'way' as in way of thinking or being.

Gauny's writing was not only exercised by the medium of auto-biographical texts, letters, and poems, but also by writing against the horrors of the nineteenth century such as the prisons that were being built at the time in the suburbs of France. These were the same panoptic prisons that Foucault was later to write about in *Discipline and Punish*. In fact, like Foucault after him, Gauny writes of the panoptician and how the system of building workshops borrowed from cellular prisons: by building workshops according to a panoptic design, so that from the point of the centre, from where mirages were diverging to the radiating threads of a spider's web, the boss could see the most intimate acts and relations of his subordinates.[47] Unlike Foucault, however, Gauny also addressed the workers who built these prisons, who, he wrote, were building cells for their own kind: new prisons, fortified and silencing tombs built by the plebs and for the plebs![48] They build against themselves with these terrible cells.[49] However, Gauny was not asking for absolution for those convicted of crimes but for fair treatment: We are not here to absolve the guilty, but we want that they are treated as our lost brothers and that they have the right to justice.[50] Thus, Gauny's individual acts of emancipation spread to the community too, not only in his parrhesiastic walks and letters but also in in his writing against work and prison conditions. Like Diogenes whom Gauny admired so much, Gauny spoke out with *parrhesia* and in doing so, even offered 'other' worlds within the consensual world of prisons:

> The prison must be large and salubrious, each captive must have a room with breathable air and the door open, the window free to view [. . .] a walk planted with

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[46] As Greg Bird puts it in his text on Agamben, Esposito, Nancy, and community: [I]f community is based in the romanticized past perfect or in the mystical, utopian, or eschatological future perfect tense, community becomes an unobtainable and thus never realizable entity. Whenever a concerted effort is made to bring this unrealizable model into reality, the results are violence, bloodshed, and destruction" (Bird 2016: 30).

[47] "*en construisant les ateliers sur un plan panoptique, afin que, du point de centre, d'ou divergent des mirages pareils aux fils rayonnants d'une toile d'araignée, le chef pût voir les actes les plus intimes et les relations de set subordonnés*" (Gauny 2017: 71).

[48] "*prisons nouvelles, tombes fortifiées et muettes bâties par la plèbe et pour le plèbe ! . . .*" (86).

[49] "*Ils bâtissent contre eux-mêmes ces cellules affreuses* [. . .]" (88).

[50] "*On ne vient pas absoudre les coupables, mais on veut qu'ils soient traités comme des frères égarés et qu'ils aient droit à la justice*" (89).

trees is essential to the hygiene of the soul and the body; sufficient and healthy food is a must; the work must be voluntary and remunerated according to the outside tariff; humanitarian education, replacing devout practices, will be offered but never imposed; speech will be free, complaints easy [. . .].[51]

Following the above, we can say that to critique Rancière's and Foucault's respective emancipatory practices as being purely for the individual would, as shown through the medium of Gauny's life, be a one-dimensional interpretation. Whilst these emancipatory practices start with the individual, there are ripple effects that spread to the community: Gauny's letters to other emancipatory individuals, his publications in worker newspapers, and his walks of metaphoric somniloquism as he passed people leaving work, for example. As stated in Chapter 6, in line with Foucault, *parrhesia* happens in relationships of shared lives and is therefore, relational. Within a life of *parrhesia*, be it a *parrhesia* of action or non-action, spoken or written words, the dissensual individual connects to the community with their individual emancipation. As Rancière writes: "a different society presupposes the production of a different humanity, not a destructive confrontation with the master or the bourgeois class" (Rancière 1989: 82).

Yet another way that emancipation as a synergy of practices of equality and freedom can be communal, is by the reframing of the real by fiction and the understanding of how truth and fiction both act as contranyms: truth as fiction, fiction as truth. This is the subject for the next and final chapter.

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[51] "*La prison doit être vaste et salubre, chaque captif doit y posséder une chambre à l'air respirable et la porte ouverte, la fenêtre libre à la vue . . . une promenade plantée d'arbres est indispensable a l'hygiène de l'âme et du corps ; une nourriture suffisante et saine est un devoir sous les verrous; le travail doit y être volontaire et rétribué selon le tarif du dehors ; l'enseignement humanitaire, remplaçant les pratiques dévotieuses, y sera offert mais jamais imposé ; la parole y sera libre, les réclamations faciles* [. . .]" (Gauny 2017: 109).

Chapter 9 - Fictions: Reframing the Real

This final chapter turns to fictions as a means to reframe the real: its unequal distribution of space and time and its lack of ontological freedom, due to its imposition of normative identities. In doing so, it illustrates how Rancière's and Foucault's practices can complement each other when used within their respective dynamics of fiction. The first section of this chapter addresses Rancière's understanding of creating fictions as a polemic against the police order's positing of its fiction as the univocal real. The second section addresses Foucault's understanding of fictions and that which he names 'problematisations'. The third section turns to Foucault's understanding of experience and experiment and in doing so, revisits Gauny's dissensual reveries. The last section adopts Foucault's term 'poem-lives' and gives it another definition that leads into Deleuze's and Guattari's understanding of a 'minor literature' which in turn, ties into Rancière's use of bi-univocal terms as a variant of the major discourse.

9.1 Rancière and Fictions

Studies of the beginning of history and so-called 'civilisation', the urban revolution, emerging from the neolithic revolution, will often tell us that the mythos of imagined realities was probably the means of keeping the first large communities together. As one such study by Yuval Noah Harari states:

> How did *Homo sapiens* manage to cross this critical threshold, eventually founding cities comprising tens of thousands of inhabitants and empires ruling hundreds of millions? The secret was probably the appearance of fiction. (Harari 2014: 28)

Fictions can become rooted in our "collective imagination" rather quickly (Harari 2014: 28). Harari exemplifies the speed of fiction becoming rooted, or perhaps better put, becoming 'truth', by illustrating this dynamic in the French Revolution (32). In an indirect precursor to Harai's exemplification, Rancière states in a 2010 interview:

> Insurrectional experiences have taught us how unimaginable things can very quickly enter into the field of possibilities. The judgement and sentencing to death of the king of France by an assembly of representatives of the people was something unimaginable in 1789. (Rancière 2010c: 242)

Other philosophers have also written about fictions. Kant told us of the fictions he named "regulative principles" of reason as hypotheses that control our theoretical processes by ideas such as 'cause and effect' (Kant 2000: A769-771/B797-9). Nietzsche too, quite possibly influenced by Kant's regulative principles, told us that we live by "regulative fictions" which aid our comprehension of life and the world. (Nietzsche 2001: §344). Indirectly in congruence with Rancière and Foucault, he proposed a creative ontology of becoming against modernity's fictions that incorporated an understanding of an essence to the human form aimed at justifying those fictions. For Nietzsche, as quoted in Chapter 6 of this thesis, any understanding of an essence to the human form is a fiction itself: "being is as an empty fiction" (Nietzsche 1997: 19). However, as discussed in Part 1, for Rancière, a presupposition of equality is not an ontological principal and thus, it is not an empty fiction. It is a practice and thus, as quoted in Chapter 1, it "only functions when it is put into action [. . .]" (Rancière 2004a: 52). Therefore, it is a presupposition that enables a creative ontology to unfold counter-fictions that are polemic to a consensual ontology of identity and inequality. Or, if you like, are contra the mythos of souls of iron, silver, and gold that Plato relays as the grounds for social stratification.[1] As Rancière states in a 1996 interview regarding fiction as dissensus:

> Fiction is not the reverse of reality. It is not a flight of imagination that invents a dream world. Fiction is a way of deeply examining reality, of adding names and characters to it, and scenes and stories that multiply it and strip it of its univocal self-evidence. (Rancière 2014: 50)

New fictions of the type that Rancière promotes happen, as they did in Gauny's existence, as a way of life through an individual creation. Thus, the fictions that we create and live by, like Aristotle's habituations, create us by the reciprocity of *ethos* and *ēthos*. In the context of Rancière's work, this reciprocity manifests in the simultaneity of politics and aesthetics, in Foucault's, parrhesia and ethics. In a synergy of practices of equality and freedom, these respective terms can be conjoined under the banner of the simultaneity of transgression and

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[1] As Rancière states in a 2000 interview regarding his archival work: "I extracted those workers' texts from their socio-economic links so as to read them as anti-Platonic [. . .]" (Rancière 2017g: 91). It is also interesting to note that in a 1994 interview Rancière states that he understands "*muthos*" in the Aristotelian sense as plot and as such, we can see how it is used to form narratives of knowledge and discourse (Rancière 2017h: 57). This is further addressed in *The Names of History: On the Poetics of Knowledge* (Rancière 1994 [1992]). Thus, we can see Rancière's use of

transformation. However, if new fictions within the construction of the real manifest in one collective swoop as the outcome of social revolutions, individuals do not think autodidactically but follow a didactic collective or individual–just as they did in the aforementioned French Revolution, amidst the change in fictions and the sanguine chaos that ensued. This same violent chaos happened after the communist revolutions of the twentieth century, where political revolution caused a switch from one form of domination to another. The dissensus of aesthetic revolution, however, as mentioned above, is very different from mass mobilisation of political revolutions: "This work involved in creating dissensus informs an aesthetics of politics that operates at a complete remove from the forms of staging power and mass mobilisation [. . .]" (Rancière 2009c: 25). To understand that we can create new fictions with an aesthetico-political dissensus, we must understand, as Rancière informs us in his essay 'The Paradoxes of Political Art' (2010a), that there is no univocal real:

> There is no 'real world'. Instead, there are definite configurations of what is given as our real, as the object of our perceptions and the field of our interventions. The real always is a matter of construction, a matter of 'fiction' [. . .] What characterises the mainstream fiction of the police order is that it passes itself off as the real, that it feigns to draw a clear-cut line between what belongs to the self-evidence of the real and what belongs to the field of appearances, representations, opinions and utopias. Consensus means precisely that the sensory is given as univocal. (Rancière 2010a: 148-9)

Aesthetico-political fictions within the bi-univocality of Rancière's lexicon, act polemically within a dissensus of the consensual, univocal formation of the real:

> The practice of fiction undoes, and then re-articulates, connections between signs and images, images and times, and signs and spaces, framing a given sense of reality, a given 'common sense'. It is a practice that invents new trajectories between what can be seen, what can be said and what can be done. (Rancière 2010a: 149)

Rancière's redefinition of emancipation is not economic and political like the revolutions of late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century France but, as stated above, aesthetic and political in Rancière's meaning of these terms where the aesthetics of politics and the politics of

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poetics that this chapter engages with is a kind of counter-*muthos* in the creation of fictions, other worlds, and other lives.

aesthetics are connected by the nexus of dissensus. By utilising dissensus in the forms of *parrhesia* mentioned in Chapter 8, we can also become revenants as our consensual 'self' dies within that which Rancière sees as the kernel of an aesthetic revolution such as Gauny's: "the idea of equality and anonymity" (Rancière 2003b: 205). By turning away from our taxonomic social self, our consensual self which exists in "the fiction of a community without politics" (Rancière 2014: 46), and by becoming an emancipated spectator, we become an anonymous who and no longer a taxonomic what: "The political begins when one finally achieves an identification with anonymity" (73). This is not a proposal of some kind of universal Fregoli delusion,[2] however, where everyone folds into anonymity and becomes one person (the anonymous *parrhesiastes*) but rather, it is a means to deploy new existences and new fictions as a political being: The deployment of the Cynic is a movement in the realisation of a free identity.[3] Rancière gives this dissensual and creative duality of politics and aesthetics the same description as the title of his aforementioned essay, 'The Paradoxes of Political Art':

> We are now in a position to address the paradox that resides at the heart of the relationship between art and politics. Art and politics each define a form of dissensus, a dissensual re-configuration of the common experience of the sensible. If there is such thing as an 'aesthetics of politics', it lies in a re-configuration of the distribution of the common[4] through political processes of subjectivation. Correspondingly, if there is a politics of aesthetics, it lies in the practices and modes of visibility of art that re-configure the fabric of sensory experience. (Rancière 2010a: 140)

In this sense, a 'politics of aesthetics' and an 'aesthetics of politics' are both dissensual *and* transformative and create an ontological space for fictions to unfold. However, as this thesis has strived to show, Rancière's understanding of an aesthetic revolution is not equivalent to a dissensual negation as Žižek et al. define it (unless one believes in utopia) but can lead to new ways of being through a practice of a presupposition of equality as a way of life (*bíos*) within, yet against, a consensual configuration of space and time. For just as Marx states in his notebooks collated under the title of *Grundrisse* (1973 [1939]) that human beings can only "individuate" themselves "in the midst of society" (Marx 1973: 84), Rancière believes practices of equality can

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[2] A belief that different people are a single person. For an example of this, see Charlie Kaufmann's 2015 film *Anomalisa*.

[3] "*Le dépouillement cynique est un moment dans la réalisation de l'identité libre* [. . .]" (Rancière 2017b: 123).

[4] Cf. the Cynic's notion of devaluing the currency mentioned in Chapter 7.

only operate within the space and time of inequality: "The political doesn't need barricades to exist. But it does require that there be two distinct and perceptibly opposed ways to describe the common situation and to count the players involved" (Rancière 2014: viii). The predominant criticism of Rancière that May and Žižek have is that he does not accept the possible arrival of an order of equality. However, as we know, Rancière does not believe equality as an ideal will ever exist, or in fact, he does not believe in equality as an ideal at all. Thus, there is no arrival because equality is a presupposition to be enacted not an ideal to be reached. For Rancière, there will always be inequality, and revolutions of ideals against this inequality only lead to further inequalities in the medium of totalitarianism or hegemonic oligarchies. Therefore, he points the individual to areas to engage with as a means to live an aesthetic revolution utilsing a presupposition of equality and thus an autodidactic rather than didactically imposed understanding.

The focus of Rancière's work, as he has it, as quoted in Chapter 3 of this thesis, is "to thread a new way between consensual thinking and the ethical absoluticisation of the wrong" (Rancière 2003a: 16). In other words, like Foucault and Nietzsche, Rancière wants to go beyond the dialectic of good and evil in an open-ended offering. Thus, as he continues, in this space between consensus reality and social revolution, "there is still much room for discussion" (16). The lack of a theoretical engagement with freedom and *parrhesia* within a self-constitution of the subject in Rancière's work provided an impetus for this thesis's 'discussion' and offering of a synergy of Rancière's practices of equality and Foucault's practices of freedom. As Foucault does not offer a theoretical engagement with equality, this synergy is mutually beneficial within these thinkers' respective aims to find an autotelic path of emancipation outside of a Hegelian, telos-laden, negation of the negation: a dialectic of becoming that powered political revolutions in the form of ideals and which still animates critics of Rancière and Foucault, such as Žižek. Furthermore, it seems that Rancière's self-confessed focus on a disruption of consensual time rather than space as a means of dissensus can help fill the lacuna in Foucault's focus on discursive and non-discursive practices as more spatially orientated than time orientated, and vice versa.[5] That being said, Foucault does not actually write of dissensual acts through the

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[5] We can recall from Chapter 5 of this thesis that Foucault stated in *The Birth of the Clinic* that it was a book about space and that Deleuze described Foucault as a cartographer. However, whilst Foucault does not explicitly write of an exclusionary time, we must bear in mind that it does seem to be implicit within his writings on exclusionary space: in the beginning of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault includes a prisoner timetable from a French, nineteenth-century prison (Foucault 1977: 6-7) and towards the end of the book he cites the daily and weekly events at the penal colony

disruption of an exclusionary time or space as Rancière does but refers more to transgression by the transformation of the self via new subjectivities. Whilst these subjectivities in turn are a form of dissensus against consensual space and time, unlike Rancière's work, there is no real focus on these spatial-temporal transgressions or a political body such as the *demos* contra the police. Foucault is not interested in "redistributing the sensible," as Rancière states in an interview in 2000, but in "the relations between technologies of power and technologies of the self" (Rancière 2017e: 104). "What interests him," Rancière continues, "isn't the polemical common, but the government of the self and others" (105). However, whilst Foucault focuses on a transformation of the self and Rancière focuses on a dissensus of the distribution of the sensible, there is a crossover in their respective foci where they are a lot closer than they initially appear. Just as Foucault focuses on what we do–*ergon*, in other words, our practices as a means of transformation, Rancière does likewise:

> The important thing is to construct the space where you are rather than constructing who are you [. . .] you are first and foremost what you *do*. You give yourself things to do, rather than defining the kind of self you want to adopt. (Rancière 2016a: 119, Rancière's stress)

Thus, Foucault's understanding of practices of freedom and a focus on *parrhesia* and an aesthetics of the self as transformative and transgressive, within an offering of ethics, is compatible with practices of equality and a focus on the dissensus of exclusionary space and time within Rancière's offering of politics and aesthetics. Therefore, both practices fulfil each other in a synergy actuated in a lived aesthetic revolution of the individual where transformation and transgression merge in their simultaneity and creation of fictions.

9.2 Foucault: Fictions and Problematisations

The fictional side of Foucault's historical interpretation is something that resonates with Rancière's storytelling that we explored in Chapter 4. This is a use of history as a means to reflect issues of the now from the mirror of the past, as Rancière's work, as mentioned above, differs yet is influenced by Foucault's 'history of the present' approach of his genealogical

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Mettray (293-4). He has also placed timetables in general under the art of discipline he names "control of activity" (Elden 2001: 139). However, he does state, "'discipline is above all an analysis of space" (Foucault in Elden 2001: 139).

analysis. Like Rancière, Foucault, in his *History of Madness* and later works, offers history as critique via a critical history which allows people to "criticise the present" without romanticising the past (Foucault 1982b: 343). In a 1980 interview Foucault calls his interpretations "historical fiction" and states the following regarding his *History of Madness*:

> I know very well what I say is not true [. . .] I know very well that what I have done from a historical point of view is single-minded, exaggerated. Perhaps I have dropped out some contradictory factors. But the book had an effect on the perception of madness. So the book and my thesis have a truth in the nowadays reality. (Foucault 1980b: 301)

Foucault had a strong engagement with literature in his early career as "a transgressive "outside"" of discourse (Blanco 2020: 4), and the French edition of the only book he ever wrote on literature, *Death and the Labyrinth: The World of Raymond Roussel* (2004), was published in 1963. However, an engagement with literature was to become less prominent in his focus on non-discursive practices and the understanding that there is no 'outside' of power.[6] This entailed a shift to seeing power as something that produces truth and subjects, as explained in Chapter 5. Thus, by fiction, we are not focusing on the fiction of literature in this thesis, but the fictions that we take as truth that create the real, such as the fictions of history and the fiction of social consensus, the "*dominant fiction*" we live by as Rancière puts it and describes in a 1976 interview as: "the privileged mode of representation through which the image of social consensus offers itself to the members of social formation and invites them to identify themselves with it" (Rancière 2017f: 5, Rancière's stress).[7] Therefore, Foucault was not, as mentioned in Chapter 7, a sceptic fighting against verified truth, but against the normative regime of truth, the dominant fiction of consensual reality. For Foucault, alternative practices, practices of freedom and *parrhesia*, can fight against discursive practices of knowledge (such as the dividing practices of taxonomy: the mad and the sane, etc.) and the non-discursive (economic, political, and institutional) practices of power. Practices are what we do within our

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[6] Whilst literature became less prominent in Foucault's texts in his new understanding of power relations and how there is no outside of power, it continued in his lectures. For example, his account of Euripides within his study on *parrhesia*, as detailed in Chapter 7. For a detailed account of Foucault's exploration of literature throughout his career, see Blanco 2020. For an overview, see the editor's introduction to *Language, Madness, and Desire: On Literature* (Foucault 2015c [2013]).

[7] In the same interview, Rancière exemplifies "America's dominant fiction," describing it as "that of 'the birth of a nation'" (Rancière 2017f: 5).

everyday lives, and what we do (trans)forms us and our experience of the world.[8] As Rancière puts it in an interview, as quoted above and in Chapter 7 of this thesis, "you are first and foremost what you *do*" (Rancière 2016a: 119, Rancière's stress). To change ourselves and the world, we need to change what we do, how we perceive, think, and exist. We need to change our practices and in turn, our experiences of the self and the Other. Thus, as stated in Chapter 5, Foucault's later work is not a return to the subject but a continuation of his focus on practices in congruence with the Greek's stress on *ergon* that we explored in Chapter 7 and, as Aristotle puts it, the reciprocity of *ethos* and *ēthos*. Therefore, Foucault, much like Rancière, offers a positive rather than negative resistance to the normative, doing so by fictions within the medium of problematisations.

A lived aesthetic revolution, such as Gauny's et al. is not a rapid phenomenon like political revolutions can be. Because of its continuity, it is a way of life. Therefore, it requires patience and persistence as its participants seek fewer constraints within a normative consensus. In *Fearless Speech*, Foucault defines problematisation as "an "answer" to a concrete situation which is real" (Foucault 2001a: 172). Unlike the negative reaction of the Cynics to the consensual reality they existed in, practices of freedom offer a positive reaction within 'continuing' problematisations through the creation of new subjectivities within an aesthetic and an ethico-poetic askesis: "A problematisation is always a kind of creation" (172). Thus, as Foucault states in a 1983 interview, an understanding of problematisations can be a means to address the history of thought when we see thought as a means to detach ourselves from what we do and reflect "on it as a problem" (Foucault 1994: 421).[9] Through this reflection, practices can occur within a simultaneity of transgression and transformation that act as a nexus for a meeting of *bíos* and *alḗtheia* where the simultaneity of transgression and transformation is also the simultaneity of desubjectification and subjectivation. If *bíos* becomes, to adopt Foucault's aforementioned neologism, alethurgy–truth made manifest "in one's acts, one's body, the way one dresses, and in the way one conducts oneself and lives" (Foucault 2011: 172)–then to

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[8] As Paul Veyne states in regard to Foucault's work: [A practice] is not a mysterious agency, a basement of history, a hidden engine: it is what people do (the word indeed says what it means)" (Veyne in Djaballah 2008: 219).

[9] Thus, as Flynn puts it, Foucault's historico-critical work gives us "a history of *problems* and not of periods," with an "emphasis not on the problem itself but how it became problematic" (Flynn 2005: 36, Flynn's emphasis). For example, we can think of the various problematics in sexuality that Foucault highlights in his volumes of *The History of Sexuality*. As Foucault states in an interview: "The interesting thing is not so much a social history of sexual behaviours [. . .] but a history of the problematisation of these behaviours" (Foucault 1996: 368).

embody practices of equality and freedom in one's body and life (*bíos*) is to adopt an other life and with it, other worlds and other selves as these practices become one's way of life. As Maria Bonnafous-Boucher puts it in regard to Foucault's understanding of freedom: "Freedom [. . .] is elaborated by constituting free acts, or acts which gradually diverge from dominant techniques and forge new, adequate techniques" (Bonnafous-Boucher 2009: 75). Therefore, in this context, Cynicism can be seen as a metaphor for living a contemporary life of transgression (desubjectification) and transformation (subjectivation) where, as practices, freedom and equality are distanced from the deferral of dialectic political philosophy and (neo)liberalism and its hegemony, and thus, as a subtitle of an essay by Giovanni Maria Mascaretti has it, we can see "Parrhesia as *Ethical Distance*" (Mascaretti 2014, Mascaretti's stress). As practices, freedom and equality are no longer nominal and existing as empty promises to be fulfilled but are made manifest as immediate lived experiences to be taken where truth is not learnt through knowledge but realised through its connection to *bíos* and the experiences within *bíos* that cause transformation such as de-subjectification (see below). Therefore, we can learn from the *bíos* of past aesthetes just as Rancière learnt from the lives of the nineteenth-century workers he researched. However, traditionally, except for the example of the Cynics, philosophy has always excluded the biography of philosophers, choosing instead to focus solely on the corpus of their work.

In a 1996 conference, as an example of this exclusion that he himself was against, Derrida stated: "You'll remember Heidegger's reference to Aristotle: "What was Aristotle's life? Well, the answer lies in a single sentence: He was born, he thought, he died. And all the rest is pure anecdote"" (Derrida in Peeters 2013: 1). Like Derrida, Rancière indirectly agrees with, to paraphrase Derrida through Benoît Peeters, "a rethinking of the borderline between 'corpus and body [*corps*]'" (Peeters 2013: 1). This can clearly be seen in Rancière's book *The Nights of Labor* and its focus on the emancipatory lives of exceptional, nineteenth-century workers that Rancière describes in an interview as "emancipation based on forms of self-transformation that I stumbled upon in my work on the archives" (Rancière 2016a: 118). While this is something that Foucault touches on with the Cynics through 'a traditionality of existence' within the borderline between logos and *ergon* where Cynicism was not learnt through logos but through living a Cynic life, he does not explicitly engage in the *bíos* of past thinkers as Rancière does with the 'paper lives' of his archival revenants[10]–in fact, to do so with the Cynics is not possible because

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[10] As Simon During puts it, "it is the texts, not the lives, which ultimately interest Foucault" (During 1992: 173).

we only have the fictional myth-like *khreiai* as a reference point (as mentioned in Chapter 7). Alternatively, in a long but rewarding 1978 interview with Duccio Trombadori, Foucault speaks of the influence of "Georges Bataille, Friedrich Nietzsche, Maurice Blanchot, and Pierre Klossowski" and their "construction of a personal experience," 'limit-experiences', as a means of desubjectivity: "in Nietzsche, Bataille, and Blanchot, experience has the function of wrenching the subject from itself, of seeing to it that the subject is no longer itself, or that it is brought to its annihilation or its dissolution" (Foucault 2001b: 241). As this is a project of desubjectification there seems to a be a reversal here, where Rancière is the one focused on an auto-subjectivity through the care of the self of nineteenth-century workers, and Foucault is focussed on dissensus. However, transformation and transgression flow into each other: an act of transformation is an act of dissensus, and an act of dissensus is an act of transformation, and both are acts of *parrhesia*. Thus, Rancière's transgressions of space and time flow into Foucault's transformations of the self and vice versa.

In the same interview with Trombadori, Foucault links 'limit-experiences' to his books, his 'experience books' as he names them, as opposed to 'truth books' which bind the readers to the logos of a regime of truth where the author is, to appropriate the quote from Badiou above, the *le maître savant* who adopts a didactic approach. As Foucault states: "I don't accept the word "teaching." A systematic book employing a generalisable method or offering the demonstration of a theory would convey lessons. My books don't exactly have that particular value" (Foucault 2001b: 245). Thus, Foucault's understanding of what a book should be is much the same as Rancière's, in that a book should not be didactic but encourage autodidactism within the book's transformation, much like Seneca's and Gauny's letters mentioned above, of both the reader and writer (just as *parrhesia* can transform both the listener and the speaker): "in short, a transformation of the relationship we have with our knowledge" (244). Therefore, much like Rancière's books, Foucault's books offer an alternative understanding of modernity where, after reading one of his texts, we might have a new relationship with the world around us and with the subject of the book at hand: be it madness, recidivism, sexuality, or otherwise. Thus, experience books, be they Foucault's or Rancière's (both have the same aim), encourage, as Milchman and Rosenberg put it in an essay regarding Foucault's work, "a constant activity of problematisation," and it is this which "permits one to establish a certain distance from a given way of acting or seeing the world" (Milchman and Rosenberg 2009: 63). It is this activity of problematisation which establishes an always ongoing emancipatory existence by practices of freedom and equality. However, we must be epiphytic and create from the normative life and

consensual reality in which we live, rather than try to create fictions, new lives, and new worlds *ex nihilo*. The worlds that Rancière and Foucault trace are worlds within worlds, not outside them, as past revolutions have shown us the totalitarian dangers of such creations. In line with this thinking, we use the open-ended traces of paths of emancipation adumbrated by practices of equality and freedom to epiphytically grow from via new experiences and experiments stemming from problematisations. What problematisations we choose, would be a matter of, in the traditional meaning of the word, ethics. [11]

In writing experience books, one is always writing a fiction as it is, to quote from Jan Masschelein's essay on Foucault's 'experience books', "a truth outside a regime of truth" (Masschelein 2006: 571). This is not so much to imply a regime of truth is *the* truth or to imply a truth outside of power and knowledge, so to speak, a transcendent truth, but rather, a different truth offering change that comes from within by the introspection of practices of the self. As O'Leary puts it in his book *Foucault and Fiction: The Experience Book* (2009):

> In the 1970s, with the turn to politics and the question of power, we could say that the outside of thought, the engine or motor of change, is conceptualised as resistance which, perhaps, has its source in the forces of the body. While in the 1980s, with the final turn, the outside becomes, in a strange way, the inside of subjectivity itself; in other words, the potential for change emerges out of a folding back of the self upon itself. (O'Leary 2009: 85)[12]

Thus, it is not just the body that transforms the self through practices, but the internal shift incorporated in the change of the 'modern soul' leading towards new experiences of the world and others through the *terra incognita* of the self.[13] What is meant here by experiences, as

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[11] As Fjeld puts it regarding Rancierie's work: "We choose our own problems, although we always do so within concrete distributions of the sensible and through configurations and reconfigurations of the sensible network of things, bodies and words. There is thus an ethics underlying Rancierian thought, and one might say that this is our ethical-political challenge: the problems we choose and —in order to invest and deal with these problems— the capabilities we invent, the sites of incommensurability we open up, and the processes of experimentation we play with and reconfigure ourselves in" (Fjeld 2016: 161).

[12] For an in-depth discussion of Foucault's understanding of self-constitution as a folding, see Deleuze (1988a: 94-123).

[13] This mirrors Foucault's understanding of normative practices and how bio-politics controls the body and normative subjectivities cause the subject to consciously believe in the identity imposed upon them as who they are.

Claire Blencowe puts it, is "not the seeing and feeling that is done by a subject, but what is seeable, what is sayable, what is affectable. The history of bodies and of truth is the history of the formation of experience" (Blencowe 2012: 20). If we recall how, for Foucault, (non-)discursive practices inform how we exist, we can understand how they inform our experience in regard to what is seeable, sayable, and affectable. Therefore, practices of freedom can also form our experiences and change what we see, say, and do: "[e]xperience is tied to life and, in Foucault's view, to the transgression of limits" (26). In the unexplored territory of experiment, we create new experiences that transform us and new fictions that destroy prior fictions/truths: "An experience is always a fiction: it's something that one fabricates oneself, that doesn't exist before and will exist afterward. That is the difficult relationship with truth, the way in which the latter is bound up with an experience that is not bound to it and, in some degree, destroys it" (Foucault 2001b: 243). These explorations then link to new explorations through the methodological bridge of practices. We can make an allegory here with Foucault's writing of 'method books' such as *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *The Order of Things*, and his "thoughts on method in articles and interviews" as a "retrospective reflection on the experience" he had gone through in writing experiment books such as *History of Madness*, *The Birth of the Clinic*, etc. These method books, articles and interviews, for Foucault, acted as bridges to new explorations. Thus, unlike the formations of knowledge (*savoir)* that emerge from social practices that *The Order of Things* examines in the social discourse of natural history, political economy, and grammar, these bridges are not solidified or discursive practices: "They are something like a scaffolding that serves as a link between a work that is coming to an end and another one that's about to begin" (240). Therefore, they are seen as fictions, not as truth. Aesthetic practices are experiments but can also act as links from one new dissensual experience to another in a continuation of new experiments/fictions and experiences that perpetuate each other via the nexus of practices that can create other lives and worlds.

9.3 Experience and Experiment: The Reveries of the Solitary Walker

The French word *expérience* can be translated as both experience and experiment, as some texts on Foucault point out (O'Leary 2009 :7, Blencowe 2012: 21). Thus, Foucault's use of the word can be seen in both meanings, showing us how we can experience life as an experiment against the structure of experience imposed upon us by a normative knowledge, power, and truth, structuring how we perceive, think, and exist. Or, to use Rancière's terminology, a consensual reality: a police logic of the distribution of the sensible and an ontology of identity.

Thus, unlike the phenomenological approach that Foucault's early work went against which, as quoted in Chapter 5 of this thesis from *The Order of Things*, "gives absolute priority to the observing subject" Foucault 2002: xv), Foucault sees 'experience' as something formed by the historical era we live in, which, as explained in Chapter 5, he formulated as the *episteme* within its connections to the historical *a priori*.[14] This view on experience, as Blencowe informs us, is continued throughout Foucault's work: "Foucault explicitly characterises his genealogical work as history of experience" (Blencowe 2012: 20).

To support this statement, Blencowe points us towards Foucault's lecture series *The Government of the Self and Others*, and his *History of Sexuality* vol II. In the latter, Foucault describes experience as "the correlation between fields of knowledge, types of normativity, and forms of subjectivity in a particular culture" (Foucault 1990a: 4) and does likewise in the prior (Foucault 2010b: 4,5). A few pages later, he writes of "an analysis of the "games of truth" [. . .] through which being is historically constituted as experience [. . .]" (Foucault 1990a: 6-7). Thus, we can return to the beginning of Chapter 5 of this thesis and the statement that Foucault's work is a continual study of historically constituted practices–discursive practices (knowledge and truth) and non-discursive practices (power and normativity)–and how they form our experience of our self, of others, and of the world. So, in this interest in historically constituted experience, we could refer to Foucault as a genealogical phenomenologist in his interrogations of the (non-)discursive practices that form this experience.[15] However, for Foucault, phenomenology is purely about quotidian experiences, whilst practices of freedom (self-constitution and truth/*parrhesia*) are about forming new experiences that break away from the ontological restrictions and forms of experience imposed by a regime of truth. These are experiences that his influences such as Nietzsche, Bataille, et al. proffer as "the maximum of intensity and the maximum of impossibility at the same time" (Foucault 2001b: 241). Therefore, as O'Leary puts it: "We can distinguish between, on the one hand, something that we will call 'everyday' or 'background' experience and, on the other hand, something that we will call 'transformative' experience" (O'Leary 89). In this sense, we can understand how Gauny's practices of reverie were aimed at creating a transformative experience within the background experience of the everyday. As Tanke succinctly puts it: "Dissensus is the process of transforming the sensible by

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[14] This is why Deleuze states: "This is Foucault's major achievement: the conversion of phenomenology into epistemology. For seeing and speaking means knowing [*savoir*] [. . .]" (Deleuze 1988a: 109).

[15] For an aim to connect Foucault to phenomenology, see Visker 1999. For a comparison and contrast of Foucault's genealogy and Hegel's phenomenology, see Sembou 2015.

placing it in conflict with a rival conception of the world" (Tanke 2011: 103). Gauny's acts of reverie are a prime example of a rival conception in conflict with the world of consensus. Therefore, we must add to the O'Leary quote by stating that we can distinguish between everyday experience formed by the consensus and transformative *and* transgressive (dissensual) experience, as transformation and transgression do not exist without each other but are simultaneous. In this simultaneity an individual not only creates their own double, but also a double of the real; both of which, are formed in the same way as that which they double: by practices and fictions. With the existence of these doubles, we have an aesthetic revolution lived by an individual life of transgressions and transformations of the consensual impositions of the normative 'self' and normative experience of the everyday.

We could use the title of the unfinished book by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, mentioned in Chapter 3 of Rancière's *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art*, *Les rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire* (*The Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (2004 [1782])), as a descriptor of Gauny's oneiric walking activities, especially as both Rousseau's and Gauny's walks revolved on the axis of exclusion: the prior, the son of an artisan, excluded because of his dissident writings, and the latter because of his artisan identity. Both thinkers also offer a way to think and act against the wrongs of society by solitary walks. However, whilst Rousseau's way involved recalling of memories of his dissident writings, Gauny's walks were actually dissident in their own right. In his dream-like actions, there is something of the plebeian's reverie that Rancière's *Aisthesis* describes as a "troubling revelation: the plebeian's happiness does not lie in the conquest of society. It lies in doing nothing, in annulling *hic et nunc* [(here and now)] the barriers of social hierarchy and the torment of confronting them, in the equality of pure sensation, in the uncalculated sharing of the sensible moment" (Rancière 2013: 52). Rancière tells us that Rousseau designates acts such as these, of existing in the "present moment" (45), as "*far niente*" (doing nothing) (46), but not in the sense of being lazy, either in the literal sense or in the sense of Lafargue's essay mentioned in Chapter 4 of this thesis, but in the 'act' of enjoying that which is "forbidden to the plebeian": leisure (45). It is true that there is something of an insomniac aspect to Gauny's life where, forever tired from early mornings, long days of labour, evenings of dissensus, and nights of autodidactic activities, he lives a hypnagogic existence in his daydreaming, somnambulism, and somniloquies, and thus seeks the shelter of leisure. These 'acts' of reverie are, however, like Gauny's cenobitic economy, not just a means of survival but also a means of dissensus. As 'acts' they are an escape from the 'doing' that plebeians are constricted to as a means to survive. As Rancière writes:

The patrician occupation is to *act,* to pursue grand designs in which their own success is identified with the destiny of vast communities. Plebeians are bound to *do* - to make useful objects and provide material services to meet the needs of their individual survival. (Rancière 2013: 46, Rancière's emphasis)

Therefore, these 'acts' are, as Rancière says of creative ontologies, "a metaphor or an allegory [. . .] constructed in practice" (Rancière 2016a: 63). This is because these ambulatory reveries *are* creative ontologies made manifest as dissensual ways of being, perceiving, and thinking in actuality rather than existing as abstract dreams or theories of ideals: "daydreaming" is "a moment of interruption of a certain course of sensible experience" (103). Thus, they are not sleep disorders (parasomnia) brought on by a lack of sleep, or a dream-like escape that many adopt to deal with the banality or extremity of certain forms of labour, although there are of course aspects of that, but allegories of emancipation formed through the simultaneity of transgression and transformation: polemic practices imported from the night and imposed on the quotidian practices of the day.

These acts are also that which Rancière names a 'scene', as a scene is, for Rancière, "like an encounter, a clash between several registers of discourse" (Rancière 2016a 69). As Rancière states in a couple of sentences that we can refer to the *parrhesia* of Gauny's somniloquism: "the power of a scene, meaning the power of a shift in sensible positions, is always linked to the fact that the noise turns into speech. Speech can sometimes be minimal, but I think it has to be there" (70). It is a "function [. . .] that (re)constructs a distribution of the sensible" (72), just as Gauny's somnambulism in the streets of the affluent was, as dissensus, a testing of a presupposition: "people test the equality that the other denies them" (72). Thus, as scenes, Gauny's states of reverie suspend the space and time imposed by the consensus, and as heteroclitic and polemic acts against the consensus–night against day, sleep against wakefulness, *act* against *do*–open up a space for transformation. Therefore, they are a means to revolt without being seen to do so by existing in-between the daily routine of a nineteenth-century worker where, as the Souvestre quote used in the prior chapter states: it is necessary to go to work or to sleep![16] In-between the binary of work and sleep, Gauny was in a state of

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[16] "*il faut aller au travail ou il faut dormir!*" (Souvestre 1839: 248).

reverie that suspended the partitioning and sharing out of the space and time of consensual socio-reality where Gauny presupposed equality and acted accordingly.[17]

Gauny's acts of reverie create a constitutive instability that opens up a transgressive space and time for transformative experiences and, in a very real sense, are transformative experiences themselves. In Rancière's parlance, they are a reconfiguration of experience (a reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible), in Foucault's, they are experiments. Thus, like Foucault and his shift from phenomenology's interest in the everyday, due to the influence of Nietzsche's, Bataille's, Blanchot's, and Klossowski's 'limit-experiences' as a means of desubjectivity in wrenching the subject from their self, Gauny distances himself from the quotidian in his aim of desubjectification in wrenching his 'self' away from everyday practices. As he walks, he is neither awake nor asleep, neither a worker or not a worker, but in the hypnagogic state of always being on the threshold of sleep, just as a liminal existence is always on the threshold of other lives and worlds. In this existence, this living on the edge of other lives and worlds, he refused the binary narrative of work and sleep imposed by an absence of time, just as he refused the narrative that his poor schooling wished to impose. As Rancière writes, Gauny's texts taught him that what defines the worker is simply the absence of time[18] and that emancipation begins with the incredible act of taking the time you don't have.[19] It is by acts of taking time, that a person can start to wrench their normative subjectivity from their 'self'. By breaking away from quotidian practices, practices of the police logic of space and time, one starts to de-identify oneself; by being asleep to the consensus in breaking with the consensual rhythms of work and sleep, one is awake to dissensus and other lives and worlds. Thus, Gauny dreams through consensual reality and is out of sync with its discourse as he lives somewhere in-between the consensus and political revolution in the oneiric realm of dissensual reality. Therefore, Gauny creates a dissensual double but also remains forever on the threshold of being this double in the in-between dream-state where he is neither worker nor poet, neither conformer nor revolutionary dreamer but a *parrhesiates* within a plebian reverie. Thus, his doubling of the self is a splitting of the self which is not illusory but creates a political (dissensual)

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[17] If we were to adopt Aristotle's lexicon, we could state that Gauny's acts of reverie are the 'mean' in-between the extremities of consensual reality and political revolution. They are also the very place that Seneca advises his correspondent and friend Lucilius in letters V and VII to exist in: somewhere in-between conformity and extreme opposition (Seneca 2004: 37, 43).

[18] "*ce qui definit l'être-ouvrier, c'est simplement l'absence de temps*" (Rancière 2017d: 11).

[19] "*l'acte inoui qui consiste à prendre le temps qu'on n'a pas*" (11).

self, whilst retaining the consensual self for the necessities it fulfils within, as Chapter 8 noted that Gauny stressed, the importance of personal economy. As Chapter 8 stated, it is a split of the self as *zôion* within a life of consensus and its biological needs fostered by bio-politics, and as *alethes bíos*: a true life, a life of dissensus as a *parrhesiates* within the emancipatory needs of being a political existent who is heard as logos rather than the *phōné* of *zôion*. It is, as Rancière writes of the appearance of the *sans-part* in *Disagreement*, "the duality of a social body and a body that now displaces any social identification" (Rancière 1999: 100). It is a democratic existence in Rancière's bi-univocal understanding of democracy that was first mentioned in the introduction to this thesis and quoted in Chapter 2 as "politics' mode of subjectivation" (99). It is the solid reality of a double rather than the singularity of revolutionary dreams of a new human form such as Marx's comrade or even Nietzsche's non-revolutionary *Übermensch*: "There is no new man, only people who try to live two lives" (Rancière 2017c: 24). Thus, we can take Blanco's uptake on Foucault's focus on the double in her studies on literature and apply it here: Foucault saw the double as that "which opposes dialectic synthesis as unity" (Blanco 2020: 76, Note 34).[20] Even though the duality of the double is polemic to the consensus, it is not an anti-thesis awaiting a supposition. Rather, it is a constant struggle: existence as coexistence, like the coexistence of equality and inequality and power and freedom. Or, as Foucault names it, as stated in Chapter 5 of this thesis, an agonism. It is a continual way of emancipation to adopt within the understanding that society will always be unequal and lack ontological freedom and that there is no supposition leading to an ideal of equality or freedom. As ideals, equality and freedom are purely a chimera that have been used to justify the violence of hegemony and political revolution, both of which, an aesthetic revolution opposes in the understanding that force perpetuates domination.

Bi-univocal semantics such as Rancière's act as a lexical variant to pry open the democratic space of this doubling and in-betweeness within the formation of new fictions against the fiction of consensual truth, the regime of truth, in which we live by partaking in everyday practices. As Rancière states: "what counts is the appropriation of speech that allows you to tell your personal experience differently, to subjectify daily experience and phrase it in a language that is no longer the language of the everyday" (Rancière 2016a: 73). Thus, if we return to an understanding of Gauny as *parrhesiates*, we can state that *parrhesia* as dissensus is not a

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[20] One example of the double in literature that Foucault explored was Oedipus who was both son and husband, etc. See Blanco 2020: 72-7 and the Foucault lecture on April 28, 1981 at the Catholic University of Louvain (Foucault 2014b).

matter of transgressing the realities of Plato's cave for the truth that lies outside it, for there is no definitive truth as a way to live and experience the self, others, and the world. Rather, it is to double and thus reframe the real through practices of equality and freedom, to create new fictions and experiences. Or, in a contronymic sense, new truths that loosen the boundaries of the normative self and the distribution of time and space that give a limited spatial-temporal experience to the *sans-part*. In a police order, space and time are as contronymic as this order's expression of freedom and equality or truth. For their inclusion is always at the same time an exclusion for the *sans-part*. Within an understanding of a presupposition of equality and freedom and the fictions they can create within a doubling of reality and the self, the semantics of the lexicon of a police logic can clearly be seen as unintentional irony within the enforced passivity of the *sans-part*.

In a 1977 interview with Lucette Finas on the first volume of the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault uses fiction as a verb when he speaks of how "One 'fictions' history" or "'fictions' a politics not yet in existence" (Foucault 1980: 193). Therefore, fictions are acts, just as doubling is. They are *erga* (the plural of *ergon*) that act against the fictions of the normative established as 'the' truth in the same way that Ranciere's bi-univocality aims to replace the meaning of the words semantically hijacked by a police logic. Thus, just as Foucault uses fiction as a verb, Rancière does likewise in his *On the Shores of Politics* with 'community', in the sense that he believes community, when shaped and defined by equality, "has no material substance. It is borne at each and every moment by someone for somebody else–from a potential infinity of others. It occurs but has no place" (Rancière 1995: 82). Community is, therefore, in Rancière's understanding of the word, a heterotopia: a world within worlds that is borne by *erga*. For as we can recall, for Ranciere, a presupposition of equality only functions when put into action. Therefore, community is a poetic space of creation where fictions are a verb, a way of putting something into action. This is the type of community that occurred within Gauny's somniloquies that complemented the poetic time and space of his somnambulism which created his double by his dissensual act of walking in the consensual space and time that his identity excluded him from. Both of these acts of reverie are forms of *parrhesia* situated in-between consensus and political revolution: "Political being-together," to return to *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, as quoted in Note 16 of Chapter 2 of this thesis, "is a being-between: between identities, between worlds" (Rancière 1999:137). Thus, Gauny's plebeian reverie opens up a dissensual community, one that places one world into another.

Through a synergy of Ranciere's and Foucault's respective practices, we can start to build up fictional lexicons that start to metamorphose into truth and create dissensual actions that in turn create fictions within the time and space of aesthetico-political dissensus. These fictions can help us to form different experiences of the world in different ways through an experimentation with a lexical variant of the major discourse, thus loosening the normative grip of consensual reality: words and things, space and time. To aid our understanding of lexical variants, we can turn to Deleuze's and Guattari's description of Franz Kafka's work as a minor literature.

9.4 Minor Literature and Poem-Lives

The 'in-betweeness' of an aesthetic revolution where someone like Gauny is both a worker and not a worker, is indicative of the *sans part* who are always somewhere in-between dissensus and consensus, much like people who are colonised and are somewhere in-between their language and culture and the language and culture of the colonisers. An example of this would be the writing of Kafka which Deleuze and Guattari describe in their *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1986 [1975]), a book which O'Leary mentions in his aforementioned *Foucault and Fiction*. Kafka was a member of the Jewish community living in Prague where the Czech language had given way to German, which allowed Kafka to utilise that which Deleuze and Guattari name a 'minor literature'. This is a literature that uses a variant of the major language, thus disrupting it (O'Leary 2009: 61).[21] Because of this disruption, according to Deleuze and Guattari, everything in "minor literatures [. . .] is political" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17). This is especially the case if we think of politics in Rancière's definition of the word as dissensus. Therefore, a 'minor literature' of sorts can be seen in Rancière's bi-univocality as a variant of the major language (the language of the consensus)–police, democracy, politics–that is used against the consensus by giving this language other meanings and thus making everything in this second and minor voice. This bi-univocality is like the minor literature Deleuze and Guattari highlight in a statement that resonates with the immanence of dissensus: "A minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language" (16). If we step out of the standard understanding of colonisation of one country colonising another, we can see that the *sans-part* as autochthon are always colonised themselves by normative identities, consensual semantics, a police logic of the distribution of

[21] There are many examples of this kind of literature: Deleuze and Guattari give the example of the African American transformation of English (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17).

the sensible, and economic exploitation.[22] Therefore, Gauny's writings, for example, act as an 'indigenous' minor literature, as he comes from an underprivileged background of not learning the major language well.[23] Then, through autodidactism, he creates a minor literature in the sense that it is a variant of the major language written in couplets and a biographical prose of emancipation. This variant also manifests as a verbal *parrhesia* in the form of somniloquies spoken in the poetics of anonymity under the cover of dusk: the time in-between day and night, in-between work and sleep. These lexical variants of bi-univocality and minor literature can lead to decolonisation in the poem-lives of fictions and semantic oppositions to the consensus where the *sans-part* become active rather than remain passive within the construction of words and things, lives and worlds. This takes us back to a quote in Chapter 8 taken from *The Method of Equality* where Rancière speaks of how in *The Nights of Labor* he showed "the appropriation of a kind of speech that is not public speech or poetic speech or novelistic speech," but "a speech regime that is a regime of dis-identification" (Rancière 2016a: 73). This regime of dis-identification accompanies those who live poem-lives. To use the same Weil essay quoted from in Chapter 8, and to apply Weil to Gauny and the paper lives of Rancière's research, we can state: "Workers need poetry more than bread. They need that their life should be a poem" (Weil 2003: 180).

Poem-lives is a term used by Foucault in his essay 'Lives of Infamous Men' (Foucault 2001c [1977]), which can be seen as an introduction to the book Foucault put together with the historian Arlette Farge.[24] This is an anthology of eighteenth-century *lettres de cachet de famille* from the Bastille archives–letters mostly written by scriveners for the illiterate that addressed to the king a wish for him to intervene in family and marital problems of various charges such as drunkenness, infidelity, theft, and the like. In the aforementioned essay, Foucault calls the lives of these infamous people–"these cobblers, these army deserters, these garment-sellers, these scriveners, these vagabond monks" (Foucault 2001c: 157)–'poem-lives' because in these archives their existence consisted of only "a handful of words" as "[s]ingular lives transformed into strange poems" (157). However, if we take the Greek word from which 'poem' derives, *poiesis*, which means 'to make', 'to create' (we can recall the Greek term *poiētēs* translated

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[22] Or as Derrida points out in his *Monolinguism of the Other: or, The Prosthesis of Origin* (1998 [1996]), we are all colonised by our own culture and language.

[23] Gauny states he learnt to speak badly due to his miserable education (Gauny 2017: 31) and bemoans the sorrows of the mutism of our uncultivated brains ("*chagrins envois dans le mutism de nos cervelles incultivées*" (215)).

[24] *Disorderly Families: Infamous Letters from the Bastille Archives* (Farge and Foucault 2016 [1982]).

above as *'creator'*), we can redefine poem-lives as lives that are lived by those who exist within an aesthetic revolution as a way of life, in which they live the transformations of their 'self' and the transgressions of dissensus as a means to create new lives and worlds within the consensus and in this sense their lives as poems are palinodes retracting prior ways of being and truth by speaking and living new truths.[25] Therefore, we can use 'poem-lives' as a descriptor of those who live the palinodic life of a *poiētēs* in creating fictions and using lexical variants in the poetic space of dissensus and a creative ontology, where a handful of words of auto-emancipation can help transform lives into strange poems, especially if we think of the normative's semantic peripheralisation of the non-normative as disorderly, unreasonable, mad, strange. This understanding takes us back to *The Method of Equality* where Rancière states that he has "always insisted on the fact that ontology is always in a way a poem [. . .]" (Rancière 2016a: 63). In other words, when we create our own ontology, it is a fiction and "never," as Rancière continues, "a discourse that tells the truth about difference" (63). Thus, what Rancière states his work offers "is more like a general poetics, a general theory about the multiple ways in which its possible to make the gap work" (63). Now whilst Rancière is specifically talking about, in the context of this interview, the gap between multiplicities that makes politics possible (62), we can think of this gap, in the context of this thesis, as existing in a life in-between conformity and violent opposition, and thus existing as the poetics of liminal transformation and transgression that make this gap work. When one exists in this gap by practices of equality and freedom, one is living an aesthetic revolution. We can recall from Chapter 3 that Rancière defines the aesthetic revolution as a shift in the understanding of art that accompanied the changes in European culture during and following the French Revolution in the form of the aesthetic regime and its space somewhere in-between art as life and the traditional understanding of art as separate from life. In other words, where life becomes an art form: life as art. Rancière sought to illustrate the continuation of this revolution in the individual paper lives of the emancipatory revenants of his archival work. However, in this thesis, there is a stress placed on an indefinite rather than a definite article before the term 'aesthetic revolution' as a means to not wish away but to remove any focus on this revolution as an event or advent that occurred in the 1790s and was played out in the nineteenth century by Rancière's

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[25] A palinode is a poem where the author retracts their view given in a prior poem. Plato's *Phaedrus* gives an example of a palinode by Socrates and Socrates also quotes Stesichorus' palinode on Helen of Troy (243a), the latter of which is believed to be the first recorded use of a palinode. Socrates states that Stesichorus lost his sight after speaking badly of Helen but regained his sight straight after writing the palinode (243b). Thus, by speaking the truth, Stesichorus was able to see clearly.

revenants and thus remains in the past as Rancière believes it does. Instead, the focus is placed on Rancière's definition of an aesthetic revolution as life as art, as transformation and transgression, as it was in Gauny's life.[26] In doing so, the connection between Rancière's aesthetico-politics (dissensus) and Foucault's ethico-politics (aesthetics of existence) becomes more overt and their synergy strengthens in the understanding of life as art. In this sense, Rancière and Foucault are saying the same thing, and in this sameness, equality and freedom fold into each other in *sunergos.*

In line with Rancière and Foucault, this thesis sees life as art, as an individual movement of being always on the way to emancipation in the balancing act of an aesthetic revolution that lies somewhere in-between consensus and political revolution: being a worker without being one. This askesis and poetic act of balance, is similar to the poet Seamus Heaney's balance which O'Leary quotes in his *Foucault and Fiction*: "The two contrary truths that drive Heaney, and that he tries to hold in a productive balance, are that, on the one hand, 'the efficacy of poetry is nil – no lyric has ever stopped a tank', and on the other hand, its efficacy is 'unlimited'" (O'Leary 2009: 27)". These comments are taken from a book by Heaney which has the rather apt title, in the context of this thesis, of *The Government of the Tongue* (Heaney 1989), which is what we could describe *parrhesia* as. It is in this balancing act of *poiesis*, of creation, expressed in an aesthetic revolution against a consensual space and time and a normative self, enacted by the (non-)action and spoken and written words of *parrhesia* that Rancière would call poetics in its horizon of truth,[27] that there is a certain unlimitedness that defies the critiques that Žižek makes against both Foucault and Rancière. However, this defiance would not come in a way that Žižek and other dialecticians would accept, as it involves the experiment of following the traces of a path of auto-emancipation in the space between the either/or narrative of good and evil. This is a narrative that lays a concrete path before us in paving stones of didactic instruction. It is a path that leads to ever deferred and non-existent ideals of equality and freedom, proffered as the beach beneath the paving stones[28] on which inequality and lack of freedom will be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge for the sea. At the same time, it offers a representation of

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[26] As such, this is not to say that Rancière's statement in a 2015 interview is incorrect: "The aesthetic revolution is something that belongs, and overwhelmingly so, to the past, which is not to say that its buried" (Rancière 2017k: 298). Rather, it is to focus on one aspect of this revolution (life as art) within its assimilation into this thesis's synergy.

[27] "[A]s I use it, 'poetics' designates an operation whose horizon is truth [. . .]" (Rancière 2017h: 58).

[28] This is a play on the May '68 slogan in France that refereed to the sand found underneath the paving stones that were taken and used to help build barricades: *Sous les pavés, la plage!* (Beneath the paving stones, the beach!).

'the poor' in a taxonomy in line with an ontology of identity, thus complicit with the fictions of a police logic and a normative regime of truth. In this sense, we can state, along with Weil: "It Is not religion but revolution which is the opium of the people" (Weil 2003: 181). In other words, revolutionary ideals of eschatology forever promising freedom and equality are the opiate of the masses, just as these promises are within the many nation states that are democratic in name only. Foucault and Rancière, like Socrates before them, do not offer didactic instruction and the opiate of false promises of ideals but a maieutics of sorts, helping an individual to work on themselves. Let us not forget that one meaning for the word *ergon* is 'work', which makes up part of the word *sunergos* that the term synergy etymologically stems from and means 'working together', just as working on oneself incorporates a human-being-together of communities, of *parrhesia*–"Too bad for you if you're tired!" as Rancière jokingly puts it (Rancière 2017c: 24). However, this maieutic approach does not occur by questioning an interlocutor as Socrates did, but by tracing an indeterminate path that allows a person via their own will and auto-emancipation to question their 'self': the 'self' as a question and a problem to itself, as the Augustine quote in Chapter 8 has it. It allows a person to question their own *bíos* and *alḗtheia*, and the world around them, and by doing so, constantly create and give birth to their own emancipatory way of life aided by the *maieuesthai* (midwifery) of the adumbrations given by Ranciere and by Foucault of *bíos kai praxis* (life and practice), life as a practice of equality and freedom.

Conclusion

This thesis has argued that a synergy of Rancière's practices of equality and Foucault's practices of freedom can offer an ongoing auto-emancipation from normative practices and the consensual distribution of social space and time. This thesis' original contribution to philosophy is the incipient bringing together of equality and freedom as practices and the opening up of new perspectives on Rancière's and Foucault's work. As a result of this research, equality and freedom can start to be thought of as compatible when cojoined in the form of practices, as can the work of Rancière and Foucault. In turn, the social impact of this thesis is that the path of emancipation that it traces can be adopted in a way of life as *amphíbios* (existence as a double): caring for both *zôion* and *bios* whilst existing somewhere in-between conformity and political revolution. Whilst this is a way of life for the individual, this form of emancipation also expands communally into other worlds of emancipatory non-identity, thus evading any polemics between communitarian positions and the atomism of liberal individualism. However, in this nascent stage of research regarding the innovation of connecting practices of equality and freedom, lots of space was needed to lay the foundation of Rancière's and Foucault's work before embarking on a synergy. In the space restrictions of this thesis, this meant there was a stronger focus on the individual than the community, leaving an expansion of the latter, in practices of equality and freedom, for the future. Therefore, rather than being a completed project, this thesis is, to a degree, a springboard for future research on practices of equality and freedom for both the emancipatory individual and the worlds they give rise to.

In critically engaging with the respective practices of Rancière and Foucault, this thesis has shown that there is a strong commonality to these practices as they are both aesthetic and autotelic forms of emancipation that expand communally in an agonistic and thus always ongoing auto-emancipation via *parrhesia* as dissensus and dissensus as *parrhesia*. In Part 1 of this thesis, after Chapter 1's fleshing out of Rancière's presupposition of equality, dissensus was shown to bridge the gap between aesthetics and politics, just as the democratic existent was shown to occupy the gap in-between conformity and political revolution. In this redefinition, emancipation is an ongoing and quotidian immanence, rather than a grand act of transcendence to a new social order. Therefore, Žižek's critique that Rancière's form of democratic politics was merely a determinate negation, was disputed as being an imposition of a Hegelian dialectic that equates to a negation of the negation, which for Rancière and Foucault, could lead to new social orders of domination in a perpetuation of hierarchy that manifests either totalitarian or

liberal oligarchies. May's less aggressive approach in his appropriation of Rancière's form of democratic politics via his Anarchist project was also disputed for being a following of the Enlightenment rationale of progress in its dialectic calling for an institutionalised democracy as a means to move away from a police order, albeit a tentative calling in May's 'agnostic' stance, as he puts it, regarding the institutionalisation of a presupposition of equality without notions of utopia. Both Žižek's and May's respective stances, however, were shown to be susceptible to Rancière's general attack against political philosophy as a whole: its didactic approach of dialectic deferral to an external telos and a collective emancipation where equality is seen as an ideal. In congruence with this attack, Chapter 2 highlighted how Žižek's and May's respective critiques seem to miss the agonistic relationship of police and politics that indirectly echoes Foucault's understanding of the agonism between normative practices and practices of freedom. In an aim to stress this agonistic coexistence by stipulating that politics is only ever dissensus and never consensus, this chapter illustrated how Rancière did not adopt the homonymy of political philosophy in defining key terms such as politics and democracy but applied them as bi-univocal terms to reframe a consensual reality and challenge its insistence on a univocal truth. For Rancière, politics exists within the agonistic coexistence of consensus and dissensus in-between conformity and the opposition of homonymic identities.

In avoiding homonymic terms, it was shown that Rancière also avoids multivocity's and identity politics' strategy of reclassification that proliferates subject identities and thus contributes to the legerdemain of the consensual order's thematic of individuality, that makes us believe we are ontologically free within the univocity of consensus. In applying bi-univocity, practices of equality do not proliferate subject taxonomy and its inequalities but aim for its demise via a declassification of the subject by not conforming to a police logic. Accordingly, practices of equality are not made up of identities claiming equality but of non-identities presupposing equality. In this declassification, it was illustrated that the focus is on practices of equality within the everyday as a means to oppose both the quotidian practices of the consensus and the violence of transcendent suppositions of new social orders. As such, the criticism by critics such as Patton that Rancière's form of emancipation is a utopianism because it lacks a template for democracy, was contested by highlighting that Rancière's offering of a democratic politics is one of an aesthetico-political autoemancipation that incorporates autodidactism as a way of life. Therefore, Chapter 3 focussed on Rancière's understanding of politics as aesthetics and aesthetics as politics by answering what it meant to enact politics and aesthetics under the concept of dissensus. In addressing this question, this chapter engaged with Rancière's

regimes of art, focussing on the aesthetic regime as an aesthetic dissensus that can suspend the consensual distribution of time and space. It is this suspension within the aesthetic regime or art, according to Rancière, that can lead to a new way of living by thinking about politics and aesthetics under the concept of dissensus. As such, it opens up an aesthetic creativity that Rancière names, adopting Schiller's term, 'free play'. It is this free play that illustrates an aesthetic revolution, according to Rancière, which is a revolution of sensible existence rather than the *coup d'état* of a political revolution. Art as the aesthetic regime, offers life as art, and for Rancière, enables the simultaneity of politics and aesthetics, which this thesis named, in its synergy, transgression and transformation. In this simultaneity, life can become a form of art within the creativity of manifesting new worlds and new ways to exist in an auto-emancipation. Chapter 3 also contested Tanke's critique that Rancière's practice of emancipation was wanting due to its lack of engagement with the imagination as an aesthetic form of creation. In contesting this critique, this thesis was able to stress again that Rancière's focus is always on acts of equality and not systemisations of the imagination or will. Within this focus, he offers a poetics and aesthetics in a stress on dissensus and a suspension of the sensible rather than directly examining the imagination, as it detracts from the focus on lived practices of a presupposition of equality. This lack of focus on imagination, as Tanke points out, sets Rancière apart from other thinkers such as Kant, Schiller, Hegel, and the Romantics, who equated aesthetics and the imagination with freedom.

Lastly, in Part 1, Chapter 4 laid the ground for Part 3 and its illustration of Gauny's life as one led by practices of equality and freedom. It did so, by engaging with the background of Rancière's archival work and of Gauny's life in nineteenth-century Paris. This chapter was somewhat problematic, as the key focus of this thesis and its word restriction did not allow for a fuller engagement with the social history in France at the time of Gauny's life. Therefore, whilst this chapter is open to a critique of being somewhat of a broad historical sweep, it is important to understand that this history was framed in the context of Rancière's archival work and Gauny's life and work rather than as a complete truth. Thus, within the constraints that it faced, the brevity of this chapter is justified by its necessity.

To aid a comprehension of practices of equality, Foucault's understanding of *parrhesia* and an ethics of the self were laid over Rancière's path of emancipation in the form of an ontological map offering signposts along the way. To enable this cartography, Part 2 critically engaged with the work of Foucault. The first chapter of Part 2, Chapter 5, worked through Foucault's archaeology and genealogy to provide a foundation for understanding his practices of freedom

as a means of emancipation for the individual from discursive and non-discursive practices stemming from a normative knowledge, truth, and power. It did so, by focusing on Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*, *The Order of Things*, *Discipline and Punish*, and the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*. In working through Foucault's archaeology and genealogy, his practices of freedom were outlined as a means to spin out of the tautology of resistance involving identity politics where the very identities imposed upon the normative subject are adopted in a resistance that perpetuates normative taxonomies. This outline highlighted Foucault's understanding of freedom as agonistic rather than dialectic and used Rancière's term of a 'presupposition' of equality to qualify the binary of power and agonism that Foucault worked from as stemming from a 'presupposition' of freedom, even though Foucault does not specifically use this term. For Foucault, via this agonism, a subject can exist in a form of being objectified whilst still creating their own subjectivities. This was tied into Gauny's existence as a double–both worker and poet, which this thesis described as living 'both' (*amphi*) kinds of 'life' (*bíos*): a life of consensus focussed on the needs of *zôion*–a biological life entangled in the socio-control of bio-politics as 'bare life'–and a life of aesthetic revolution focussed on *bíos* defined as a way of life. This then led to an engagement with Foucault's exploration of *epimeleia heautou* (care of the self) that he draws his ontology of freedom from in search of an aesthetics of existence as an enabler of new subjectivities. By drawing on Rancière and Gauny, a distinct account of agonism, as Foucault describes it, is created in terms of *amphíbíos*, thus suturing practices of equality and freedom together within an understanding of life as a double.

Chapter 6 engaged with Foucault's *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* and its highlighting of the diminishment of a care of the self by Christianity's morality of codes deriving from a hermeneutics of the self and later morphing into a pastoral power within governmentality. In calling for a re-emergence of *epimeleia heautou* in his focus on an aesthetics of existence, Foucault calls for an ethics of the self in an understanding of truth as transformation by aesthetic knowledge rather than a knowledge of the self. This incorporates a shift from seeing philosophy as purely academic, to seeing it as a way of life and thus shifting from intellectual knowledge to spirituality which involves the postulation that truth is something to carry out as a practice. It was illustrated in Chapter 6 that truth as a practice is the unlearning *(de-discere)* of normative practices imposed by the modern soul, as Foucault names it, that is the prison of the body as a correlative of technologies of power. This unlearning is facilitated by *sibi vacare* (making oneself vacant for oneself) in the sense of making time for *epimeleia heautou* where a care of one's 'self' is a care of the practices of the self, much like Gauny made time for his practices with his

cenobitic economy. It was shown that within a care of the self, truth is seen as transformation and not an essence as it is depicted by a knowledge of the self that underpins normative taxonomies. With *de-discere* and *sibi vacare*, a constitutive instability of objectification and subjectivation emerges as an individual transforms, according to Foucault, the ethical substance of normative subjectivities to new subjectivities in a connection of subjectivity and truth, in that which this thesis termed in Chapter 6 as an autophagy of the (modern) soul. This is not a call to jettison a knowledge of the self, however, but a call for a joining of knowledge of the self and care of the self as *epistēmē* and *meletē* (knowledge and exercise) as an *áskēsis* to shift from normative practices. In this *áskēsis*, as Chapter 6 stated, freedom coexists with power within an agonistic relationship and can thus be seen, like Rancière's equality, as a presupposition.

This thesis argued that in Foucault's call for making time for a care of the self, he did not address equality in his offering of practices of freedom; the examples he gave of a care of the self were only used by the affluent of the Greco-Roman world he drew from, thus pointing to the luxury of time being a precondition for this care. The nearest Foucault gets to addressing this is in his turn away from Stoicism to Cynicism, but this can be seen as Foucault's turn against Stoicism's universalism and a transcendence of the self rather than engaging with this purported precondition. This thesis' synergy negated this lack by pointing out that a reflection on Rancière's archival work–Gauny's life, and the lives of other archival revenants–illustrates that those without time could take time for a care of the self by occupying the duration allotted to rest with autodidactic activities and by creating more free time with a cenobitic economy. It pointed out that this economy acts as a strong allegory for the contemporary need to extract oneself from the belief in neoliberal ideals offered as the good life, and the accruement of debt and the work ethic needed to achieve neoliberalism's definition of happiness by being an entrepreneur of oneself, as Foucault put it. In carving out aspects of Gauny's life as a care of the self in a synergy of practices of equality and freedom, this thesis was able to affirmatively answer the very necessary question that Foucault never asked: Can those without the time that privilege brings engage in a care of the self? That being said, as this thesis has stated, Foucault was not offering Stoicism in his care of the self, and the understanding of the ability of all to care for the self is implicit in Foucault's work.

Chapter 7 engaged with *parrhesia* and Cynicism via Foucault's 1983 lecture series at Berkeley and his last two lecture series at the Collège de France: *The Government of the Self and Others* Volumes 1 and 2. *Parrhesia*, as Foucault portrays it, is a means to rupture consensual reality

with the courage to speak against a regime of truth and to live alternative practices within an emancipatory way of life. This thesis thus described *parrhesia* as dissensus in Rancière's understanding of the word, as *parrhesia* consists not only of spoken and written words but of action and non-action. The antonymous tension between *parrhesia* and *isegoria* (the legal right for a citizen to speak their own opinion) was portrayed as Rancière's understanding of the antonymy between dissensus and consensus respectively, as *isegoria* was a nominal free speech because only those who had the luxury of time to attend to politics could speak at a political assembly and only those possessing logos were heard. Thus, *isegoria* corresponds to what Rancière calls a passive and received equality and *parrhesia* corresponds to an active equality, or, in the case of Foucault's work, an active freedom where *isegoria* is a passive freedom as part of the bare liberty that allows certain acts of freedom such as *parrhesia* to exist. Accordingly, *parrhesia* was also portrayed in Chapter 7 as analogous to the politics of the *demos* in Rancière's bi-univocal understanding of politics. Rancière's offering of the *demos* was used to supplement Foucault's lack of a political body in his work. With this supplement, *parrhesia* can be seen as politics in Rancière's sense of the word. By putting together the definitions these thinkers respectively give to *parrhesia* and politics, this thesis gathered a wider understanding of their form of dissensus within an aesthetic revolution of emancipation. *Parrhesia*, through action and non-action as well as speech and silence, was defined as *ergon* (action, activity, work), the latter word making up part of the etymology of the term 'synergy' used in this thesis to state the aim of bringing together practices of equality and freedom. The term derives from *sunergos* meaning 'working together': *sun*-together + *ergon*-work. Thus, *parrhesia* is a working together of the *sans-part* as it is a dissensus for the individual in an emancipation from normative subjectivities and narratives that expands communally into heterotopias, as illustrated in Gauny's life via a community of like-minded emancipators. *Parrhesia* as an ethics of the self as a dissensual politics creates a space that suspends but does not transcend the consensus and thus powers an aesthetic revolution that engages with government indirectly by engaging with the government of the self that Foucault names *alethurgy*: the connection between *autos* (self)/subjectivity and truth where *bíos* becomes truth in the latter's manifestation as a way of life.

In turning to *parrhesia* and the Cynics we were able to see, in Foucault's work, that tying subjectivity to *praxis* could be a means to counter the productive subjectification of discursive and non-discursive practices. The Cynics served as a link between Rancière's and Foucault's practices: Rancière examined the Diogenes of Gauny within a cenobite economy and Foucault

examined a militant Diogenes who aimed to change the world. However, the thesis has shown that neither Foucault nor Gauny were followers of Cynicism *per se*, as the prior saw it as carnivalesque in its extremities and telos of a city of sages, and the latter as a limited perspective, quite possibly because it believed in poverty as a virtue. Linking Rancière's understanding of dissensus and disagreement and a bi-univocal politics and democracy with *parrhesia* helped clarify the latter as a dissensual tool to be used against the rhetoric of the consensus (*parrhesia* transforms whilst rhetoric merely persuades) and against the normative objectification of our consensual self. Likewise, this linkage revealed dissensus, in Rancière's understanding of the term, as parrhesiastic in its (non-)actions and in its written and spoken words. This connection of parrhesia and dissensus in Part 2 laid the ground for Part 3 and a synergy of practices of equality and freedom.

Part 3 consisted of two chapters, both of which offered a synergy of practices of equality and freedom. The first chapter focussed on Gauny's emancipatory way of life and expanded on its exemplification of Rancière's practices of equality by illustrating its exemplification of practices of freedom that reveal Gauny to be a *parrhesiates*, and in doing so, opened up *parrehessia* as a nexus for practices of equality and freedom. By exemplifying Gauny as a *parrhesiates* who lived by practices of equality and freedom, this thesis traced the path of an emancipatory way of life that is enacted by the individual in their own way. To aid this adumbration, Chapter 9 intertwined Rancière's and Foucault's respective uses of fiction as a means to oppose the normative fiction of the consensus that is represented as the truth. This tied into the lived experiment of emancipatory lives that can lead to new ways of experiencing the 'self', the world, others, and truth. It was then shown that bi-univocal terms can act as a support to new fictions as a variant of a normative discourse and thus a disidentification from the taxonomy of the consensus and its distribution of time and space. These terms can aid a minor literature that facilitates the forming of poem lives (palinodic lives of creation) by the disruption of the consensus. This is something that needs to be further engaged with in future research on the forming of communities by practices of equality and freedom within an active construction of other lives and worlds.

To sum up, this thesis has stressed that the key to emancipating the self from both normative subjectivities and a hierarchical space and time, is not a care of the self, but a care of practices of the self: practices of equality and freedom. Caring for these practices will enable them to embed themselves within us as a way of life, and in doing so, they will transgress and transform

the normative self and how it relates to the socio-space and time in which it exists. In creating a synergy of these practices, this thesis had three key areas of focus: the value of a 'self-tutelage' (an authority over and instruction of oneself) within an autodidactism over and above the didactic instruction of the consensus, the necessity of an 'autotelic approach' (*autotelēs*) so that these practices happen now in everyday lives rather than being deferred to a transcendent ideal never to arrive, and how individual practices expand communally by creating other social spaces–heterotopias–and other forms of social time–heterochronies. These areas of focus raised the following questions: Why is self-tutelage necessary for this form of emancipation? How do individuals create 'other lives' of emancipation by autotelic practices rather than the external telos of ideals? How do they form 'other worlds' by individual practices within an existing world? The answers, which are briefly summarised in this chapter, in sum, all led to answering the question of how to live practices of equality and freedom as a way of life. However, in stressing these three key areas, it would have been ironic to proffer them as the answer to the question of how to live these practices, as the steps that an individual takes along the path that this synergy traces are always their own, even though individual acts of emancipation expand into communities, as Part 3 of this thesis illustrated. As such, this thesis has stressed that practices of freedom and equality always need to be modified and re-negotiated by the individual amidst emergent needs of emancipation within an autarchy–*autarkēs* ('self'-sufficiency). Therefore, there is no answer as to how to live these practices, only a direction to follow traced by the three themes above. Thus, the synergy that this thesis offers is an ontological gesture towards an existence that is always on the way to emancipation, an emancipation never to be reached or possessed but always to be practiced in experiences and experiments that are not deferred but happen in the present in the conjoining of life and practice–*bíos kai praxis*. In this way, this synergy encourages further research and lived experiences of these aesthetic practices in the *heuriskein* (finding, discovering) of paths of auto-emancipation.

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