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Althusser and ideological criticism of the arts

RICHARD ELDRIDGE

Louis Althusser's 1970 essay "Ideology and ideological state apparatuses"¹ is arguably the most influential and important document in contemporary critical practice and its theory. In one way this is puzzling, for the essay contains almost nothing that can be recognized as an argument. It does not put forward a causal theory of the rise and fall of forms of social life. It offers no deductions, and it contains only a few sketchily described examples of ideologies. The essay is instead filled with oracular pronouncements, couched in a terminology partly invented and partly cobbled together from the Marxist tradition and from Lacan.

Yet there it is. Althusser's work receives more extended discussion – thirty-five consecutive pages, plus numerous occasional references – in Fredric Jameson's 1981 *The Political Unconscious*,² perhaps the most important American text in so-called New Historicist criticism, than any of the literary works Jameson considers except Conrad's *Lord Jim*. Althusser is the principal subject of the longest chapter in Rosalind Coward and John Ellis's 1977 *Language and Materialism*,³ itself one of the principal theoretical works of so-called cultural materialist criticism in England, and the discussion of "Ideology and ideological state apparatuses" is the centerpiece of that chapter. Terry Eagleton observes that in this essay "Althusser has taught us to regard... [the] misperceptions [of] the infantile narcissist of the Lacanian mirror stage... as an indispensable structure of all ideology,"⁴ where ideology is omnipresent. By allusion the essay appears in hundreds of titles such as *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, *The Romantic Ideology*, *Aesthetics and the Ideology of Form*, *Ideology and Imagination in the Victorian Novel*, and so on. Teachers and students of literature will readily recognize the game of "hunt the ideology" – ferreting out an author's necessary but unconscious

reinforcements (“reinscriptions” they are often called) of various forms of class domination – that is typically played in advanced literary classrooms. In the criticism of the visual arts, critics such as John Barrell are now busy unmasking the traditional seductions of artistic form and its connoisseurship, instead focusing on, for example, Constable’s implicit simultaneous acknowledgment and devaluing of the existence and importance of displaced agricultural laborers, often represented in miniature in the foreground or background of his landscape paintings. “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses” is the essay of Althusser’s that is included in Adams and Searle’s anthology *Critical Theory Since 1965*, where Althusser’s work is said to be “much used by literary theorists” and where we are told that this is “one of Althusser’s most influential essays.”⁵ A recent critical obituary of Althusser calls “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses” Althusser’s “single most influential text.”⁶ Together with the work of Raymond Williams, Althusser’s writings are the most decisive theoretical influence in the development of British cultural materialism. Together with the work of Foucault, they are the most decisive theoretical influence in American New Historicism. Insofar as cultural materialism, New Historicism, and politicized Lacanism have themselves affected feminism, Althusser’s work forms much of the theoretical basis of advanced feminist criticism as well. “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses” is the most general articulation of a critical sensibility for which ideology is all-important and economic theory largely irrelevant. The essay has both helped to form that sensibility, directly and indirectly, and given it powerful expression where it exists on its own.

Yet, to repeat: “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses” offers very little that can be recognized as an argument. Such premises and assumptions as it relies on and urges are far from being readily acceptable starting points that then lead us to more interesting conclusions. They are not always even readily intelligible. What are we to make of this situation?

The most plausible initial guess to understand the influence and importance for criticism of “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses” is that the essay, despite its turgidity and lack of argumentation, somehow expresses a view of human life that contemporary academic critics of literature and the arts find to be compelling on its own. Hence investigating Althusser’s essay to tease out this view promises not only to elucidate Althusser, but also to help us to bring to consciousness a conception of human life that is dominant

within critical studies in our time. Having such a view before us explicitly, we can then begin to think all at once about topics that will emerge as deeply interconnected: how Althusser's view might be criticized, what the shape of critical studies might be other than ideology criticism, and what general views about human life and its prospects of social expression or development are plausible for us.

ALTHUSSER AND HUMAN SUBJECTIVITY

"Ideology and ideological state apparatuses" elaborates four inter-related theses. "Ideology has no history" (239B); "Ideology represents the imaginary relation of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (241A); "Ideology has a material existence" (242B); and "my central thesis: Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects" (244A). Each of these theses helps to establish the meanings and uses of "ideology" in Althusser's analysis of culture, cultural production, and cultural reproduction, where, as he notes, ideology is "a reality which needs a little discussion" (239A). Two of these theses – the first and third, on the lack of history and the material existence of ideology – draw on and are best explicated in terms of a Marxist theory of history. The other two – the second and fourth, on the relations between individuals and ideology – also draw on terms and ideas from Lacanian psychoanalysis. Of all these theses, the second is the most fully summary statement of Althusser's view of human life. "Ideology represents the imaginary relations of individuals to their real conditions of existence." Here we are told just how ideology always mediates between individuals and reality. Understanding how and why this mediation always takes place, according to Althusser, is necessary for understanding what it means to say that art is ideological or that artistic and literary works always reinscribe ideologies.

But this thesis – "Ideology represents the imaginary relation of individuals to their real conditions of existence" – drawing together the Marxist and Lacanian strands of the essay, uses terms ("imaginary," "real," "ideology") that themselves stand in need of explication. What are the imaginary and the real for Althusser? What is ideology that it has no history and yet has a material existence? Just what does the summary thesis say? It is best to begin by thinking about Marx.

To say that ideology has no history and has a material existence, or elsewhere, as Althusser puts it, that ideology "has no history of its

own" (240B) and that "its history is outside it" (240A), is in the first instance to say that philosophical idealism is false. Or, as Marx himself puts it in the 1859 Preface to *A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*, "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."⁷ In history agents conceive of things in various ways and form various plans of life that lead to action. Culture seems to result from the accumulated actions of individual, intentional agents. But in fact this appearance is deeply misleading, for agents form their ideas and plans of life only by taking up conceptions and possibilities of life that their cultures have made available to them, and cultures in turn are shaped by economic forces and relations. How we produce and reproduce the conditions of human life, both what forces or powers of production are available to us and the social relations through which these forces are deployed, largely determine what we will think and do. "Ideology, then, is for Marx an imaginary assemblage (*bricolage*), a pure dream, empty and vain, constituted by the 'day's residues' from the only full and positive reality, that of the concrete history of concrete material individuals materially producing their existence. It is on this basis that ideology has no history" (240A).

The most systematic development of a Marxist conception of history is in G. A. Cohen's *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence*. Where Althusser is, at best, difficult, Cohen is startlingly clear. It is instructive therefore to compare Althusser's conception of the determination of culture with Cohen's account of Marx's views. Using the 1859 Preface as the centerpiece of his interpretation, Cohen ascribes two central theses to Marx: "(a) The productive forces tend to develop throughout history (the Development Thesis); and (b) The nature of the production relations of a society is explained by the level of development of its productive forces (the Primacy Thesis proper)."⁸ Productive forces are human capacities and powers to shape or work natural materials so as to satisfy human needs, both biologically given and created. They grow principally through the growth of "productively useful science,"⁹ which is then put to use in technological innovation, though this is not the only means of growth of productive power: growth in population, for example, will produce increased labor power. The level of development of the productive forces may be gauged by measuring their capacity to produce a surplus of humanly useful goods, over and above the holdings of goods (including machines and machine tools themselves) that

existed prior to their deployment. The development thesis states not simply that the productive forces *have* grown throughout history, but rather that they have a *universal tendency* to grow. That tendency may be inhibited on occasion, but not too often (for it would then be implausible to see it at work in history), and when the productive forces do grow, they must grow not “for a miscellany of uncoordinated reasons,”¹⁰ but rather because it is, as it were, in their nature, or their nature in relation to human nature, to grow.

Cohen argues in favor of the Development Thesis by making two further claims, one historical and one a set of premises about human nature. The historical claim is that by and large productive forces have grown. “Societies rarely replace a given set of productive forces by an inferior one.”¹¹ So far this might be true, but the result merely of accident or of political decisions autonomously taken by agents or groups, not the result of an autonomous tendency toward growth on the part of the productive forces. The premises about human nature then take us from the historical facts to the existence of a tendency. Those premises are that human beings exist in situations of relative scarcity (not all their wants are readily satisfied), that they are capable of recognizing their wants, and that they are intelligent enough to develop new means to satisfy the wants they have recognized.¹² It might be that these facts about human nature obtained, but did not regularly result in the growth of the productive forces, for the ability of human beings to develop means of satisfying their wants might be regularly inhibited by their pursuit of other interests. But the historical claim shows that this has not in fact happened. The productive forces have generally grown, and they have grown autonomously, in the face of whatever other interests human beings have had, so that we are entitled to conclude that there is an autonomous tendency for them to grow.

The Development Thesis, now established, is then used as part of the argument for the Primacy Thesis. Relations of production are social relations through which productive powers are deployed. People work, deploying productive forces, as serfs giving up part of their product to the lord, or as slaves, or as laborers selling their labor-power in return for a wage. People receive goods produced through the use of the productive powers variously as serfs, slaves, or workers, lords, masters, or owners. The Primacy Thesis then states that the existence of a given set of productive relations – master–slave; lord–serf; owner–worker – is explained by the level of development of the productive forces. A given set of productive relations will come to inhibit the autonomous tendency of the productive forces to

grow. For example, the continual use of slave labor to extract luxury products will inhibit the investment of the social surplus in new technology. When that happens, then, given that the productive forces are tending to grow, that set of relations of production will disappear in favor of a new set of relations under which maximum growth of productive power can take place. There are, as Marx puts it, correspondences between social forms and productive ones. And these correspondences must result from the selection constraint exercised on relations of production by the productive forces, for the tendency of the productive forces to grow is *autonomous*.¹³

A similar sort of selection is then exercised by the relations of production on ideas. Classes, or groups of people producing or receiving goods under definite social roles, through which they struggle for goods with members of other classes, “are receptive to whatever ideas are likely to benefit them.”¹⁴ Hence classes will either develop or select from independently available candidates the sets of ideas about appropriate life plans, political arrangements, religious duties, gender roles, and so on that will increase the share of the social product that their members will receive. These ideas will be their ideology. The ruling class, the class which owns or controls the deployment of the forces of production, will have the ability to propagate its ideas most effectively and will be able to develop religious, political, educational, and cultural institutions that will both reflect and inculcate them. While it may be possible for political, religious, educational, or artistic ideas to arise spontaneously, such ideas will not be effective in shaping either social relations of production or social institutions unless they suit the material interests of the current ruling classes or perhaps their nascent successors.

In the long run, Cohen argues, human productive powers will have increased under capitalism to such an extent, giving us such an ability to satisfy human needs, that it will then be manifestly unreasonable for workers any longer to accept the curse of toil in exchange for relatively meager wages. Capitalism “cannot realize the possibilities of liberation it creates. It excludes liberation by febrile product innovation, huge investment in sales and advertising, contrived obsolescence. It brings society to the threshold of abundance and locks the door. For the promise of abundance is not an endless flow of goods but a sufficiency produced with a minimum of unpleasant exertion.”¹⁵ Once this contradiction between promise and its inhibition is manifest, the expropriators will be expropriated and capitalist relations of production will be done away with.

In comparison with Cohen’s classical, teleological Marxism,

Althusser's Marxism is distinctively structural and anti-teleological. Where Cohen sees productive forces autonomously tending to develop and through their development tending further to lead toward a society of human freedom, Althusser sees continuing class struggle, without end, and continuing frustrations of human freedoms, in various ways. "Superstructures," or educational, religious, juridical, and cultural institutions that reproduce class relations by propagating class identities, Althusser writes, "are never seen to step aside respectfully [in favor of a non-class society of equal freedom] when their work is done. . . From the first moment to the last, the lonely hour of the 'last instance' never comes."¹⁶ In place of Cohen's optimism and claim that the forces of production tend autonomously (and beneficently) to grow, we find Althusser's pessimism and sense of the continuing force of political, superstructural relations and institutions. Indeed, in the context of France in the 1960s, when bureaucratic communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe was still apparently strong and expansionist, the sort of optimistic, beneficent forces of production Marxism that Cohen later elaborated from Marx's texts in the 1970s might well have seemed both historically inaccurate and dangerous. In such a context, economic determinism may well have seemed to point toward forced development under five-year plans. Alternatively, and perhaps more likely given Althusser's affiliation with the French Communist Party, it may have seemed important to explain why the communists had not come to power, why republican political institutions had not altered, in industrialized France. It may well have seemed important then to emphasize that political arrangements resist full determination by the forces of production, even while remaining in some sense "in the last instance" subordinated to them. Althusser's effort was hence to find a way between philosophical idealism, humanism, and voluntarism, on the one hand, and forces of production determinism, on the other. "Central to Althusser's work is his concern to provide an account of the social totality which avoids a crude economic determinism and allows for the effectivity of the superstructures whilst at the same time retaining a notion of determination by the base in the 'last instance.'" ¹⁷

Althusser's central move in navigating between idealist voluntarism and economic determinism is to introduce the notion of the *overdetermination* of superstructural ideas and institutions. Not only are these ideas and institutions conditioned by economic life, they also display a kind of structural or internal causality. Certain ideas

and institutions logically require further ideas and institutions for their existence and intelligibility. Just as, for example, the concepts “adult” and “child” are internally related, in that each is essentially defined and explained in terms of the other, so the concepts “property owner” and “plaintiff in a civil suit,” together with all their surrounding institutions, are internally related. What it is to sue for damages must be explained in terms of what it is to own property, and what it is to own property must be explained, among other things, in terms of what it is to be able legitimately to defeat such suits, to be able to claim protection from theft, and so forth. A *structural causality* obtains among these concepts. There is a clear sense in which property owners and plaintiffs, and the institutions under which they exist, are what they are by virtue of their internal relations, and not only by virtue of the development of the productive forces. According to Althusser, this overdetermination – internal, structural causality in addition to conditioning by economic life – gives to superstructural ideas and institutions a kind of partial autonomy or effectivity.¹⁸ The cost, however, of introducing this notion of overdetermination, avoiding both idealist voluntarism and economic determinism, is that there seems to be no room left for any source or agency of change. If not from accumulated acts of individual will, and if not from the autonomous tendency of the forces of production to grow, then from what are transformations in social structures to come? Althusser “seems better placed to account for the persistence of a structure than for transition and change.”¹⁹ A certain pessimism, favoring the sublimities of detached understanding of social life as it stands over solidarity and substantive transformation, results, it seems, from the move between idealist voluntarism and economic determinism.

Human beings thus live under the necessity of producing and reproducing their material conditions of existence. This necessity is lived out under a further necessity of having some structured social arrangements or other, within which there is always relative domination, as those with the responsibility of enforcing a social order must always have rights and powers that are denied to others. And it is at this *social level*, where distinct social classes with distinct but internally related rights and powers face off against one another, that the formation of human ideals is materially conditioned. “Material,” in Althusser’s writing, thus means not “pertaining to the forces of production or to physical nature and our powers to rearrange it,” but rather “pertaining to the way in which *within a structured system of*

opposed classes people produce and reproduce their conditions of existence.”

All this is taken for granted in “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses,” not argued for. Althusser insistently emphasizes the importance in human history not of forces of production, but of relations of production, class relations. These insistences amount to a kind of litany about reality. The ways in which individuals think of their lives “in the last analysis arise from the relations of production, and from relations arising from the relations of production” (242A). “The reality in question [out of which ideology is constituted]... is indeed, in the last resort, the reproduction of the relations of production and of the relations deriving from them” (249A). “Ideologies are ‘born’... from the social classes at grips in the class struggle: from their conditions of existence, their practices, their experience of the struggle” (250B). Opposition to forces of production Marxism, coupled with Marxist opposition to idealism, has here led to relations of production Marxism.

Althusser’s skepticism about the possibility of a society of full and equal human freedom, let alone as the appointed destiny of humanity through the growth of its productive powers, is further partly expressed in considerations drawn from Lacan’s accounts of the formation of conscious and self-conscious human subjects. Lacan describes not the dismissal or disappearance of the human subject, but rather a decentered, emergent, and internally self-opposed human subject, yet for all that a subject nonetheless. For Althusser, the human subject as Lacan describes it will be the subject of ideology, that is, the person who necessarily has some ideology or other, some form of false consciousness.

Lacan’s principal interest as a psychoanalyst is in the material of the analytic situation, in what patients say in recounting their dreams, fantasies, wishes, obsessions, and so forth. On the basis of his encounters with this material from various patients in analysis, and developing from his reading of Freud, Lacan is led to posit the existence of an order or register or mode of human experience, prior to the entry of the human subject into language, discursive consciousness, and self-consciousness.²⁰ This initial order of experience, the imaginary, is characterized above all by *immediacy*. There is no subject–object differentiation, no awareness of one’s own body as one’s own, as a home for a subject, and no subject–subject differentiation. Here there is no desire for specific objects, for there is no awareness of objects as objects, but only a generalized *lack* of

completeness of being, a generalized, uncomprehended, and unconceptualized dependence on a world one knows not. Specific and self-conscious subjectivity then emerges through two stages of development: first through the formation of an *imago* or image of a brighter, better, wholer self whom one wishes to be, formed at the age of six to eight months, as one experiences one's mirror image as this wholer, more complete *imago*, and secondly through entry, continuously effected from the ages of about one year to two-and-a-half, into the symbolic order of language, wherein one becomes able to conceptualize and name objects, and hence able as a now self-conscious subject to desire specific things. Lacan emphasizes two features of this course of development, two related modes of loss of contact with reality that occur within it. Within this course of development, the self-conscious subject who is coming into existence loses contact with and represses both the pre-linguistic subject of the *lack* and the world as it is (a world not of discrete objects, but an undifferentiated world that mysteriously induces and remedies lacks – this might be called “Mother” some day). These two separations – from preconscious subjectivity and from a material world that is preobjectual – are necessary for the development of explicitly human propositional or judgmental consciousness or subjectivity. To be able to say or judge that here is an F, and so to experience the world as objectual, one must be able to deploy a structured system of internally related signifiers. What one then says or judges within the symbolic order of signification will then be overdetermined, just as in Althusser superstructural ideas and institutions are overdetermined. For Lacan, all human utterances within the symbolic order are both pressured or conditioned by prelinguistic material needs on the part of subjects and structured or internally determined by the internal relations among concepts and expressions that are present in a particular language. (These are valuable points against computational linguistics and scientific semantics.)

The conscious subject thus comes to be in separation from what there really is: from both its own preconscious, deep subjectivity, and from reality as it is preconsciously experienced and genuinely is. What the now conscious subject or ego then explicitly desires will hence always be an inadequate, too specific substitute for the fulfillment of a more primordial and still deeply persistent lack. The object of desire will now be specifically conceived of and named (constructed) in the terms set by a culture, more or less arbitrarily, given the fluid nature of reality in itself. The real, according to Lacan,

is a set of linguistically constructed objects of desire, and “the real” that is thus constructed is not what there really is. What one then desires is never fully one’s own, never the primordial, sometime lack-filling reality that was once sought and is still sought, at least by the being whom one most deeply is. The unconscious, the locus of this primordial lack, is what is left over and repressed in this course of development. It is material from this part of the subject, the unconscious, that then surfaces in the material of the analytic situation, the patient’s dream reports, wishes, fantasies, and obsessions, as well as always covertly pressuring even more routine and conventionalized utterances.

What Lacan calls the *Spaltung* (splitting) of the subject or the division of the subject. . . results from the fact that he speaks and from the fact of his insertion into the symbolic order. By mediating himself in his discourse, the subject in effect destroys the immediate relation of self to self, and constructs himself in language. . . as he wishes to see himself, as he wishes to be seen, and thereby alienates himself in language.

This is the best way of conceiving the establishing of an unconscious. If the image the subject makes of himself for himself is a lure, then his desire will be lost in its real implication to his consciousness and will be conveyed in a demand (that is, in spoken discourse and in accordance with the exigencies of Culture) in which it will be only a metonymy of itself.²¹

Lacan’s views about subject development are of considerable use in illuminating all at once the fragility of our life with language, our buried creative potentials for transforming routinized expressive systems, and analogies between the resistances of artists to routinized systems of expression and the utterances and behaviors of neurotics. As a general theory of human subjectivity, however, these views also have distinct weaknesses. They tend first toward an odd mix of Cartesian individualism about a deep prelinguistic self and Heraclitean materialism about reality, encouraging peculiar and implausible conceptions of a deep self and of a fluid reality as non-emergent, primordial, and subject to repression through the processes of subject construction. It is as though Lacan were arguing that a person who is lost in the dark and then acquires a flashlight becomes thereby less fully herself and less fully in contact with reality than prior to acquiring the flashlight. Since such a person can now with the flashlight identify discrete objects through the darkness, such a person has now lost contact with a pre-flashlight, groping subjectivity and with the “reality” of obscure things in darkness. Second, Lacan’s views about subject development are not in the first instance distinctly political. For Lacan, it is language in general, any language,

accession to which involves repression of preconscious subjectivity. Repression is not in the first instance a matter of living under a specifically unjust political system or set of social arrangements, and its undoing, in so far as it is at least partly possible, is more immediately a matter for private psychoanalytic therapy than for public political action. Third, Lacan's normative views about human subjectivity, in his orientations toward the private and the preconscious, are thin and implausible. It is for him a necessary truth that in entering into any language or system of expression, one is forced "to misconstrue the particular meaning of [one's] life in false communication,"²² that is, to distort and betray one's prelinguistic subjectivity. "We get used to the real. The truth we repress."²³ As a result, since we do this, the way forward is an always impossible way back toward prelinguistic subjectivity rather than toward articulate expressiveness.

Althusser's views are nowadays often presented as merely derivative from the deeper views of Lacan. It is Lacan, not Althusser, Coward and Ellis write, who "demonstrates the construction of the subject in language. . . .Lacan's concept of 'the imaginary' is a more subtle instrument for understanding this process"²⁴ of subject formation than Althusser's theory of ideology. "It is only with [Lacan's] theory of the subject [- not Althusser's -] that Marxism can move towards a destruction of the division between subject and object, which underlies its [deplorable] return to idealist thought."²⁵ In fact, however, it is current critical, politicized Lacanism that derives much of its appeal from Althusser and the Marxist tradition, not the other way around. It is Althusser's account of the partial autonomy of superstructural ideas and institutions, themselves structured like a language by internal relations, that enables Lacan's views about subject development to be connected up with a specifically political account of class domination. Without this connection, Lacan's views imply nothing about either the omnipresence of class relations in society or the repressions involved in the existence of superstructural social institutions. Lacanism may in a way enable relations of production Marxism to go forward, to articulate further views about the subject in society, but it cannot found or establish relations of production Marxism on its own.

What then is the source of the appeal of Althusser's conception of subjects of class-related ideology? Althusser is not producing a theory of history. The shift on his part from forces of production Marxism to relations of production Marxism where relations may

themselves be formed autonomously, as people pursue their various religious, scientific, or political interests, is in fact a shift away from a genuinely explanatory theory of history, according to which class relations and ideologies are explained by the requirements of growing productivity. Althusser is not interested in tracing the ultimate causal antecedents of social formations. While he acknowledges that “ideologies have a history of their own (although it is determined in the last instance by the class struggle)” (240B), Althusser is not in “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses” interested in that (vague) causal determination, insisting instead that “ideology in general has no history, not in a negative sense (its history is external to it), but in an absolutely positive sense” (240B). Nor, though he avails himself of their idioms, is he deriving his views about subjects and ideology from the views of Lacan or Saussure. Just what is he doing?

In explicating the slogan that ideology in general has no history, that ideology is “a non-historical reality, i.e. an *omni-historical* reality, in the sense in which [its] structure and functioning are immutable, present in the same form throughout what we can call history” (240B), Althusser appeals to “a theoretical reference point:” Freud’s account of the role of the unconscious in the dream-work. In what sense is Freud’s theory of dreaming in any way structural or non-historical?

Freud distinguishes, as Althusser notes, between the manifest content of a dream, or the dream as reported, and its latent content. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud sketches explanations of the formations and significances (latent contents) of various dream reports by describing what he calls the dream-work. The general theory of the dream-work involves the specification of three kinds of influences that are *always present* in the formation of any dream report or manifest content: (1) the thoughts of the day (what one has heard, read, seen, thought, and so on in the course of the day’s experiences), (2) various thoughts that are naturally present at various stages of psychogenesis (infantile envies, wishes, resentments, transferences, etc. and their repressed remainders in the lives of adults), and (3) the mechanisms of the dream-work: condensation, displacement, considerations of representability, and secondary revision.²⁶ Influences (1) and (2) together form the latent content of the dream; (3), the mechanisms of the dream-work, then translate that latent content into the dream as reported or manifest content, as, for example, visual images to express wishes are sought, narrative

coherence is introduced, thoughts are combined or condensed with one another, and substitutes for the objects of deep wishes and revenges are found. In any dream, however, some material from the day, some material from the life of the unconscious since infancy, and the mechanisms of the dream-work always combine to generate the dream as remembered and reported. In a clear sense, that (1), (2), and (3) always figure in the formation of the manifest content is an eternal (human) fact, not a human historical one. And it seems equally likely that it is an eternal (human) fact that there are dreams.

It is like this, according to Althusser, with ideology. His structural Marxism consists in his effort to describe the perennially present sources and mechanisms of formation of very general views people hold about how human flourishing and freedom may be secured under certain sets of social institutions. Ideology is here “the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of man or a social group” (239A), a kind of always false consciousness about how equal human freedom may be secured through the operations of various religious, artistic, trade union, sporting, familial, etc. organizations and institutions (the ideological state apparatuses). It is the manifest content of culture, formed by a sort of always present ideology-work, that it is the business of the structural Marxist to specify. How does that ideology-work take place?

The latent content of ideology is the existing set of relations of production, class relations, under which human beings work and under which the goods that they produce are distributed. Under these class relations, there are various modes of unfreedom and domination. Certain people or groups of people will have rights and powers that others will lack. In that sense, there will not be equal freedom. The ideology-work consists in reacting evaluatively to existing relations of production. Perhaps these relations are simply accepted as productive of full equal freedom, so that the proper job of educational, artistic, religious, etc. organizations (the ideological state apparatuses) is then seen as that of forming subjects to enter into and accept these existing relations. Perhaps alternatively, existing relations are seen (correctly) as embodying unequal freedom, and alternative relations genuinely productive of full equal freedom are then imagined (dreams of a new society), together with the educational, religious, artistic, etc. infrastructures of reproduction that they would require. But in any case, whether accepting, reformist, or revolutionist, these evaluations are one and all false in their envisioning of *some* condition of full equal freedom under some relations

of production or other. Individuals imagine that there might be such a condition, and thus generate ideology, but in this imagining are victims of false consciousness. Society requires some social organization, some relations of production. Any such organizations and relations will involve some unfreedom, some arbitrarily unequal rights and powers attaching to dominant and subordinate classes. In reaction people imagine that this is not so. But in this imagining they are mistaken. We can no more cease living within existing relations of production nor cease imagining either them or some alternatives to embody full equal freedom than we can cease having unconscious thoughts, wishes, fantasies or cease dreaming. "Ideology," we may say, "represents the imaginary relation of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (241A). Or, more fully,

All ideology represents in its necessarily imaginary distortion not the existing relations of production (and the other relations that derive from them), but above all the (imaginary) relationship of individuals to the relations of production and the relations that derive from them. What is represented in ideology is not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live. (242A)

But why can't we stop doing this? Why is the relation of individuals to existing relations of production "necessarily an imaginary relation" (242A), one marked by false consciousness or belief about the possibility of a society of full equal freedom under some relations of production or other, existing or alternative? Why can't we either get it right, and successfully envision and fashion a society of fully equal freedom, or just give up such envisionings and accept the relatively tragic character of human life (perhaps still recognizing that some social organizations embody more freedom than others)?

Here is where Althusser appears to draw substantively on Lacan. Echoing Lacan's account of the formation of the unconscious according to Freud, Althusser writes that "It is clear that this ideological constraint and preappointment, and all the rituals of rearing and then education in the family, have some relationship with what Freud . . . registered by its effects [a Lacanism] as being the unconscious" (246B). Roughly, just as the experience on the part of preconscious subjects of a primordial lack, now buried in the unconscious and productive of fantasies, obsessions, and neuroses, persists in the lives of conscious subjects (whose desires are always inadequate metonymies or substitute-successors to that lack), so the experience of relations of production and their unfreedom likewise persists, as

human beings come to speak the language of culture, to develop (always inadequate) evaluative responses to social life as they assume socio-cultural identities. Althusser's name for the process through which subjects are ideologically constituted as having specific evaluative responses to existing relations of production is *interpellation*. Human subjects coming to be under existing relations of production are called to respond to them one way or another by existing evaluative languages and stances. Even refusal to accept an existing invitation to evaluate is itself a language of evaluation, the language of outsiderliness, which is to say that "ideology has no outside" (246A).

But this appearance of dependence on Lacan is in part misleading, or, where genuine, unhelpful, in so far as Lacan's account of subject formation is not itself related to class. And in fact Althusser does present another, *historical* argument, for the claim that ideology – (mistakenly) imagining relations of production of equal freedom – is for us inevitable, like dreaming. This argument is somewhat buried in the text; it is not even marked as itself a line of argument. But it is the source, perhaps, of whatever appeal Althusser's text and ideology-criticism that makes use of Lacan now have for critics of the arts.

"Why," Althusser asks, "do men 'need' this imaginary transposition of their real conditions of existence in order to 'represent to themselves' their real conditions of existence?" (241B). Althusser begins to treat this question by surveying solutions to it that have been proposed in the past but are *not* the answer to it. It is not the case that "Priests or Despots" (241B) forced people to imagine a condition of full equal human freedom, as the Enlightenment perhaps urged us to think. Nor is it the case, as Feuerbach and the early Marx urged, that "material alienation" forced human subjects into ideological imaginings (241B). Nor is it the case that God, through his Scriptures or his papal servants, has himself in fact commanded us to take up a certain evaluative stance toward existing relations of production. This too is an ideology, a piece of false consciousness about the possibility of equal freedom that is like any other in its structure and significance (247A-248A). People believe variously "that they must be obedient to God, to their conscience, to the priest, to de Gaulle, to the boss, to the engineer, that thou shalt 'love thy neighbor as thyself', etc." (248B). The cumulative force of these examples of "Enlightenment ideology," "Feuerbachian-early Marxist ideology," and "Christian ideology," and so on, is that, altogether apart from commitment to Lacanism, ideologizing – forming conceptions of possibilities of

equal human freedom in reaction to existing relations of production – is something people do. After all, it is here, and here, and here.

This historical evidence is then reinforced by – perhaps is even itself developed out of – a deep sense people now have about the conditions of their lives in complex societies. People are aware of the existence under various forms of present social life of various forms of unfreedom. The complexities of social life being what they are, and the surveyable social alternatives all remaining marked by some modes of domination, people feel powerless to do anything in social life to increase human freedom significantly. Is it possible that human beings may some day no longer have to work to satisfy their needs? No. Is it possible that they may come to do their work without having a structured social organization, within which some groups of people (parents, judges, teachers, etc.) have powers that others lack? No. A sense of powerlessness in the face of present modes of domination and social complexities – perhaps the deepest legacy, in Paris, of May 1968 – when coupled with the apparent historical facts about ideologies, then leads to a sense that ideologies, hopeless reactions against social unfreedom, are inevitable. Can we stop having them – either by solving the problem of human freedom or by tragically accepting its unsolvability – any more than we can stop dreaming? The thought that we cannot has its plausibility. Human subjects, it seems, are subjects of ideology.

HUMAN SUBJECTIVITY AND THE FUNCTIONS OF THE ARTS

The consequences for art of such a view of human subjects are immediate and powerful. Six habits of thought about art that are motivated by the Althusserian view of subjects are powerfully manifest in contemporary criticism (even if not always fully consistent with one another).

(1) Where traditional Kantian critics, formalist critics, or humanist Marxist critics (such as Marcuse)²⁷ all see works of art and literature as exemplary envisionings, born of genius in its engagement with a tradition of such envisionings, of human freedom (variously conceived in contexts), ideology critics under the influence of Althusser and structural Marxism are now inclined to dwell less on the contents of such envisionings and more on their internal structures and (often disguised) histories of formation. Instead of elucidating an author's or a painter's self-consciousness, genius, or understanding of freedom, an ideological critic is more likely now to point to *how*

the author or painter has been interpellated, that is, how the author or painter has come to a vision of human freedom by interacting with (perhaps refusing or negating) a sectarian piece of false consciousness about how to accept, reform, or overthrow existing relations of production so as to produce human freedom. Authors or painters will be seen to have taken their sectarian and false reactions to existing relations of production less from their genius in relation to tradition than from the church, from the artistic elite, from a rising bourgeois class, from the working class, from the consciousness of men, or whatever, in all their one-sidedness. It will then further be pointed out that the ideology thus inscribed in the work involves the repression or domination of some other social group – atheists or workers or women or whatever – whose interests and (likewise, of course, sectarian) conceptions of freedom are opposed to the interests and conceptions of the social group from whom the artist's conception was developed, the social group, that is, that “interpellated” the artist as the subject or creator of his artistic production.

(2) To the extent that critics acknowledge any preferences for particular works of art and literature, it will typically be not for universalist works that pretend to speak from and to a universalist human condition (works, as Wordsworth put it, of “a man speaking to men”), but for explicitly *localist* works. Not Wordsworth but John Clare, not Pollock or Rothko or Louis but local weavers and watercolorists, not John Updike but Raymond Carver, are the heroines and heroes of art. Not high and universal works of art, but immediately local productions of texts and artifacts are what is of interest: what is naive, not what is sentimental, in Schiller's terms.²⁸ As one recent, prominent, feminist, post-Althusserian critic has claimed, the “two-page autobiography,” written in “the first decades of the century” by an “anonymous ‘Seamer on Men's Underwear,’” despite its “somewhat hackneyed style” and artistically simple, “circumstantial,” accumulations of “events from the melancholy to the melodramatic,” despite its clichés and “sentimentality,” is at least as interesting as other texts in that its writer “had a unique sense of herself both as an individual and as member of the working class” that she did not repress.²⁹

(3) In keeping with the relative devaluing of high and universal art, the aim of critical study is recast as knowledge of a work's contextual conditions of determination, rather than appreciation or evaluation of its envisionings. Critical study of the arts is now to tell us not how we might best imagine our futures, how we might by following

artistic envisionings of genius ourselves avoid sentimentality and cliché, but rather how class and gender antagonisms in society are “spoken” – both noticed and repressed – by the texts of art. Works of art are now to be interrogated as showing us the social antagonisms and illusions about their resolutions that were typical of members of a certain class (author or painter and their audiences) in a given society at a given time. The aim of criticism is not the elucidation of the powers of high art, but positive historico-social knowledge.

(4) When artistic works do not explicitly comment upon or notice their social conditions of production, this failure of notice will typically be taken to have proceeded from unconscious notice overlain by repression. Works are read as palimpsests of such unconscious awarenesses and their refusal. Thus, for example, we are told that Wordsworth in writing “Tintern Abbey” must have been aware of such things as the fact that the actual abbey was a site where vagrant beggars from the armies of the Napoleonic wars sought alms, but must further have repressed that awareness (while nonetheless manifesting it to the canny reader) in titling his poem in full “Lines Composed A Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the banks of the Wye during a tour, July 13, 1798” (italics added). And so on for other bits of detail throughout the poem. In “Tintern Abbey,” “the primary poetic action is the suppression of the social.”³⁰ As one trenchant critic of this way of reading has observed, it is not obviously true that everything that is not present in a poem is repressed or canceled. “Tintern Abbey” may be titled as it is largely because it is a loco-descriptive poem, composed in a certain spot a few miles above the abbey. If we are to say that “Tintern Abbey” suppresses the social, then we might as well “say that a drawing ‘cancels’ the oil painting it might have been, or that a solo partita ‘suppresses’ the symphonic mode it might have been written in.”³¹ Yet, against this criticism, the Althusserian critic has an extraordinarily plausible general conception of the human subject as a subject of ideology to deploy, and, armed with this conception, the critic has very little trouble reading “Tintern Abbey” in detail, in subtle and interesting ways, as arguing, just as the bourgeoisie has always argued, that significance and freedom are achieved in a human life by individual minds in interaction with nature – surely, it will be argued, a piece of false consciousness, an ideology. Once one has a conception of the subject that encourages one to look for expressions of ideology, they are not hard to find. Once found, they do not appear to be accidental to the poem’s argument and intentions.

The aim of the canny critic is then to ferret out such unconscious awarenesses and repressions in even those works that may seem most innocent of them.

(5) To the extent that any attitudes toward existing relations of production and evaluative, ideological reactions to them are held to be more worth having than others, there is a pronounced tendency within ideological criticism to favor diffuse attitudes of directionless resistance. Rather than appreciating accommodationist or reformist or revolutionist attitudes in art toward existing relations of production, and rather than developing such attitudes on their own, ideological critics of the arts will typically tend both to praise and to maintain a certain sort of detachment and disengagement from the political. This will often take the form of praising artistic and literary works that, while acknowledging their social conditions of formation, fail to achieve closure in a formed understanding of human possibilities – fragmentary works, say, that simply break off, or that reveal the authors' disunity of subjectivity in her or his multiple, inconsistent interpellations. (There are obvious affinities with post-structuralist and deconstructionist stances here.) Here the preferences will be against Anne Tyler and for Thomas Pynchon and Donald Barthelme, against Helen Frankenthaler and for Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, against Jennifer Bartlett and for Cindy Sherman. The sublimities of resistance to, refusal of, being any one thing in social life, intermingled with awareness that social life solicits or interpellates us in various ways, is the hallmark of advanced artistic and critical consciousness.

(6) The interest in sectarian interpellations rather than in contents of artistic envisionings, the preference for localism against (always inauthentic) universalism, the seeking of socio-historical knowledge rather than the developing of elucidatory appreciations, the attention to unconscious awarenesses and repressions in all works, and the development and appreciation of rhetorics of resistances without closures, all tend to encourage a considerable shyness or hesitancy about evaluation in the arts. From what standpoint, in whose name, could standards or even looser principles of evaluation be developed? Do not conceptions of artistic success and value themselves proceed from the very same class affiliations and interpellations as artistic works themselves? At best, it seems, the critic might "intervene" in cultural life from a particular point of view, writing as a partisan of the working class, as a woman, as an elite modernist, or whatever. "Disinterested" "rational" evaluation seems to disappear

along with disinterested, universal artistic production. (And it is hard to see how dogmatic invocations of taste in the manner of Hilton Kramer or of Clement Greenberg in places will be of much help in resisting the conception of the human subject as ideological that underlies this evaluative hesitancy.)

These six features permeate the artistic and literary criticism of our cultural moment. They are fed by historical considerations about persistent unfreedom in human societies displaying various class relations coupled with a kind of despair or hopelessness about bringing human freedom into the world in social life. These historical considerations and this sense of despair are powerfully expressed in Althusser's "Ideology and ideological state apparatuses." Against the vision of the human subject as ideological that it puts forward, it will not do to point to the fact that that essay itself has an ideological stance. "Of course," an Althusserian will reply, "it does: the essay is itself an intervention, not a master discourse. See if you can do better, can write from the point of view of humanity as such; you can't." Nor will it do to attack the six habits of thought that permeate contemporary criticism piecemeal or on their own, without engaging with the general Althusserian conception of the human subject that supports them. Nor will it do simply to deny the historical considerations about domination and the present sense of despair that Althusser expresses and that people feel. The historical considerations are well founded; unfreedom and varieties of evaluative response to it have existed under manifold forms of social life, under wide varieties of relations of production. And how would one criticize a sense of despair? There is perhaps not even any question of whether Althusserian conceptions of the human subject and Althusserian critical stances are true or false apart from whether we do or do not manage to recover a kind of self-confidence as human subjects. Althusserianism may reasonably seem less attractive if, but only if, we manage to recast our social lives and class relations as expressions of a universal human interest. And how would we do *that*?

But perhaps – this must be tentative – there is a way of accepting Althusserian, relations-of-production-Marxist historical insights and of acknowledging the naturalness of present social despair while shifting slightly the tone in which these insights and this despair are given voice. Perhaps it is true that the history of successive forms of relations of production is a history of successive forms of human domination. Perhaps it is true that human beings naturally react evaluatively to such domination and fantasize or envision its amelior-

ation or removal. Perhaps it is true that their envisionings proceed always in part from a class position, from interpellations, and are not fully attractive to those outside that class position. Perhaps their art must always reflect such sectarian envisionings, rooted in the historical experiences of classes. Aaron Copland is not Charlie Parker; Raymond Carver is not John Updike. Explaining and elucidating artistic and literary production as reflecting in part the experiences and outlooks of a social class is a standing possibility for criticism.

Yet there may also be distinctions to be drawn. Althusserian criticism tends to regard all sectarian envisionings of human freedom as equivalent in value. Roughly, from the facts that all such envisionings are in part sectarian and in part unattractive to some members of some classes at some historical time, it is concluded that all such envisionings, and all artistic productions that express them, are equally worthless: hence the structuralism, the localism, the interest in knowledge not appreciation, the attention to repressed awarenesses of complicities, the rhetorics of diffuse resistances, and the shyness about evaluation that dominate contemporary criticism.

But equivalent one-sidedness in envisionings of human freedom does not entail equivalent worthlessness. To develop, albeit against a sectarian background, new forms of shared aspiration, individuality, and intelligibility, and to do that with grace and power and craft, is not mechanically to reproduce socialized humanity as it stands, but to call us in some specific ways to something better. James Michener is not Salman Rushdie; Jerry Lewis is not Jean Renoir; Tony Roche is not Rod Laver. Appreciation and elucidation of such socially inflected exercises of grace and power and craft are likewise standing possibilities of criticism.

Human subjects have common multiple interests. They are not prisoners of the interests of their classes. Workers and owners, men and women, serfs and lords, peasants and bureaucrats, may all have interests among other things in their autonomy and in human solidarity, in health, in discovering and cultivating their talents whatever they may be, or in their friends and families. It may well be that there can be no society, no set of relations of productions, that enables the universal and full satisfaction of all these divergent interests. Under some sets of relations of production, certain of these genuine and universal human interests may be more fully repressed than under others, and more fully repressed for certain classes than for others. When it happens that under an existing set of relations of production certain genuine human interests are repressed, then in

reaction certain utterances, images, musical themes, plastic forms, and so on can remind us – all of us – of the importance of these interests. Such reminders to us all then stand as culturally specific and personal expressions of common aspirations to a collective freedom. A society of whatever political structure in which wide ranges of such reminders are encouraged and attended to is at least in that respect better than one in which they are not. Art may serve, as one critic has it, in a vision that is not so far, perhaps, from what is common to humanist Marxism, New Criticism, post-Aristotelian historicist humanism, and Kantianism, as the perennial “cultural psychic monitoring”³² of what we have done and continue to do to ourselves under various relations of production and as the exemplary envisioning of something better. Such artistic envisionings, inflected by the sectarian though they may be, offer us various “models of what we can make of ourselves” that “elicit fundamental forms of desire and admiration,” call to us not to repeat or imitate them but to follow after them in liberating our common humanity against a background of culture.³³

Notes

- 1 Louis Althusser, “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses,” first published in *La Pensée*, 1970; English translation in *Lenin and Philosophy*, tr. Ben Brewster (London: New Left Books, 1971), pp. 123–173; excerpted in Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle (eds.), *Critical Theory Since 1965* (Tallahassee: University Presses of Florida, 1989), pp. 238–250. Subsequent references to this essay will be to the excerpted version in Adams and Searle, likely to be the most readily available and influential version of the essay, and will be given in the text in page and column numbers, in parentheses.
- 2 Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981).
- 3 Rosalind Coward and John Ellis, *Language and Materialism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977).
- 4 Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 87.
- 5 Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle, “Louis Althusser” (editors’ introduction to “Ideology and ideological state apparatuses”), in Adams and Searle (eds.), *Critical Theory Since 1965*, pp. 238, 239.
- 6 Gregory Elliott, “The lonely hour of the last instance: Louis Pierre Althusser, 1918–1990,” *Radical Philosophy* 57 (Spring, 1991), 30.
- 7 Karl Marx, “Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*,” in *Early Writings*, tr. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin Books, 1975), p. 425.

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- 8 G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 134.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 135.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 153.
- 12 See *ibid.*, p. 152.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 158.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 291.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 306–307.
- 16 Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, (London: New Left Books, 1977), p. 113. It is useful to compare Althusser's stance here with a recent criticism of G. A. Cohen's optimism. Joshua Cohen, "Review of G. A. Cohen's *Karl Marx's Theory of History*," *The Journal of Philosophy* 79/5 (May, 1982), 253–273, has argued that Cohen is over-optimistic and is wrong to hold that the forces of production grow autonomously; rather they grow only under political arrangements that may be willed for a variety of reasons even in the long run: for example, perhaps because tyrants enjoy despotism. Consequently the development thesis and the premises about human nature do not entail the primacy thesis. G. A. Cohen and Will Kymlicka, "Human nature and social change in the Marxist conception of history," *The Journal of Philosophy* 85/4 (April, 1988), 171–191, have replied that of course the forces of production grow only under relations of production, not autonomously or by themselves, but they nonetheless autonomously tend to grow, in the long run more or less no matter what relations of production obtain. This reply perhaps misses the point, however, that a *so far* persistent tendency toward growth may not now be decisive enough to be beneficent for a society of full equal freedom.
- 17 Sheelagh Strawbridge, "From 'overdetermination' to 'structural causality': some unresolved problems in Althusser's treatment of causality," *Radical Philosophy* 38 (Summer, 1984), 12A.
- 18 See *ibid.* for a very clear and useful treatment of overdetermination and structural causality in Althusser.
- 19 *Ibid.* p. 12A. See also Barry Hindess and Paul Q. Hirst, *Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 134.
- 20 Anika Lemaire, *Jacques Lacan*, tr. David Macey (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), esp. pp. 1–187, is the best general survey of Lacan's work.
- 21 Lemaire, *Jacques Lacan*, p. 64.
- 22 Jacques Lacan, "Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage," *Ecrits* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1966), p. 282.
- 23 Lacan, "L'Instance de la lettre dans l'inconscient," *Ecrits*, p. 521.
- 24 Coward and Ellis, *Language and Materialism*, p. 75. Italics added.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 92.
- 26 Richard Wollheim, *Freud* (London: Fontana, 1971), pp. 65–106, esp. pp. 65–79, provides a useful summary of the mechanisms of the dream-work.

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- 27 Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension*, tr. Herbert Marcuse and Erica Sherover (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978).
- 28 Juliet Sychrava, *Derrida to Schiller: Idealism in Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) argues impressively for the interest of naive, non-sentimental, localist, “material,” works in general and the poetry of John Clare, in comparison with that of Wordsworth, in particular.
- 29 Lillian S. Robinson, “Treason our text: feminist challenges to the literary canon,” in Adams and Searle (eds.), *Critical Theory Since 1965*, p. 581A.
- 30 Marjorie Levinson, *Wordsworth’s Great Period Poems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 37.
- 31 Helen Vendler, “‘Tintern Abbey’: two assaults,” typescript of an address delivered to the conference “Romanticism and Revolution,” Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA. April, 1989, p. 6.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 12. See also Richard Eldridge, *On Moral Personhood: Philosophy, Literature, Criticism and Self-Understanding* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) for an extended account of how poets and novelists attend to modes of the repression of multiple and genuine human interests and describe partial overcomings of these repressions.
- 33 Charles Altieri, “An idea and an ideal of a literary canon,” *Critical Inquiry* 10/1 (September, 1983), 47, 51. The distinction between imitation and following after or succession (*Nachfolge*) appears in Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement* tr. J. C. Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 171. It is nicely associated in Timothy Gould, “The audience of originality: Kant and Wordsworth on the reception of genius,” in Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer (eds.), *Essays in Kant’s Aesthetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

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