BETWEEN WORK:
Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser and Jacques Martin

By
Nikki Moore
B.A. University Scholar
Baylor University, 1998.

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ARCHITECTURE STUDIES
AT THE
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
JUNE 2005

Signature of Author: _____
Nikki Moore
Department of Architecture
May 11th, 2005.

Certified by: _____
Mark Jarzombek
Associate Professor of the History of Architecture, and Director of History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture and Art, Department of Architecture
Thesis Co-Supervisor

Certified by: _____
Arindam Dutta
Associate Professor of the History of Architecture, Department of Architecture
Thesis Co-Supervisor

Certified by: _____
William Porter
Professor Emeritus, Department of Architecture
Thesis Co-Supervisor

Accepted by: _____
Julian Beinart
Department of Architecture
Chairman, Committee for Graduate Students

BETWEEN WORK

Index

Introduction

Between the work and friendships of Jacques Martin, Michel Foucault and Louis Althusser there are moments, images and texts which tempt us to say, ah... 'that's he,' and furthermore, 'that is his work.' Yet, the textual collaborations of Foucault, Martin and Althusser can be seen as process of subjectivation, even cannibalism, which blurs the boundary between self and other. In one of his annual lectures at the College de France, Foucault asked the question that every good philosopher, adolescent and empty-nester might ask, by looking at 'Who am I?' in far more elegant terms, as follows:

> *How was the subject established, at different moments and in different institutional contexts, as a possible, desirable, or even indispensable object of knowledge? How were the experience that one may have of oneself and the knowledge that one forms of oneself organized according to certain schemes? ...The guiding thread that seems the most useful for this inquiry is constituted by what one might call the 'techniques of the self,' which is to say, the procedures, which no doubt exist in every civilization, suggested or prescribed to individuals in order to determine their identity, maintain it, or transform it in terms of a certain number of ends, through relations of self-mastery or self-knowledge*[1].

In outlining a further investigation into these 'techniques of the self' Foucault asks: 'What are these 'techniques' which can be used to determine, maintain and transform an identity?' In the overlapping lives of Louis Althusser, Jacques Martin and Michel Foucault himself, these questions take on ever increasing complexity. By Foucault's model, subjectivation, or the process of becoming a subject, is more than the process of developing a human being. Human being's have biological components; they have dates of birth and dates of death. The process of 'subjectivation', on the other hand is different:

---

[1] Foucault, Michel. "Subjectivity and Truth," *Michel Foucault: Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth.* Ed. Rabinow, Paul. Trans. Robert Hurley, et al. New Press: New York, 1997.

> *A process of subjectivation, that is, a production of a mode of existence, cannot be confused with a subject, unless it is to discharge the latter from all interiority and even from all identity. Subjectivation does not even have anything to do with a 'person': it is an individuation, specific or collective, that characterizes an event (a time of day, a river, a wind, a life...) It is an intensive mode and not a personal subject.*[2]

It is the 'intensive modes' of Louis Althusser, Jacques Martin and Michel Foucault, the techniques by which each man individuates, and the dissolution of these identities in which I am interested. In the written textual traces of Foucault and Althusser, stories are told, choices are made, and histories are written. What we find in the literature of and on each of these three human beings, these male specimens, in fact, are multiple births, deaths, texts, men, and madness. The 'events' they created, destroyed and left behind provide nearly infinite ground for nearly infinite possible observations. Where does one begin, and why should one begin at all?

Let us begin with what we know of the human beings in question. One Louis Althusser was born October 16th, 1918, at 4:30 in the morning in Bois de Boulogne, 15 kilometers from Algiers to his mother, Lucienne and his father, Charles Althusser.[3] One Jacques Martin was born to Felix Henri and Marguerite Martin on the 18th of May, 1922, in Paris, and one Paul-Michel Foucault came into the world on October 15th, 1926 in Poitiers, France.[4,5] These are the singular, markable beginnings. Yet over time these human beginnings created an array of selves, some with semblance to three intertwining biological human beings born on the above dates, and others which developed into

---

[2] This quote originated in the writing of Gilles Deleuze, "La vie comme oeurvre d'art" in *Pourparlers,* 138 pp 100-101, but is discussed in an insightful writing by Eleanor Kaufman entitled "Madness and Repetition" in *The Delirium of Praise*, p 70.
[3] Boutang Moulier, Yann. *Louis Althusser: Une Biographie.* Grasset: Paris, 1992. p 55.
[4] Boutang-Moulier, Yann. *Louis Althusser: Une Biographie.* Grasset: Paris, 1992. p 453.
[5] Macey, David. *The Lives of Michel Foucault.* Pantheon Books: New York, 1993, p 3.

dramatically different persons, unions and effects unrecognizable in nuance and in content.

Beginning with what we know of Jacques Martin, his is a life which has been traced through the writings, remembrances, lives and ideas of others. Even so, secondary literature on Martin is scarce, and generally appears only as a subchapter or a footnote on the life of Althusser. Yet these scant references are critical, as, in the throws of what Althusser described as an increasingly destructive schizophrenia, Martin destroyed all of his work before ending his own life in August of 1964. What he left behind included his passport, a few photos and contracts for German translations which would never be completed. He also left behind an archive of application files at the École Normale Superieure in Paris. In the first chapter of my thesis I look through the reference letters, official documentation and hand written testimonies left behind by Martin as startling reminders both of his intellectual promise before the onset of schizophrenia and of the emerging shadows which soon began to blot out that promise.

In the second chapter, I have chosen to play a game with events that are Martin and Althusser. The game engages the friendship of the two as it challenges notions of individuality and unique subjecthood. As Deleuze once said of his friend Foucault:

> *It is not certain that a life, or a work of art, is individuated like a subject, in fact, to the contrary. Foucault himself, one did not grasp him exactly like a person. Even on insignificant occasions, when he entered a room, it was rather like a change of atmosphere, a kind of event, an electric or magnetic field, or what you will. This did not at all exclude gentleness or well-being, but it wasn't on the order of the person. It was an ensemble of intensities.*[6]

[6] Ibid. p 71

Further exploring the nature of connection through friendship in these 'ensembles of intensity' mentioned by Deleuze, Derrida looks at cannibalization and perpetual mourning and finds them at the essence of relationship.

> *Drawing on Freud's conceptualization of narcissism, Derrida is led to the formulation: "we are never ourselves, and between us, identical to us, a 'self' is never in itself or identical to itself" (Mémoires 28)... he is led to the position that we are inevitably cannibal selves...The obvious lack of self-identity that is seen when the other is mourned in fact pertains in a more generalized way to every subject constituted with alterity at its heart. We are the constant interiorization/incorporation of the other.* [7]

This introduction to Derrida's rich discussion on interiorization and incorporation is also an introduction to the relationship between Althusser and Jacques Martin introduced in Chapter 2. In *Louis Althusser: Une Biography*, Yann Moulier Boutang suggests in passing that by the end of Althusser's life, and in his autobiographies, Althusser was no longer writing his own story, but that of Jacques Martin's. Is it possible that in remembrance, in mourning and in friendship Althusser had so merged Martin with his own understanding of self, that all distinction between the two had been lost to him? The idea is at least intriguing, and at most, entirely accurate. Both Althusser and Martin, while he was alive, tailored their childhood stories to merge with those of the other. Both grew up with their grandparents, both were absent in their mother's eyes and both had adverse if not violent relationships with their fathers. In remembrance of his childhood, Althusser takes on Martin's authentic homosexuality, and by the time Althusser murdered

---

[7] Deutscher, P. *"Mourning the Other, Cultural Cannibalism, and the Politics of Friendship (Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray)." differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 1998 Vol. 10, #3 pp. 159-184 – www. muse.jhu.edu

his wife, his bi-polar disorder had mutated somehow into schizophrenia identical to Martin's. The experimental nature of the writing style in this chapter is meant to reflect the sort of internalization of the other that occurred between Martin and Althusser. It makes an attempt toward the multiplicity of stories which can be told about these two conjoining 'intensities,' telling different stories in tension between the primary text and its own footnotes. The footnoting, therefore, outlines all possible textual sources on Jacques Martin.

Apart from the mesh of Martin and Althusser, another key manifestation of Jacques Martin, as evoked in the work of Michel Foucault, often isn't evoked at all. When it comes to the naming of Jacques Martin in print or speech, unlike Althusser, Foucault never mentions him. Yet, in excess of friendship and collaboration, it is the idea of Martin, *l'homme sans oeuvre,* both the man and the symbol, which enabled Foucault to draw out and define *l'absence d'oeuvre* (absence of work). The primary force of the third chapter engages first, the discourse around the figure of Martin as his schizophrenia begins to inhibit his ability to produce, and annihilates his potential for a magnum Opus, or creative work in the Kantian sense and finally, the consequent writings which Martin's inhibitions may have inspired in Foucault. Looking at work as both the action and an attempt to dissolve alienation, work is also a necessary, constant, yet ultimately futile attempt at an impossible metaphysical union. Foucault's absence of work, is then, both a recognition of this futility and a recognition of the absence which occurs when metaphysics, (*á la* Descartes in particular), is no longer the frame for rationality or ethics. Foucault proposes that the absence of work is doubling of reason onto its alienated twin,

madness, in a fold that recognizes their identical nature and their resultant nonexistence. It is this figure of Martin, 'the man without work', in Foucault's texts that draws out a more developed reading of 'work' from the whole of Kant's theses in the *Critique of Pure Reason,* nuancing and augmenting his overt discussion of work and beauty in the *Critique of Judgment,* and influencing Foucault's own work in *Madness and Civilization.*

Along with the chorus chanted through the streets May 6th, 1968, chapter four then asks: 'Where is Althusser?' in recognition of Althusser's own profound statements of self doubt. Louis Althusser's life and career were both marked by a willingness to revisit, revise and shift his own positions and now, 37 years after the May 1968 student revolts and 25 years after he murdered his wife, Althusser's work and biography are being revisited and viewed as examples of a philosophy of breaks and rupture. Yet as this revisiting occurs, the staid influences of Althusser's Catholicism, his friendship with Martin, his reliance on his wife, Hélène, and his dependence upon the French Communist Party marked his life and his career in ways yet unexplored. For Althusser, Martin was at once a twin, a mentor and mirror. After Martin's suicide, Althusser began to merge his own experiences with his memory of Martin, meanwhile merging the Catholic theology of his youth with his newfound Marxist criticism. The result is a Catholic-esque, Heideggerian anti-humanism and a proposed break in Marx's texts which mimics the break between Old and New Testaments of the Bible. The absence of work in Althusser, as in Martin and Foucault, is embodied not only in Althusser's work, but also in the larger collectives at work in his time. In May 1968, in the French Communist Party, schools and government this absence of work marked the speeches of the PCF, shadowed

the student revolt and hovered in Althusser's hospital cell as he towed the Party line and retreated, habitually, into the safety of attempted anonymity.

Returning to Gilles Deleuze; after Foucault's death, Deleuze published a text in his friend's honor. When questioned about his motives, he stated:

> *I felt a genuine need to write this book. When someone whom one loves and admires dies, one sometimes has a need to make a sketch of him. Not to glorify him, even less to defend him, not for memory but rather for drawing this ultimate resemblance that can only come from his death, and which makes one say 'that's he.'* [8]

Between schizophrenia, work, friendship and the lives of Martin, Foucault and Althusser there are moments, images and texts which tempt me to say, ah... 'that's he.' But those moments pass quickly and reflect very different images, often conflicting; a theme which I hope is echoed in the organization of *Between Work's* pages.

[8] Ibid. p 68.

Chapter 1

Jacques Martin:

Jacques Martin: to single out his name in the subtitle to this section is to give deceptive clarity and singularity to a figure seen only through the lens upon lens of others. From the varying views that create what we know of Martin, his many lives fill many different biographies of several different men and multiple human beings. These many narratives of Jacques Martin are known to posterity only through silent and written dedications in footnotes, in application forms and in story telling of the sort herein. As in the writing of any story, sacrifices are made for what we consider clarity, continuity and readability. While this is a story of Martin it is also of a story of those sacrifices and those processes of subject making which require decisions, additions and primarily, deletions.

The easiest way to tell this story may be to begin in Jacques Martin's beginnings. His birth, verified by one of the only remaining artifacts of his life, took place on the 18th of May, at 5:30 am, 1922.[9] Christened Jacques Henri Michel Francois Martin, he was born to Felix Henri and Marguerite Martin in the 14th arrondissement in Paris. As a child of five, Jacques and his younger sister Jacqueline, age 3, were sent to live with their maternal grandparents, the Tonnellots, in Niévre when their mother, Marguerite, was diagnosed with a supposedly terminal case of Tuberculosis. In Niévre, Jacques and Jacqueline attended school at the Lycée de Nevers, where Jacques, apparently an ornery

[9] The documentation I found in J. Martin's application to L'École Normale Superior indicates his name as written here, "Jacques Henri Michel François Martin," as does a copy of his birth certificate found therein. In his autobiography of Louis Althusser, Yann Moulier Boutang writes his name as "Henri, Jacques, Michel Martin." See footnote 1. on page 453 of Moulier Boutang's *Louis Althusser.*

student, rebelled against many of his teachers but finished each year, nonetheless, at the top of his class. At age 14, Jacques returned to his early childhood home at 6 Rue Froidevaux in Paris where the death of his grandfather and the stunning recovery of his mother brought him to the Lycée de Henri-IV, where he entered as the class salutatorian. Later, in 1938, after readjusting to life in Paris, Jacques took first place in the French General Exams[10] and went on to his final years at Henri-IV, from which he ultimately applied for admittance to L'École Normale Superior in 1941.

This above linear story of birth, childhood and Jacques' first step into adulthood is one gloss on Martin. It is the story of a child who grows from boy to manhood, it is the outline for a life that my lines cannot fill. A second beginning of Jacques Martin begins in his time at L'École Normale. To this day, J. Martin's first official file at the École Normale includes, among other things in his application for admittance, a testament to the validity of his birth certificate, a handwritten curriculum vitae, reference letters from past teachers in testament to his intellectual aptitudes, two testaments as to Martin's legal status and a letter from *La Commission Médicale.* This set of artifacts outlines the second Martin, contiguous with the first in his ability to excel in school, yet different in his shadows, different in his relationships, different in his implications.

Jacques Martin's École documentation includes a verification of his birth certificate, issued by the Mayor of the XIV arrondissement on the March 13th, 1941. Fees ranging from 2.5 francs to 9 francs were paid for this official documentation. Next, the curriculum vitae, handwritten on graph paper and signed by J. Martin, restates Jacques'

[10] See Moulier Boutang, Yann. *Louis Althusser: Une Biographie,* p 454.

birth date and its location, confirming the veracity of his father's professed career as a pharmacist, certifying Jacques scholastic lineage from before and after his return to Paris at the age of 15.[11]

Martin's application file is filled with reference letters that sing the praises of one surely destined for greatness at the Normale Superior. In his letters for promotion a past teacher by the name of Monsieur Gusdorf states that Martin is one of the best qualified candidates for the École's 1941 aggregation by praising Jacques' solid philosophical background and his valor in expressing ideas. Monsieur Piobetta proclaims that, from what he has seen, Martin possesses a distinguished spirit, with an aptitude for discussion and plenty of finesse. Finally, among others, a Monsieur Gaston Bachelard states that Martin is a good student, with good diploma work and solid knowledge.

With this fine application, Jacques Martin was admitted to L'École Normale Superior, yet the documentation following Martin's admittance takes on darker and darker shadows before it steals away altogether into a void. The first shadows appear in what is missing from Martin's medical record. The paper included in Martin's files decrees that Monsieur Martin, graduated from the Lycée Henri-IV, and under the execution of article 4 (of May 1904), *"est propre aux functions de l'enseignement."* As this document, signed by President Caurter-Luly and *les assesseurs* states, Martin was, in 1941, 'ready for the functions of learning.' At this time, clearly, the schizophrenia which would later envelope both Martin's functions and learning, was still silenced and unseen.

[11] The above documentation states the Jacques studied, as a child, at Henri-IV, and, before that, at the Lycée de Nevers and the Lycée Blaise Pascal de Clermont-Fernand.

In Jacques Martin's second official folder at L'École Normale, two handwritten testaments bring the tensions of World War II into the history of Martin, the adolescent male, the emerging subject. The first of these two statements reads as follows:

> *I, the undersigned, Martin Jacques Henri Francois Michel, born in Paris on May 18, 1922, certify that I am not under the law of October 3rd, 1940, regarding the statute of the Jews. Paris, March 21, 1941. J. Martin.*[12]

Nearly identical to the abovementioned handwritten testament by Martin, this graph paper statement mirrors the official rhetoric required for entrance into the École: 'I, the undersigned, born in location X on the Xth day of the Xth month, 192X, certify that...' Martin finished this formula with various statements, such as: 'my father is a pharmacist,' 'I have the approval of the Secretary for Public Jurisdiction for my application,' and, as in the above quote: 'I am not under the law of October 3rd, 1940 regarding the statute of the Jews.' The rhetoric comes to bear in another of Martin's testimonies:

> *I, the undersigned, Martin Jacques Henri Francois Michel, born in Paris on May 18, 1922, certify that I am not under the arm of military law. Paris, March 21, 1941. J. Martin.*[13]

'I, the undersigned... certify that I do not fall under the arm of military law,' signed by Jacques Martin in 1941. In 1941 the German occupation of France had been in effect for over a year. Though Poland was invaded by Hitler's Germany in 1939, the 1940 invasion of Belgium came as a surprise to the French and the British. As both of the latter countries rushed north to protect their neighbors, the German army made its way south, through northern France to arrive in Paris for a coup and occupation. Moving the head of government to Vichy released little pressure from the city of Paris. In 1941, Jacques

[12] From Jacques Martin's file in the École Normale student archives.
[13] From Jacques Martin's file in the École Normale student archives.

Martin could sign the release stating he was not part of the military, but within the span of two short years, all of this would change.

During 1941 through early 1943, Martins ENS files are again filled with rave reviews, marked by strong grades in his course work and continued positive appraisals of his talent and intellect. In 1941 he took an 'AB' in Psychology and a 'B' in Philosophy and Logic. In 1942, he took a 'B' in Sociology and Morals, an 'AB' in the History of Philosophy, and was exempted from a special exam on living languages. Martin's longest reference is a review by M. Cuirlluir, and outside the 10th to the 15th of February notation, the date of this evaluation is unknown. M. Cuirlluir's statements are the only known evaluations of Martin's teaching skills. During Jacques Martin's first week as a teaching assistant Cuilluir notes that he responded with competence to the questions posed by his new students. For the second week, Martin gave the course lecture from memory and while Jacques was well informed, Cuilluir states that he was a bit dogmatic, with entrenched ideas that needed nuancing. Overall, however, Martin made the natural mistakes of a novice teacher : he was a bit precipitous in his responses, moving too quickly to answer when his students did speak soon enough and he taught in such a way that his students had difficulty taking notes. In addition to his teaching duties, Martin corrected papers on the question: "Does philosophy give its value to the questions it poses or to the answers that it brings about?" As his assessments of those papers matched those of Cuirlluir's, he was congratulated on the outcome of his evaluations. The final word by Cuirlluir is that Martin presented a good subject which filled the class with real enthusiasm.

Looking at Martin's grades and his evaluations it seems that Martin's practice during his first years at the ENS matched the quality of his paper work: he was eloquent, communicative, and lively, if not a bit precipitous. With one remaining file, written by Emile Bréhier on April 17th, 1943, the archives of Martin's time at the École come to a close. Again, Bréhier, like others before him, writes that Martin's previous years' work is "good, with a sharp and solid spirit". The future looks promising... yet Martin's files end here. There are no hints of a graduation, no signs of what was to become of Martin post-ENS. It seems then, that we might end here, where we began with this Jacques Martin; full of intellectual promise, genius and compelling communicative abilities. Yet, by way of Moulier Boutang's work, another story and another Jacques Martin comes into being. It is one, perhaps, that takes on more shadows than Martins' ENS files could hold.

In June of 1943, two months after the last noted reference letter as to Martin's work at the ENS, the German occupation of France finally swept Martin into the militant, anti-Semitic and unsteady public domain of World War II Paris. At this time Jacques Henri Michel François Martin and 249,999 other Frenchmen were called up for civilian service in the ranks of the Service du Travail Obligitoire (STO). The STO began as a way to fuel the German war machine and the German agricultural and industrial economies. After the 1942 invasion of Belgium and France, workers from each conquered nation were required, by the Nazi regime and its Vichy counterparts, to fill labor shortages in exchange for their freedom from Bolshevism. Fritz Saukel, head of the STO under the Germans, first forced all prisoners of war to work in German factories and industries. Next, with the help of propaganda offering better wages and decent food, the French

could choose to support their families by means of German employment. Then, 'exchanges' were promised: for every three French workers employed in Germany, one prisoner of war would be released. Yet, by 1943, the exchange figures were disappointing on both sides. By June of that same year, all unemployed French men between the ages of 16 and 60, along with childless women between the ages of 18 and 35, would be exported by train for work in Germany. In June of 1943, as pressure for STO recruitment grew, Saukel demanded that all unemployed men between the ages of 20 and 22 would be sent for service in Germany. This age group included and targeted France's best, brightest and most energetic as they entered their respective Universities and Écoles. The 20-22 call enraged the French, and as resistance to STO grew, schemes were devised whereby 'unemployed' students could falsify their French employment status and escape STO deportation. According to work done by Yann Moulier Boutang, it was particularly easy for *normaliens,* (students at the École Normale), to evade the STO in this way. Sympathetic industries and business run by past graduates or admirers of the École Normale offered *normaliens* false employment to escape the draft: Jacques Martin was offered at least one such escape route. Yet, in June of 1943, Martin left France for Francfort sur le Main, where he stayed in STO service until April 12, 1945.

Beginning in 1941, the year Martin applied to the École, France's escaped and former leader, Charles de Gaulle, began making speaches from London calling up the French to resistance by way of British military service. In France as in the French colonies, French loyalty was strained as de Gaulle formed the Free French Forces and lead them in a failed march against the Vichy government. Still in this era of tension, Martin's decision to

work in Francfort sur le Main is troubling. Louis Althusser, in his autobiography, speaks for Martin on the issue of his STO service. He insists that it is Martin's Kantian ethic, his inability to evade duty, that brought him to Germany. Yet once he was there, Moulier Boutang claims, the intellectual prowess that echoed through his ENS files took its first steps into a darkness that would Martin would ultimately claim in suicide. The date when schizophrenia first took hold of Martin is unknown, but his abilities began to diminish in Germany.[14]

When Martin returned to the ENS from Francfort sur le Main, his situation did not improve: *he had trouble getting rid of the feeling that he had missed an opportunity.*[15] In a climate of resistance, STO's were not well received and Martin felt disenfranchised. Apart from social friction, Martin deeply questioned his own relationship to German philosophy and culture.

> *Yet in Frankfurt, at the heart of German philosophy is where he found the resources for his mutation. He began to read a lot of Hegel, and in 1945, he entered into Marx with both feet. ...he left [for Germany and the STO] ...as a Kantian very concerned with aesthetics and at the liberation he found him[self] Marxist and Hegelian.*[16]

What we know of Jacques' direct relationship with Marxism, and by extension, the Parti Communiste Francais (PCF) is that he was never an official member. He attended meetings, and along with Althusser, is remembered for a dedication that often superceded that of his card-carrying comrades. What remains of Martin's views on Marxism in the 1950's are ideas passed through to the mind and works of Louis Althusser. Personally

---

[14] Moulier Boutang, Yann. *Louis Althusser: Une Biography.* p.455
[15] Translation of Moulier Boutang, Yann, p 456.
[16] Translation of Moulier Boutang, Yann. *Louis Althusser : Une Biography.* p.456, itallics, (...) and [], mine.

and philosophically Althusser absorbed Martin, reading Marx, Hegel and Kant with Martin's help and translations. When Martin was still in the early struggles with schizophrenia, Althusser found an apartment for Martin at 6 Rue d'Ulm, next to his own at 7. But by 1948, Martin's abilities to communicate and to write were fading fast. Instead of leading Althusser into the depths of Marx, Kant and Hegel, Althusser now became the coach for his teacher. When, in that same year, Martin failed his final dissertation, his own situation became truly unstable. He lived in the pockets of his friends, borrowing money and failing to show up for carefully and specially arranged job interviews.[17] When offered a position at *Progress* in Lyon, Martin's desire for action was outweighed by other factors whose origins are unknown. Fear? Anxiety? His illness? Or was it what Moulier Boutang describes as Martin's more sarcastic, secret and tormented political positions, as opposed to Althusser's finessed and gentile humours, which kept Martin from taking the *Progress* position?[18]

After turning down jobs, interviews and action, in Martin's defense Althusser said of Jacques that to subject himself to the will and choosing of an other, a larger group, or organization would bring a shadow Martin could not shake.[19] Yet not all of Martin's

---

[17] Ibid. p. 456

[18] Ibid. p 352.

[19] In a recent interview, Gilles Deleuze describes his own response to L'appel de Stockholm in a way which may shed light on Martin's own dilemma. Deleuze states: To be in the French Communist Party at this time there, there were cell meetings all the time. It was the time - I have a bench mark – L'appel de Stockholm. ... I do not know even any more what it was, the call of Stockholm, but that occupied a whole generation of Communists. Then me, I had problems because I knew many communist historians, full of talent, and I said to myself: good god, if they worked on their theses, that would be much more important for the Communist Party, which at least would have work at handsome price instead of using them get signatures for the call of Stockholm, stupid call on Peace or I do not know what... and I did not want any part - I was not talkative, I did not speak - and to sign the call of Stockholm, that would have put to me in a state of timidity, of panic... I never did anything to sign with anybody. Moreover, it was necessary to sell Humanity, and all that... I did not want to have any part in the Party. ... All the respect of the human rights, it is... really, one wants almost to take hold of the odious proposals. That formed so much part of this soft

actions were stilted: sometime after March 12th, 1950, Jacques joined millions of others in signing *l'appel de Stockholm*. *L'appel* was a petition, drafted by communist Frédéric Joliot-Curie, stating opposition to the use and production of atomic bombs. It reads as follows:

> *We require the absolute prohibition of the atomic weapons, arms of terror and the massive extermination of populations. We require the establishment of a rigorous international control to ensure the application of this measurement of prohibition. We consider that the first government who would use, counter any country, the atomic weapon, would be committing a crime against humanity and should be treated like a war criminal. We call all the men of goodwill in the world to sign this call.*[20]

Millions of people world-wide signed the Stockholm petition, and by doing so, they participated in the mounting Cold War tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. According to the terms of the petition, the United States Military should be tried as War Criminals for the bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima and all of its efforts toward stockpiling an atomic arsenal would be called to a halt, putting the Soviet Union in a clear atomic advantage. When the author of *L'appel de Stockholm* was held at Ellis Island and barred from entering the US, the tension surrounding the Stockholm document hit its peak. All that remains of Martin's reflections on this situation is knowledge of a signature of agreement with Joliot's petition.

---

thought of the poor period we're speaking of. It is pure abstract. Human rights, but what is that? It is pure abstract. It is empty. It is exactly what one a few moments ago said for the desire, or what I tried to say for the desire. The desire that does not consist in setting up an object, with saying: I wish this. One does not wish, for example, freedom and liberty, etc. It is zero. One is in situations.. Interview segments from : « **G comme Gauche :** L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze, 1988 ». Yet, Martin, unlike Deleuze, did sign *L'appel.* Did he hope to 'shake the feeling that he had missed an opportunity'? By signing, did he hope to redeem his status from its STO taint? Did he believe in *L'appel's* rhetoric and promise? Was he simply part of the era where, as Deleuze said, *L'appel* was the primary question?

[20] Translation mine.

In the height of these tensions, in 1951, Martin's mother Marguerite died from lung and cardiac failures. Martin inherited a large sum of money from her, but also re-inherited lasting problems with his father, Henri. Authoritarian and dominating, among other things, Henri never forgave Martin for choosing philosophy rather than his own unfulfilled medical aspirations. When Henri died in 1969, five years after Jacques, neither father not son had resolved their conflicts with one another, and the disconnect forced Martin to fend for himself without parental support, even through his struggle with schizophrenia.

So, without work, without income, and without stable support, Martin dreamed of days in Italy and a trip to the United States that would never result. In the meantime, Martin's only documented actions after signing *L'Appel* are his French translations of two German texts: Ernest Wiechart's *Misse Sine Nomine* from 1950-1951, and Herman Hesse's *Les Jeu des Perles de Verre* in 1955. Along with his translation of Hegel's *L'Esprit du Christianisme et son Destin*, these works are all that remains of Martin's academic textuality. And, apart from choosing their object, Martin's translations reveal little about his own ideas and inclinations.

In his autobiography again, Althusser remembers a day when Jacques Martin announced that he had destroyed all of his work. What and how much Martin destroyed is unclear. What is clear is that upon destroying all of his own productions, Martin became a true *l'homme sans oeuvre* - a term both Jacques and Michel Foucault had attributed to Martin and his condition.

His condition: nothing in Martin's academic files hint toward Martin's condition outside of his past scholastic record. So it is up to this point, as I have attempted to put together a timeline of sorts for Jacques Martins life that my work fails. Gaping holes, ignored tangents, all that would complicate the linear nature of my narrative has been carefully streamlined into the above story of one man and his life, part of it. I have, in effect, falsified all that this chapter contains, as no life is as unilinear as the story I have told. Particularly not the life of Jacques Martin, as he most likely considered himself no *one* in particular.

Chapter 2

'I think the colloquial word is co-dependence...' but the theoretical discussion may be one of cannibalism, friendship, mourning and alterity. The textual collaborations of Foucault, Jacques Martin and Louis Althusser can be seen as process of cannibalism, an eating of the other, a digesting that blurs the boundary between self and other. Derrida describes this process as the necessity of perpetual mourning, which, for Althusser and Foucault began even before Jacques Martin's suicide in 1964.[21]

> *Upon the death of the other we are given to memory, and thus to interiorization, since the other, outside us, is now nothing. And with the dark light of this nothing, we learn that the other resists the closure of our interiorizing memory. With the nothing of this irrevocable absence, the other appears as other, and as other for us, upon his death or at least in the anticipated possibility of a death, since death constitutes and makes manifest the limits of a* me *or an* us *who are obliged to harbor something that is greater or other than them;* something outside of them within them.[22]

While Derrida's work raises poignant questions as to who is mourned, what is mourned and what responsible acts of mourning consist of and in, the stories of Foucault Althusser's mourning in life and death of Martin illustrate two examples of the unsuccess of successful mourning. Derrida describes this as follows:

---

[21] Derrida, *Memoires,* p.6
[22] Ibid, p. 35

> *Drawing on Freud's conceptualization of narcissism, Derrida is led to the formulation: "we are never ourselves, and between us, identical to us, a 'self' is never in itself or identical to itself" (Mémoires 28). Where he occupies psychoanalytic theory to theorize non self-identity at the heart of identity, he is led to the position that we are inevitably cannibal selves. The distinction between the abnormal (mourning) self and the normal self of integrity could not be sustained. The normal self does not possess integrity any more than the mourning self. The obvious lack of self-identity that is seen when the other is mourned in fact pertains in a more generalized way to every subject constituted with alterity at its heart. We are the constant interiorization/incorporation of the other.* [23]

Derrida's challenge to the notion of self as individual also pushes forward intriguing descriptions of mourning as essential to friendship as such. This introduction to Derrida's rich discussion is also an introduction to the relationship between Althusser and Jacques Martin. In *Louis Althusser: Une Biography*, Yann Moulier Boutang suggests in passing that by the end of Althusser's life, and in his autobiographies, Althusser was no longer writing his own story, but that of Jacques Martin's. Is it possible that in remembrance, in mourning and in friendship Althusser had so merged Martin with his own understanding of self, that any distinction between the two had been lost? The idea is at least intriguing, and at most, entirely accurate. While Boutang only suggests the possibilities, Althusser and Martin's legacies leave a trace of merging texts, memoirs and actions that have prompted the following exercise. By laying partial stories of each man onto the other, a picture emerges not of Martin, nor of Althusser, but of the one man each may have been writing his life to become. At once an exercise in creative writing and bibliography making, the following text might read for the possibilities such a merging of tales might evoke:

---

[23] Deutscher, P. *"Mourning the Other, Cultural Cannibalism, and the Politics of Friendship (Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray)." differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 1998 Vol. 10, #3 pp. 159-184 – www. muse.jhu.edu

I was born in Paris, 15 miles away from the border of Algeria[24]. My grandfather was a forest ranger and we lived a nice life there in the mountains. As I had neither mother, nor father, it is with them, at ages 4 and 5, that I was born.[25]

'My name is Pierre Berger.'[26]

No, I'm sorry, that isn't true at all. In point of fact, I am named for a dead man. He is my father's deceased brother, my mother's exanimate love. I know the stories; my namesake died gloriously in the war - but with his death, my own life ended before it began.[27] I guess my father hurried

---

[24] Both Jacques Martin and Louis Althusser told the fondest stories of their childhood in reference to the time they spent living with their respective grandparents. While Martin lived with his maternal grandparents in Névers as his mother struggled with tuberculosis, Althusser went to live with his maternal grandparents at the age 4 in order to avoid catching his younger sister's bout of scarlet fever. In the beginning of Althusser's earliest autobiography, entitled *The Facts,* Louis Althusser's identification with this period of life was stressed in the beginning of his first autobiography, where he wrote: *My name is Pierre Berger. Actually, that is not true. It was my maternal grandfather's name and he died of exhaustion in 1938, having ruined his health working on his own as a forest ranger for the National Forestry Commission in the mountains of Algeria. ...I was born at the age of four in their forestry house in the Bois de Boulogne overlooking Algiers.* Excerpt taken from "The Facts" *The Future Lasts Forever,* p 289.

[25] Althusser told Moulier Boutang that: [Martin's] *parents had literally abandoned him, leaving him to fend for himself. His father, a chemist, was a terrifying man who never opened his mouth in his son's presence, but his mother, who had been dead a long time, had left him a little money. I do not know how he managed to live on it.* (Taken from *The Future Lasts Forever,* p 133). The reasons why Martin never told Althusser of his mother's tuberculosis is unknown. While both men (then small boys) relished the time they spent as children with their grandparents, they both had a maternal aunt that caught their hearts as well. Did Martin keep his mother and father's existence a secret to increase the image of similarity between himself and Althusser? Did he consider them 'dead' to him even though he continued a relationship with his mother through all of his father's anger? The answers are unknown.

[26] See footnote 2. *The Future Lasts Forever,* p. 289.

[27] Throughout Althusser's autobiographies and Moulier Boutang's biography of Louis Althusser, Althusser speaks of struggling to be seen as someone, in his own eyes and in the eyes of others, particularly his mother's. The following quote, found in Althusser's *The Future Lasts Forever,* reads: *When I was born, I was christened Louis. I know it only too well. For a long time, Louis was a name I literally detested. It was too short, had only one vowel and ended in the sharp 'ee' sound which offended me (bear this in mind when I later come on to my fantasy of the stake). Doubtless it also said yes a little too readily on my behalf,*

home to report his brother's death, and seeing his brother's beautiful mourning love, he took it upon himself to propose in his dead brother's stead[28]. She accepted, but could never respect my father. To her he was a flirting tyrant, a spendthrift chemist and a man with a penis that would infect my mother with human flesh; my younger sister and I are just the physical manifestations of that violence[29,30]. Ultimately my mother found her own degree of satisfaction: she never stopped pining for her first and only love: she kept him alive inside my name[31]. I didn't stand a chance, she loved him right through me. [32]

---

and I rebelled against this 'yes', which corresponded to my mother's desire rather than to mine. Above all, it contained the sound of the third person pronoun ('lui'), which deprived me of any personality of my own, summoning as it did an anonymous other. It referred to my uncle, the man who stood behind me: 'Lui' was Louis. It was him my mother loved, not me. p. 39

[28] The story is told in *The Future Lasts Forever* on p 35: *On a Sunday the Althussers would sometimes 'go up' to the forestry house and, as their respective children were growing up and relatively well matched in age... the parents agreed they should marry. I do not know why, but Louis, the younger boy, was paired with Lucienne, and Charles, the elder with Juliette. In fact I know quite well; it was because their natural affinity was obvious from the start.* And the story continues: *One day in 1917, my father turned up alone at the forestry house in the Bois de Boulogne and told the Berger Family that his brother Louis had been killed while serving as an observer in a plane over Verdun. Them Charles took my mother aside in the garden and ended up proposing that 'he should take Louis's place and marry her'.* (p. 35).

[29] In Chapters 3 and 4 of *The Future Lasts Forever*, Althusser describes Lucienne's unhappiness, her disgust for all things sexual, and her continued love for the deceased Louis. It was Martin's father who was a chemist and a pharmacist. In Yann Moulier Boutang's autobiography, Althusser recalled that Martin's father was a tyrant, while his own was deeply sensual, flirting with his wife's friends in front of his own family.

[30] Louis Althusser and his sister, Georgette, were, seemingly, conceived by force upon a passive aggressive wife and victim: *Once the wedding had taken place, my father spent a few days with my mother before returning to the front. My mother, it seems, was left with three appalling memories of that period: one was of being sexually violated by her brutal husband; another was of seeing all her savings frittered away by him in a single evening of eating and drinking (my father's behavior was surely understandable given that he was returning to the front and perhaps going to his death. He was indeed a very sensual man... Finally my father decided without further ado that my mother should at once give up her job as a teacher, and therefore, the world she had chosen for herself. She would be having children, and besides he wanted her to be at home just for him. Thereupon, he went back to the front, leaving my mother robbed, raped, and shattered; physically brutalized, deprived of the savings she had patiently accumulated (something in reserve, one never knows – sex and money are closely linked here), and cut off from the life she had begun to make for herself and to enjoy.* From *The Future Lasts Forever*, p 38.

[31] In The Future Lasts Forever, p 53, Louis Althusser reports feeling lost under his mother's gaze and affection: Both in [my mother's] presence and away from her, I always had the feeling that I did not exist in or for myself... I always felt there had been a mistake, and that it was not really me she loved or was even looking at... When she looked at me, it was not me she saw, but another person, the other Louis, who was

To protect her young projection, my mother forced me to walk to school each day with our housekeeper, my warden. I watched through the windows as all the other boys played together before school and I stayed inside, a prisoner to my mother's phobias[33]. I was a model student, and yes, I was smug and rebellious with my teachers[34]. I learned languages with incredible ease: Moravian, Polish, German[35]... perhaps no one saw

---

not me... He stood behind me, in some infinite and imaginary sky which was for ever marked by his death. It was as if she looked through me. I disappeared under her gaze...

[32] Louis Althusser, in Chapter V of his latter autobiography, *The Future Lasts Forever* writes: *...I knew early on (children are unbelievably perceptive about things which adults fail to see, though such perceptions are certainly not conscious) that my mother whom I loved with all my heart loved someone else through and beyond me, using my physical presence to remind her of a person who was absent, or rather seeing his presence through my absence. It was only* later *I discovered this person had been* dead *a long time. ...I was doomed to be a pale reflection, that of a dead man, perhaps evens a dead person myself.* p. 55

[33] In *The Future Lasts Forever* on p 52, Althusser remembers: *When we were in Algiers, I had to cross only one quiet road to get to the local school, three hundred yards or so from where we lived (in the rue Station-Sanitaire). But my mother hired an Algerian maid to take me there. We always arrived at school too early, so that I would not be late (another of my mother's phobias). ...Instead of waiting outside until the school opened, former colleagues of my mother had arranged for me to wait in the playground until the teachers arrived... The French and Algerian boys would be playing marbles against the wall or running around together quite freely, making a lot of noise. I arrived looking rather prim, since that was how I had been taught to behave, accompanied by our Moorish maid who never said a word... Ten minutes later, the other kids came running and shouting into the playground just as lessons were about to start. I was no longer on my own, but there was now no chance of joining in with them. I found this (daily) ritual unbearable and was ashamed of being a teacher's 'pet', just so that my mother would not worry about all the risks I ran when I was in the streets: meeting the wrong sort of people, catching germs, etc.*

[34] Yann Moulier Boutang reports that Jacques Martin was: *Brillant, mordant, en rebellion avec nombre de ses professeurs, il est toujours prix d'excellence.* Taken from *Louis Althusser*, p 454. Martin's records and documentation at the École normale attest to his excellent academic performance and say nothing of quarrels with his teachers. Louis Althusser, on the other hand, writes in his autobiographies that he was 'a model student' – that he learned to emulate the preferences of his teachers, mastering the way to solid grades by learning the quirks and prejudices of his instructors. From p 93 of *The Future Lasts Forever*: *As I suggested before, a teacher does not dislike seeing his own image projected back at him and often does not even recognize it. ..What personal benefit did I derive form this? Of course there was the advantage of immediately being promoted to the top of the class, of enjoying at last the respect of my young friends – above all that of the senior boys – and of being accepted as one of the class. But at what price! I still suffer from the sense of having practiced a real deception. I already suspected I was only able to exist through artifice, by adopting characteristics which were not my own.*

[35] Martin's language skills exceeded that of his colleagues as he entered the École normale in 1941. He was exempted, by examination, from the living language courses required of his compatriots, and his grasp of German earned him several contracts for translation, but more impressively, at a very early age this ability enabled him to translate Hegel's *L'Esprit du Christianisme et Son Destin* for his own sake and to the benefit of Althusser. Althusser's dependence on this translation implies that he could not decipher the

the two unspeakable languages I would later manifest. Regardless, I was always at the top of my class.

During my adolescence, I changed schools and my mother changed my sheets. I remember that there was an age, a time, when I woke up to find them stained. My mother bore through me, to see my youth, to see my unmanned masturbation, to see my filth[36]. Did she see me then at all? It didn't matter. I soon made my first close friend at age 12[37]. We were Catholic and we were Scouts. At night, after my friend and I had finished hiking the countryside with our scout leader, we huddled close in our tent, in the ravine, and in a parish theatre and against his back my penis grew

---

original German text and raises questions about his claims in *The Future Lasts Forever,* which read as follows: *I set about quickly learning this dialect with great enthusiasm and did so quickly and readily, which didn't surprise me in the least since the change of language both was both fascinating and easy for me. Much later I had occasion to learn to speak a little Polish (a language which is so difficult to pronounce, yet my pronunciation was such that I passed for a native Pole,) the German as spoken in the camps, and also literary German, and of course* Lycée *English which I pronounced with a splendid but provocatively American accent that I picked up goodness knows where, probably form the radio... I learnt these languages so easily that I decided I must 'have a gift', as they say, for foreign languages. ...Much later, I came to the conclusion that my learning of languages and specifically my exact pronunciation of the phonemes of foreign languages, to the extent that it was not clear where I was from, must have come* both *from my desire to imitate* and *therefore to seduce, but* also *at the same time from a simple wish to do it well.* (p. 76)

[36] *I was nearly thirteen and we were living in Marseille. For some weeks, with considerable satisfaction, I had registered an acute, burning sensation of pleasure at night in my sexual organs, followed by an agreeable feeling of relief. In the morning I noticed large, dull stains on the sheets. It does not much matter whether I was aware that I was having wet dreams, since I knew quite well it had something to do with my sexual organs. On e morning I had got up as usual and was having coffee in the kitchen when my mother came in looking solemn and serious and said: 'Come with me, son.' She took me into my bedroom, pulled back the blankets in front of me, and pointed to the large dull, dry stains on my sheets. She gazed at me for a moment or two with a restrained look of pride on her face, which suggested that something momentous had occurred. Feeling it was her duty to measure up to the occasion, she declared: 'Now you are a man, my son!' I was overcome with shame and an unbearable sense of rebellion. My mother had dared to grub around in my sheets, and had invaded my privacy, the most intimate part of my naked body, in other words, my sexual organs, just as if she had looked into my pants or grabbed hold of my penis to show it off (as if it belonged to her!); and she had a horror o sex. Added to this, she had forced herself (which I strongly sensed), as if it were her duty, to point it out and comment on it in such and obscene manner. ...I had been raped and castrated by my mother, who felt she had been raped by my father (but that was her affair, not mine).* Family fate *was indeed inescapable.* From *The Future Lasts Forever,* p 51.

[37] In *The Future Lasts Forever,* Althusser recounts his friendship with "Paul"*: It was love at first sight. We became inseparable companions and were soon making plans together...* from p 83.

hard with pleasure.[38,39] I didn't understand, at the time, about that hardness. But from that time on, my friend and I shared everything; even his childhood sweetheart[40]. While he swooned after the real thing, I looked for my own copies of his love, which would always be shorter, with dark hair and the same impressive profile. Still, I can't hide that I felt betrayed when he married her[41].

Had it not been for my grandparents, I may never have learned to be loved at all. It was only in growing up with them that I learned what it was to be seen and to be loved by someone in return. My grandfather gave love,

---

[38] Did Althusser have homosexual tendencies? It seems more likely that in retrospect, Althusser has so blended himself with Martin that he has taken on even his sexual preferences in his memory. In *The Future Lasts Forever,* Althusser writes*: Someone who had recently become a friend and had been in Germany on compulsory labour service, not from political conviction – he favoured the communists – but out of intellectual curiousity, was Jacques Martin; he understood me, understood us both. He was a homosexual and though warm-hearted was an unhappy and somewhat distant person due to his latent schizophrenia; he non the less became a valued friend. I could ask him anything, unlike my fellow students at the École to whom I was ashamed to reveal my ignorance... Martin responded to me like the real brother I had never had."* p. 133.

[39] From *The Future Lasts Forever: On one particular occasion we were camping near Allos in a beautiful meadow looking down on the valleys...We stayed there alone, alone at last, tenderly entwined in our mutual anguish and crying over our fate. I remember very clearly having an erection as we hugged each other; that was all that happened but the unexpected erection was a most pleasurable experience... The same thing happened during what was referred to as the 'first-class expedition', a test which enabled us to win a special badge and earn promotion. ...We had a tent with us, but it was starting to rain so we looked for shelter, which we found in a very tiny village by knocking on the local priest's door. He unlocked the little parish theatre, and we lay down in each other's arms under our blankets, possibly as a way of keeping warm but really out of love and affection. Again I felt myself having an erection. The same thing happened the next day at noon when Paul started to have terrible stomach pains as we were going through a gorge. He was writing about on the ground, and to comfort him I again took him in my arms. Once more I felt the same unfulfilled pleasure in the pit of my warm stomach (innocent that I was I didn't know it could be satisfied...)* pp. 84-85.

[40] In a personal confession that may mix with memories of Martin, Althusser writes: *One might have thought I was destined to become a homosexual without my suspecting it, but that was certainly not the case. Alongside the boys' troop there was a parallel troop of girls... One of them was a girl with dark hair who was too tall for my taste, but she had a striking, classic profile and fascinated me because she was so stunningly beautiful. Paul fell in love with her and naturally confided in me... From that point on I devoted myself wholeheartedly to this love by proxy, as if I loved the girl myself.* See p. 85.

[41] While Althusser states that he was supportive of Paul's decision to wed, Moulier Boutang's memoir of Althusser shows that he fell into a depression at Paulo's decision and begged him to hold back.

instruction and gifts with no strings attached[42]. He taught me to shoot rabbits, make compost, plant crops and laugh in the company of other working men. But I was still a schoolboy with much to learn that he would never think to teach me.

I continued to do well in school. In my final years of the Lycée, I took first place in the national exam[43]. For my father, this might have been the ticket to a first class medical education[44]. Instead, I applied to L'École normale superior, and to his severe and lasting chagrin, I debated between

---

[42] Althusser, on p. 65 of *The Future Lasts Forever* includes an interesting bit of text on his relationship with his grandfather, which reads: *I was very struck by the fact that my grandfather, who never stopped moaning and groaning about everything with everyone else albeit quietly and through his moustache, behaved quite differently towards me. In fact, I never for a moment feared he would abandon me. If he happened to fall silent when I was with him, I never had a sense of anguish (which was not the case with my mother or father!). For he only fell silent in order to talk to me. Each time it was to point out and explain the wonders of the forest which I was not yet aware of. Rather than ask anything of me, he continued to shower me with gifts and surprises. That is how I first came to realize what it is like when someone loves you. The impression I had on each occasion was of receiving something without being expected to give anything in return. This proved to me that I existed in my own right.* Althusser also speaks of time in the mill with his grandfather and the enjoyment he procured from watching the men, with their rough hands and straight speech, as they labored and later and ate and drank together in celebration of a hard day's work. Althusser's time as a war prisoner, as we will see later, seems to revive these memories of male camaraderie in a way that helps him enjoy his imprisonment more than his freedom. With this in mind, one wonders about the references to abandonment and silence that are in the above quote, and whether his experience and pleasure in the house of his grandparents compares to his experience and pleasure as a POW.

[43] Excerpt from page 454 of *Louis Althusser: Une Biography,* by Moulier Boutang, which translates roughly as follows: "In October, 1936, he earned the French first prize in open competition, (he already had the affinity for philosophy, said one of his examiners). The national Ministry of Education offered the laureates a voyage to Dahomey. A picture was taken during the voyage. It is of a young blonde man with a great face, still a little thin, with large glasses, who is distracted from the camera's objective."

[44] While few of Martin's disagreements with his father are known, Moulier Boutang writes about a typical father son argument over professions that turned into a permanent divide between Martin and Henri. Page 454, *Louis Althusser: Une Biography,* translated roughly as follows: "It was a Professor Michel Alexandre and his wife who would mark him [Martin] profoundly. According to his sister, Jacqueline, Madame Alexandre who set him up against his family by telling him that the trade of a pharmacist is the trade of a 'tradesman'... He had a violent argument with his father regarding the legion of honor. He found in this period, but not without its own evils, a certain relationship with his mother, but completely revolted against his father, who looked on his scholarly orientation with an evil eye. He slackened more and more the ties with Denfert Place, his family home." Apparently Martin's father had hoped his son would study to be the doctor he could not be, and was angered by Martin's course of study. Is it too much to say that something else must have been wrong to provoke such a permanent divide, or was it simply the strong will of a father against the growing will of his son?

philosophy and law[45]. I was, again, at the top of my entering class and a star candidate for the eventual aggregation[46].

After a year of deliberation then, I chose a course (and at least a near future,) in philosophy generally, and Kant particularly. To live as if each act would be universalized, that is what I knew when I left the École to serve my country[47]. I was a Kantian for the Germans, and a prisoner of war for the French, but I was never a Nazi for anyone. Six years in the German camp taught me to masturbate, to read Marx and Hegel, and to love the sanctity of the infirmary[48]. I made friends in the camp. It was

---

[45] In an interesting yet short reference letter in Martin's ENS files, a professor notes that after some debate, Martin chose to study philosophy over law. The debate is attributed to Jacques personal enjoyment of philosophy outside of the University climate, and his fear that this enjoyment might change or be stifled once his work in the field was formalized or requisite. Echoing Martin's later decisions not to formally join the French Communist Party, it is possible to guess that Martin, unlike Althusser, resisted group adhesion and corporate decision making. I will return to this later in the text.

[46] Eventually, however, both Martin and Foucault would go forward for the aggregation and be rejected. While Foucault would persist and eventually publish his groundbreaking aggregation thesis on madness and confinement, Martin suffered with schizophrenia to the point that he was unable to produce cohesive thoughts and work.

[47] Althusser felt that Martin's 'Kantian' obligation to duty, and inability to avoid fulfilling such obligations, was a large part of what determined Martin's actions. See page 454 of *Louis Althusser: Une Biography* for the following quote, translated roughly, this reads: "At the time he was very Kantian. It was in the name of Kant ("act as if your maxim was universal") that he refused the easily accessible options for Normaliens to evade departure in STO."

[48] Althusser spent four years within a German camp for POWs and Martin spent two years in mandatory labor service in Francfort sur le Main. The combined six years were quite different experiences for both men. While Martin's STO service shook his Germanic cultural roots, Althusser foiled his own plots for escape from imprisonment. Martin found solace in Hegel and Marx, while Althusser clung to the security he felt with the confines of the prison camp. In *The Future Lasts Forever,* Althusser writes: *In actual fact I have to admit I began to feel quite at home as a prisoner (I was genuinely comfortable because I felt genuinely secure under the protection of German guards and behind barbed wire). I was untroubled by my parents and I confess I that I found life easy because I enjoyed the comradeship of real men and I was happy because I was well protected. We were behind barbed wire, watched over by armed guards and subjected to the vexations of roll-calls, searches, fatigues. We were very hungry during the first and last years, yet how can I explain it, I felt secure and protected from all danger simply because I was a prisoner. I never seriously thought of escaping, despite the example of several friends who tried their luck as many as six times.* Yet for Althusser, having found a plan of escape, he was satisfied with simply knowing a solution which he would never put into practice: *In essence I had found a way of escaping from the camp* without actually leaving *and of remaining a prisoner in order to escape! Though I perfected my plan, I did not carry it out, but simply prided myself on the fact that I had found 'the solution'. Having proved that I could*

one of the times of my life when I felt most secure. Caught within the barbed wire I was again among my grandfather's working men: escaping that primary, terrifying tool of the state: *the family,* my family, our family.[49] Although it couldn't have been otherwise... I had no other choice at the time.

When I returned to Paris from Germany, I met the wife I would later kill...[50] Yes, kill. She was Jewish and I was unfaithful[51]. Before and after

---

do it, there was no need to put it into practice. I have often thought since that the 'solution' came from deep within me, combining a fear of danger and the absolute need for security to produce a fictitious act of bravery. See page 108.

[49] On page 104 of *The Future Lasts Forever,* Althusser begins to discuss the state's use of the family for its own ends. His reliance on Marx here comes to the fore, yet as Althusser mentioned briefly on p 110, just after the following passage, he heard of Marx for the first time while in prison, and had met only one lone communist at this point in his life. In the following quote, Althusser must be looking retrospectively, post-Martin's re-introduction of Marx to Althusser. Whose idea Althusser is espousing is difficult to ascertain. Yet, given the climate of his friendships with Foucault and Martin, this unattributability may be the further mark of key authorship.

[50] The story of Hélène Légotien's death is told in Althusser's autobiography, *The Future Lasts Forever.* And while the event was broadcast in the media, Althusser's own description is an eerie tale of *im*personality: *Suddenly,* writes Althusser, *I was up and in my dressing-gown at the foot of the bed in my flat at the École normale... Hélène, also in a dressing-gown, lay before me on her back. Her pelvis was resting on the edge of the bed, her legs dangled on the carpet. Kneeling beside her, leaning across her body, I was massaging her neck. I would often silently massage the nape of her neck and her back. I had learnt the technique as a prisoner-of-war from little Clerc, a professional footballer who was an expert at all sorts of things. But on this occasion I was massaging the front of her neck. I pressed my thumbs into the hollow at the top of her breastbone and then, still pressing slowly moved them both, one to the left, the other to the right, up towards her ears where the flesh was hard. I continued massaging her in a V-shape. The muscles in my forearms began to feel very tired; I was aware that they always did when I was massaging. Hélène's face was calm and motionless; her eyes were open and staring at the ceiling. Suddenly, I was terror struck. Her eyes stared interminably, and I noticed the tip of her tongue was showing between her teeth and lips, strange and still.* pp. 16-17.

[51] Page 117 of *The Future Lasts Forever,* Althusser writes: *Gradually I discovered her background. She was born of a Jewish family, by the name of Rytmann from the borders of Russian and Poland, who had fled the pogroms. She herself was born in France in the Eighteenth District, near the rue Ordener, and used to play in the gutter with other children from the same street.* Additionally, Althusser's cacophony of amorous tales in *The Future Lasts Forever* is usually read as his own justifications against accusations that Hélène was controlling his every move. Still he writes that he repeatedly introduced her to each of his lovers, waiting for her response and approval. Naturally this was never given, and according to the autobiography, Hélène became melancholy and remorseful in response. See pp. 154-155.

my return, that is when the sickness began[52]. But I loved her, my future wife. In fact I literally physically loved her, my first, for the first time in my life. Immediately afterward, I had to be hospitalized[53]. The depression was unbearable and I swore (falsely) that I would never make love with her again; I feared that I couldn't bear it.

As the story of Martin and Althusser continues, the two begin to cannibalize one another until all that they never share is Martin's suicide. Althusser's autobiography constantly

---

[52] In the chapter titled "Les Jeu des Perles de Verre", Moulier Boutang describes the only picture of Martin's schizophrenia which exists on paper : his obituary, written by Louis Althusser. Along with a dedication written by Althusser in *For Marx* which alludes to Martin as 'the friend... in the most terrible ordeal', this obituary provides a unique sketch of a man suffering from what we would now call mental illness. Just who that man is, be it Jacques Martin or Louis Althusser, is allusive. The obituary reads as follows, from p 451 of *Louis Althusser:*

"He decided it was enough when he knew that he was going to lose his reason of living: his intelligence, the ultimate edge of this intelligence was, in the final count, a feature drawn from hope, this act of clearness: to precede the night.

Perhaps he had known it was coming? Perhaps it was a recourse. We at least, cannot survive to him without the tearing at this thought. But which recourse? He knew for a long time, knowing its evil, that in last authority, he alone could decide to live.

He fought during twenty years, cold, calm, complete, precise, never weakening nor yielding, without even one word of complaint: worthy. He chose death deliberately so as not to live another death in the night of an anguish without term.

Others before him died, having lucidly risked the limits, in science or the action, and died from the effects of their freedom. He was unable to choose these limits: life had enclosed him forever there, in this dreadful captivity, he made an extraordinary experiment of the intelligence: its only freedom.

Twenty years before us he saw what we start to foresee; in twenty years we will be still at his school. The thought which he left, in two sixteen year old writings, and in all his acts and matters until the end, had an edge of his death: a blade."

[53] The story of Althusser's hospitalization is intriguing. He tells it as follows: *The' drama' began to gather pace a few days later when Hélène kissed me while sitting beside me on the bed, still in my little room in the sick-bay. I had never kissed a woman (though I was thirty!), and certainly never been kissed by one. Desire welled up within me and we made love on the bed. It was new, thrilling, exhilarating, and violent. When she left, I was plunged into a profound state of anguish from which I could not escape. I telephoned Hélène the next day to tell her very firmly I would never make love with her again. But it was too late. The sense of anguish would not go away, indeed it got more unbearable with each passing day... Hélène was very worried and advised me to consult a specialist... We made an appointment with Pierre Mâle, the great psychiatrist of his day, who questioned me for a long time and came to the conclusion I was suffering from 'dementia praecox'(!) I was put in Esquirol ward, a huge communal ward, and immediately cut off from the outside world...* page 124, *The Future Lasts Forever.* Althusser's second doctor later stated that he was not suffering from dementia praecox, but from melancholia, and he recommended shock treatments twice a day for twelve days.

alludes to an invisibility and feeling of nonexistence that is made poignant in the following confession, he writes:

> *Having no authentic existence of my own, doubting myself to the point of believing I was insensitive, and feeling I was incapable of sustaining an emotional relationship with anyone, I was reduced to practicing artifice, seduction, and deception to love others (since love others calls forth love in return)... Since I did not really exist,* ***I was simply a creature of artifice, a non-being, a dead person who could only love and be loved by means of artifice and deception which mimicked those whose love I sought and whom I tried to love by seducing them.***[54]

But was Althusser being too self-reproachful in this confession? Is it not the nature of friendship to somehow absorb bits of the other, to digest them into oneself? Again, we return to Derrida, who writes *"we are never ourselves, and between us, identical to us, a 'self' is never in itself or identical to itself."* The ending of this friendship and this cannibalism can only occur in death, when the mutual digestion of the other is ended and replaced by the work of mourning. If we finish the above 'story' of an Althusser who is at once Jacques Martin, and vice versa, we would be forced to conclude with a separation, one in which the shared 'I' of the above narrative sinks back into a singular human body that dies physical deaths. Derrida, in writing on the death of his own friend, Paul de Man, explains this as follows:

> *...we know our friend to be gone forever, irremediably absent, annulled to the point of knowing or receiving nothing himself of what takes place in his memory . . . it would be unfaithful to delude oneself into believing that the other living in us is living in himself: because he lives in us and because we live this or that in his memory, in memory of him.*[55]

Therefore, as Althusser writes his autobiography, it is possible that the crosswork he evokes between his life and Martin's is not a writing of deception, but of honesty; an

---

[54] Althusser, Louis. *The Future Lasts Forever*, p 89. Emphasis mine.
[55] Derrida, Jacques. Memoires, p. 21

honesty that both and singularly recognizes and speaks of the alterity of Martin and Martin's death in himself, and the union via digestion that arose and persisted from their friendship even after death. Thus the story may end:

> Soon there after, I went to the library, I withdrew my work and I took it back to my apartment[56]. I gave it only as a gift to myself in my friend Louis Althusser. I remembered Beloyannis; the true revolutionary[57]. He died with a red carnation across his chest. When they found me I had a rose in his stead. In my room, in the 16th district, not far from the rue d'Ulm where I began.

[56] No thesis exists on file at the École Normale for Jacques Martin, though it is rumored that Martin may have given the only copy to Althusser before committing suicide.
[57] Beloyannis was a Greek Communist, known as the 'Man with the Red Carnation'. He was shot for his revolutionary action and became an icon and a martyr for many.

CHAPTER 3

The story of Jacques Martin, as told through the work of Michel Foucault, often isn't told at all. When it comes to hallowing the ideas or the impact of the friendship that Foucault shared with Jacques Martin, in print or speech Foucault scarcely mentions him. Unlike Althusser's constant acknowledgments of Martin's friendship and impact, it is in Foucault's discourses and formations of work, or rather, the absence of work, that Martin's figure begins to emerge. In excess of friendship and collaboration, both the man and the symbol that was Martin played an important role which enabled Foucault to draw out and define *l'absence d'oeuvre.* More importantly it is the figure of Martin in Foucault's texts that draws out a more developed reading of 'work' from the whole of Kant's theses in the *Critique of Pure Reason,* nuancing and augmenting his overt discussion of work and beauty in the *Critique of Judgment.* The story of Foucault and Martin is then, not only and intriguing story of friendship and collaboration, it is the story of an idea and its development from Kant, through Heidegger to the pen of Foucault and the pages of his texts.

Before examining the absence of work, or what Shoshana Felman calls 'unaccomplishment at work', I would like to explore two readings of the formation of the concept 'work' itself, as it was first defined by Kant. From there I would like to explore the link between Kant's notion of work and Foucault's theorization of its absence by looking at two of Foucault's publications which mere most markedly influenced by the figure of Jacques Martin and his friendship with Foucault: *L'Histoire de La Folie à l'age*

Classique and an article entitled "Madness, the Absence of Work". Following this, it is important to look through the lens of Martin, as symbol and as friend, at attempts made in secondary literature which systematize Foucault's own work along the lines of a false concept of an absence of work, in order to offer an alternative viewing which allows Foucault's own work the freedom from *oeuvre* making it both seeks and deserves.

While compatriots at the École Normale Superior, Michel Foucault was Jacques Martin's junior by four years. Yet as schizophrenia's hold on Martin became greater and greater, it was Foucault, among a handful of others, who took responsibility for Martin by loaning him money and the support of friendship. Before ending his own life, Jacques Martin suicided all traces of his own work and production, embodying the absence of work not only in his struggle with schizophrenia, but also in the physical destruction of all that he had thus far produced.

> The personal archives [of Jacques Martin] apparently did not conserve even a trace of his text. Althusser explained one day that Martin had destroyed all his papers in order to be the other part, "A philosopher without work", an expression that Foucault and he himself had consecrated, and he that provided it was probably Jacques Martin himself.[58]

In the act of destroying his writing, his work, the possibility of an *oeuvre,* Martin was doubling in on himself. At once creating and negating his own discourse, closing the dialectic between a subject and his objects, a man and his work, *l'absence d'oeuvre* took its shape in the subject of Martin. After his death, Martin's nickname took on new

[58] Moulier Boutang, Yann. *Louis Althusser.* p.258 *Les archives personnelles* [de Martin] *ne conservent apparemment pas trace de ce texte.* [Althusser] *avait explique un jour que Martin avait detruit tous ses papeirs et que c'etait d'autre part* << un philosophe sans oeuvre >>, *expression que Foucault et lui-meme ont consacree, et qui provident probablement de Jacques Martin lui-meme.* Translations are mine throughout.

textual significations: Foucault's prolific post-Martin writings doubled a void that evoked both Martin's life and his madness in *l'absence d'oeuvre.*

In 1965, one year after Jacques Martin's suicide in Paris, Foucault published *L'Histoire de la Folie à l'age Classique*[59]. This piece, written while Foucault was in Sweden, recasts the emergence of madness as the twin of unreason. The resultant work opened up an alternate, post-Hegelian and non-Marxist trajectory for history writing, the impact of which has filled many prior theses to date. Foucault's story in *L'Histoire* plays upon a rereading of Descartes, whereby Foucault takes the position of the infamous 'Cogito Ergo Sum' and demonstrates that in the shadow of Descartes certainty, madness is struck from the record of normative reasoning. The first move toward this exclusion happens as does the 'Cogito', exclusively within the subject of Descartes himself. In his first meditations, Descartes shuns the possibility of madness within his own reason as follows:

> *And how shall I deny that these hands and this body are mine? Unless perhaps I were to compare myself to those lunatics whose brains are so disturbed and blurred by their black bilious vapors that they go around calling themselves kings, while they are very poor, and saying that they are clothed in gold and crimson, while they are completely naked, or imagining that they are jugs or have a body of glass... But then, they are madmen, and I would hardly be less demented if I followed their example.*[60]

In these statements and in their implications, reason and madness became mutually exclusive counterpoints for Descartes. As Descartes is 'surely' sane by dint of his ability to reason, madness is auto-excluded from the realm of reason, and ultimately, from the

[59] Foucault, Michel. *L'Histoire de la Folie à l'age Classique.* Schoenhof Foreign Books, 1972.
[60] REFERENCE!

realm of production, from the realm of great works and the making of *oeuvres*[61]. (We will explore this link from reason to *oeuvre* making below.) But what if Descartes had followed through with his own doubt? What if he had denied the reasonableness which came so plainly to his senses? In his own words, he "...would hardly be less demented if [he] followed their [*the mad's*] example." With 200 years hindsight, we know that Descartes chose the path of certainty and self-confidence, following a route that began with 'I' and ended with the alienation of subject and object positions. Retracing Descartes arguments back to the point of doubt, Foucault takes up the possibility Descartes didn't follow in his work in *Madness and Civilization.*

In the chapter of *L'Histoire de la Folie* that was to be his first, translated into English as 'The Great Confinement,' Foucault retraces Descartes steps and tells the intermingling stories of work, reason and madness which developed in the seventeenth century out of Descartes hypotheses. As Descartes had separated reason from unreason, during 'The Great Confinement' the mad were sentenced to seclusion, separated from reasonable society. The basis for this seclusion however, was not confronted in its origin: rather, in the early stages of their confinement, the mad were viewed first as divine outcasts, close yet to redemption through their utter helplessness before God and man. With the coming of industrialized society, this view slowly shifted to reflect not the saintliness of the mad, but the sloth they came to embody.

[61] Felman, Shoshana. In a rich discussion in "Madness and Philosophy or Literature's Reason" Felman lays out a connection between Foucault's work with madness and reason and Descartes own project. Felman focuses her discussion on the importance of literature as an avenue for Foucault's own discourse on reason and madness outside philosophy and notes Derrida's critiques of *L'Histoire de la Folie.*

> *If it is true that labor is not inscribed among the laws of nature, it is enveloped in the order of the fallen world. This is why idleness is rebellion – the worst form of all, in a sense: it waits for nature to be generous as in the innocence of Eden, and seeks to constrain a Goodness to which man cannot lay claim since Adam.*[62]

In this way idleness made its way toward the definition of madness. It is within these confines of idleness that the mad (the un-reasonable), as Foucault's PhD thesis dictates, were subsequently confined, along with criminals, vagrants and the poor until they could be cured and restored to a healthy productivity.

In order to be cured of their sloth and idleness, the mad were, of course, put to work. Yet diligence and productivity alone were unable to earn healing individuals a place among the reasonable. Foucault writes that it was through their ability to value work, to see the goodness of industry, that the mad were socially reintegrated and redeemed.

> *It was in these places of doomed and despised idleness, in this space invented by a society which had derived an ethical transcendence from the law of work, that madness would appear and soon expand until it had annexed them.*[63]

Institutions that had been constructed to seclude the mad now allowed the diligent working prisoner to be released back into society, not for his merit as a laborer exactly, but more precisely for his ability to recover the ethos of the bourgeois distrust of idleness. Only when the mad could see the reasonableness of reason, the reasonableness of life in the confines of societal dictates, could they be released into the potential for a full and productive life.

---

[62] Foucault, Michel. *L'Histoire de la Folie à l'age Classique.* p 56
[63] Ibid, p 57.

As time passed, madness was more precisely defined in the then newly emerging work of 19th century psychology, and the attempt to isolate reason from madness became all the more intense. Yet in its intensity, the folly of bifurcated reason becomes all the more sketchy and difficult to pin down. For the classical age that Foucault describes, the following definition holds:

> *Imagination is not madness. Even if in the arbitrariness of hallucination, alienation finds the first access to its vain liberty, madness begins only beyond this point, when the mind binds itself to this arbitrariness and becomes a prisoner of this apparent liberty.*[64]

"Binding to the arbitrary:" only a strong conception of rationality could delineate arbitrariness from its other. However, according to Foucault's archeology, it was the search for a strong rationality in the midst of absent foundations which spurred on the exclusion of madness from reason just as Descartes had shunned his own mad demon in pursuit of the 'cogito'. In a posthumous twist of his theses, Foucault negates Descartes demon of deception by making him into an omnipresence. In other words, though Descartes feared that a mad demon might be deluding him into speaking folly in what he believes to be truth, Foucault's work digs up the archeology of such a distinction between reasonable truth speaking and unreasonable madness and negates their divisions. Within the thinking subject, inline with Foucault and contrary to Descartes, no distinction between reason and unreason can be made. Madness, according to Foucault, is therefore an 'other reason;' it is reason in all of its unreasonableness:

> *The marvelous logic of the mad which seems to mock that of the logicians because it resembles it so exactly, or rather because it is exactly the same, and because at the secret heart of madness, at the core of so many errors,*

[64] Ibid, p 93.

> *so many absurdities, so many words and gestures without consequence, we discover, finally the hidden perfection of a language.*[65]

In 'the perfection of a language' all its own, men can be made of glass for reasons as sound as those supporting the Pythagorean Theorem. Or, more precisely, for Descartes to reason that he *is* simply by virtue of thinking is no more reasonable than the thinking of a woman who believes she is a bird simply by virtue of her hunger for worms.

Yet, Foucault concedes that distinctions between the mad and the reasonable have repeatedly and historically been made and particular sign posts emerged to mark out the *differences* therein. It is here that work, *travail* and *arbiter* become just such signposts for sanity in individuals. Kant outlines not only this sanity, but also its potential for greatness in a way that would set an agenda for philosophical discourse for years in his own wake. Yet it is not this reading which illuminates the absence of work marked by Martin and the work of Foucault. Foucault and Martin's notion of the absence of work finds its origins and its contingencies in the internal break down of Kant's agenda. For this reason, before looking fully into the void and absence of work that Foucault theorizes, let us first look at Kant's foundational definitions of work and his own processing of working through the *Critique of Pure Reason,* as they reflect on the topic at hand.

In a path between reason and unreason and in the historical glorifications of work and Work, Immanuel Kant's notion of 'Opus' plays a foundation role as the antithesis of Martin's nickname (in all its contingency), and in setting apart not only the genial, but

[65] Ibid, p 95.

also the mad. At first glance we see in Kant Descartes' error repeated as it seems that, once again, it is a human being's ability to work and ultimately to produce true Work (with-a-capital-W), that separates the men from the boys, the reasonable from the unreasonable, the sane from the mad. Yet at a second glance, while Descartes mistakes his own thinking for the one and only sound and reasonable descriptor of reality, Kant separates human descriptions from the possibilities of what might be and opens a momentary space where madness might also be productive in a work not surprisingly titled *The Critique of Pure Reason.*

While Michel Foucault's work is an illustration of the false split between madness and reason, in *The Critique of Pure Reason* Immanuel Kant is dealing with his own illustration of what he considers to be another false split: that between reason and sensibility. To resolve this rationalism vs. empiricism debate that preceded him, Kant's work in the *Critique* is the analysis of precisely what reason can and cannot know. In the introduction to the 1781 first edition of *The Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant writes:

> *...the grand question is what and how much can reason and understanding, apart from experience, cognize, and not, how is the faculty of thought itself possible?*[66]

In a radical turn, which Kant compares to the Copernican Revolution, Kant shifts the 'knowability' of an object from the object itself to the capabilities of the knower.

> *It has hitherto been assumed that our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to ascertain anything about these objects a priori, by means of conceptions, and thus to extend the range of our knowledge, have been rendered abortive by this assumption. Let us then make the*

[66] Kant , Immanuel. *Introduction to the Critique of Pure Reason, First Edition, 1781.*

> *experiment whether we may not be more successful in metaphysics, if we assume that the objects must conform to our cognition.*[67]

Kant here distinguishes between the in-itself of an object and the mechanism by which our judging faculty operates on that given object to produce cognition.

> *Reason must approach nature with the view, indeed, of receiving information from it, not, however, in the character of a pupil, who listens to all that his master chooses to tell him, but in that of a judge, who compels the witnesses to reply to those questions which he himself thinks fit to propose. To this single idea must the revolution be ascribed, by which, after groping in the dark for so many centuries, natural science was at length conducted into the path of certain progress.*[68]

The analogy of the judge is a firm one in Kant. The judge applies laws which were determined outside his or her person: i.e., the judge conveys the ground, while the grounded is formed and exists outside the judge. This ground, for Kant, is inaccessible, yet he reasons that the methods by which the judge applies such laws can and should be examined to determine the limits of our understanding. This is the project he undertakes in the *Critiques* themselves, and it is this project which ultimately brings down the walls of metaphysics: in the distance between the judge and the ground of his/her judgments we enter this realm of metaphysics and it is here that we begin an eternal 'work' opened up by Kant and closed by no possible end.

Though Kant's project was a pre-examination of the tools used to construct a metaphysics, the end of metaphysics and its projects is commonly attributed to the work started in Kant's *Critiques*. The reasons for this lie in the above described abyss, which Kant outlines between the judging subject and the object of his judgments:

---

[67] Kant, Immanuel. *Preface to the Critique of Pure Reason, Second Edition, 1787.*
[68] Ibid.

> *Human reason, in one sphere of its cognition, is called upon to consider questions, which it cannot decline, as they are presented by its own nature, but which it cannot answer, as they transcend every faculty of the mind*[69]

Here Kant's agenda is set: How can one consider questions which are beyond the realm of possible consideration? He concludes that as such questions exceed the bounds of reason and experience, they are questions of an empty metaphysical nature; they are questions which the human mind cannot answer. Yet the end of metaphysics was not the aim of Kant's project: in fact he had aimed to analyze the foundations of knowing which might make way for the construction of a new, finally stable metaphysics. In setting up the tools for this future stability, Kant's earlier works on dynamics comes into play. These dynamics are the glue Kant applies to a crumbling metaphysics; it is a glue picked up by Foucault and Martin, as we shall later see.

In far different language than that of the *Critiques* Kant wrote earlier works such as *Spin-Cycle* (1754) and *Living Forces* (1749), which analyze Newton's *Principia Mathematica,* among other things. Relevant to our discussion, however is the fact that in these scientific studies Kant also anachronistically iterates the abyss he will later define between perception and the in-itself. This abyss is bridged, for Kant, by the:

> *...proposed bond of force and space — "force" understood as momentum-energy, Kant's active essence of substance, and "space" defined as Kant's dimensional continuum. For Kant, force grips the void, holding it as a dimensional presence that localizes the original pulse. Force extends space, ordering it, and space places force, governing it. Space dynamically expands; force structurally acts. Each needs the other. Without force, space would lack structure (Abmessungen or Dimensionen,) and could not place a world. Without space, force could*

[69] Ibid., p. 1

> *not be a field. Force is spaced and space is forced. This is their bond. Indeed: mass stretches spacetime, and spacetime grips mass.*[70]

In this complicated mass of force and space, Kant describes a dynamic inter-dependence wherein the energy and momentum of force finds form in the structure of space. The two never merge, and due to their interdependence, they cannot exist individually, it is in their interplay that substance *is*. If this sounds like the reason/experience dialogue later found in Kant's Critiques, the resemblance is not unfounded. Between reason and experience, there is an absent thing-in-itself that neither faculty of understanding can apprehend. In this absence, according to Kant, we work out the capacity for knowing and acting in a world which, for lack of access to the thing-in-itself, is determined by the mental structures and categories we place on it. In this absence we work out our ability to know in and endless pursuit of something always beyond reason's reach. It is in the absence of this very thing-in-itself that 'work' is again defined in Kant. It is in the absence of this very thing-in-itself that the absence of work takes shape.

Classical notions, definitions and foundations of work in Kant are traditionally derived from his writings in the third critique, the *Critique of Judgment.* Herein, Kant's main question regards the apparent purposiveness of nature:

> *We may either say that it was actually designed to be beautiful by the Supreme Force behind Nature, or we may say that purposiveness is not really resident in nature, but that our perception of it is due to the subjective needs of our judging faculty. We have to contemplate beautiful objects* as if *they were purposive, but they may not be so in reality. And this latter idealistic doctrine is what Kant falls back upon.*[71]

---

[70] Schönfeld, Martin. *Kant's Philosophical Development.* University of Florida, 2003.
[71] Kant, Immanuel. *The Critique of Judgment.* Trans. J.H. Bernard. Prometheus Books: New York, 2000. § 43. *Of Art in general,* introduction by Bernard, p xxv.

Focusing on the purposiveness that Kant ascribes to nature for the sake of cohesive reason, these traditional interpretations override the sublimated 'work' in Kant and focus on *Opus* and *oeuvre* making by looking at notions of 'genius', of 'art' versus 'nature' and mere 'technic'. Such a discussion is easily found in Kant. He plainly states:

> *(I).* Art *is distinguished from Nature, as doing (facere) is distinguished from acting or working generally (Agere), and as the product or result of the former is distinguished as* work *(Opus) from the working (effectus) of the latter.*[72]

Herein Kant established a distinction between *Opus* and *Agere*, wherein *Opus* is translated into French as *oeuvre*, or in English, masterwork or masterpiece, and connotes for Kant, the making of 'beautiful art'. *Agere* is simply manual technical labor. For this reading of Kant, production is at the heart of *Opus*, although the ability to produce is not adequate to the production of an *Opus* as the feeling of freedom is essential in a work of beauty:

> *In a product of beautiful art we must become conscious that it is Art and not Nature; but yet the purposiveness in its form must seem to be as free from all constraint of arbitrary rules as if it were a product of mere nature.*[73]

Thus far, Foucault's discussion on madness and imagination seem to qualify the mad artist for a truly Kantian *Opus*, as freedom of imagination was very close to the definition of madness for 17th century France. Yet, Kant goes on to write:

> *On this feeling of freedom in the play or our cognitive faculties, which must at the same time be purposive, rests that pleasure which alone is universally communicable, without being based on concepts... For whether we are dealing with natural or with artificial beauty we can say*

[72] Kant, Immanuel. *The Critique of Judgment*. Trans. J.H. Bernard. Prometheus Books: New York, 2000. § 43. *Of Art in general,* p. 183.
[73] Ibid, § 45. *Beautiful Art is an art, in so far as it seems like nature.* p. 187.

> *generally:* That is beautiful which pleases in the mere act of judging it (*not in the sensation of it, or by means of a concept).*[74]

Therefore, what is beautiful is *a priori* beautiful, existing as such without concepts, with out sensation, without complications of culture, experience and conditioning. Yet while Kant slips in this *a priori* judgment of beauty, one that everyone with taste and culture can, will and must ascribe to by nature, the mad under Foucault's 17th century definition are ultimately precluded from works of genius and the true creation of a true *Opus*: the consensus required between the viewers of an *Opus* is an impossibility for those who live in the light of unreason. Unreason is, for Foucault, a singular reasoning; it is outside consensus by its very definition. It is a language which cannot be imitated and cannot, therefore, go on to inspire imitation. While this is surely enough to preclude the mad from the creation of masterworks, the genius required for their production is itself beyond the stretch of the mad by Kant's definition:

> Genius *is the talent (or natural gift) which gives the rule to Art. Since talent, as the innate productive faculty of the artist, belongs itself to Nature, we may express the matter thus:* Genius *is the innate mental disposition* (ingenium) through which *Nature gives the rule to Art.*[75]

Yet here the facile reading of 'work' in Kant, as outlined above, falls through. Shifting from Kant's discussion of work to Kant's active definition of work reveals that in questions of genius and beauty, Kant's law giving judge again appears to distinguish himself from his mandates: yet this time the judge is genius itself. Kant goes on to say:

> *Whatever may be thought of this definition, whether it is merely arbitrary or whether it is adequate to the concept that we are accustomed to combine with the word* genius... *we can prove already beforehand that*

[74] Ibid, p 187.
[75] Ibid, p 188.

> *according to the signification of the word here adopted, beautiful arts must necessarily be considered as arts of* genius.

The problem with our simple interpretation of 'work,' in Kant, here comes to a head as Kant's descriptions of 'genius' and 'beautiful' double back on one another in an empty void. The beautiful is defined in the act of judgment, based on an *a priori* concept which is mitigated through an *a priori* notion of genius, yet neither *a priori* by definition, can be defined by human reason. Continuing the quote above, the problem is amplified:

> *For every art presupposes rules by means of which in the first instance a product, if it is to be called artistic, is represented as possible. But the concept of beautiful art does not permit the judgment upon the beauty of a product to be derived from any rule, which has a concept as its determining ground, and therefore has at its basis a concept of the way in which the product is possible. Therefore beautiful art cannot itself devise the rule according to which it can bring about its product. But since at the same time a product can never be called Art without some precedent rule, Nature in the subject must (by the harmony of its faculties) give the rule to Art;* i.e., *beautiful Art is only possible as a product of Genius.*[76]

Kant's own reasonableness has tied him into a knot, or rather a fold of voided space and force, much like the one which Martin and Foucault's description of work and its absence empty and fill and define. In this reading then, it is not the Critique of Judgment's discussion of work or of *Opus* making that 'work' is defined by Kant. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, as a whole, Kant takes half of what Foucault will later split into reason and madness, and inadvertently strips reason of its now hollow ability to do work, or at least, to make work known. In the dynamic between reason and experience, the mind does the work of judging, of categorizing, of making nature known to the viewing subject. Yet these judgments are empty constructs, subjects without objects, yes, subjects without objects, much like Foucault's mad and the absence of work they illustrate.

---

[76] Ibid, p 189.

Within the realm of 'work' outlined by Kant's own rigor in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the figure of Jacques Martin emerges in Foucault's texts. While compatriots at the École Normale Superior, Foucault was Martin's junior by four years. Though Martin started his work at the École before Foucault, two years of required civilian service in Germany planted him back at the École at the time of Foucault's first matriculation. It is here that the absence of work first emerges from the friendship of two promising scholars and students.

> *Preoccupied with the idea of madness, Martin was apparently the first to equate madness with the absence of work ("l'absence d'oeuvre"), an association that was taken up by both Althusser and Foucault.*[77]

Near the end of Martin's life, both Foucault and Louis Althusser helped to support Martin financially. Yet this quote by Eleanor Kaufman alludes to Foucault's indebtedness to Martin as well. Moulier Boutang claims that the timing of Martin's death and Foucault's prolific publications are uncanny; could it be that Foucault took credit for ideas that were not his own, but Martin's? While this is a tempting and juicy hypothesis, one would have to misread or simply slander Foucault to make such a point. Yet the question remains: what was the textual impact of this friendship between Martin and Foucault? In response, I propose a serious view of their relationship in light of its silence and its playfulness. As this playfulness is best illustrated in one of Foucault's most loudly silent texts on Jacques Martin, titled, "Madness, the Absence of Work," let us turn there next.[78]

---

[77] Ibid, p 62.

[78] Foucault, Michel. "Madness, the Absence of Work," *Foucault and His Interlocutors*. Ed. Arnold I. Davidson, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1997. p 97-104.

"Madness, the Absence of Work" though written long after *Madness and Civilization* is at once the prologue and the preface to Foucault's bodies of work on madness as they emerged from his friendship with Jacques Martin. Though silently included in Foucault's projections of a future where madness no longer threatens civilization, "Madness, the Absence of Work," is also the story of Martin's life and illness as witnessed by his friend Michel Foucault. Over the course of their friendship, Martin's schizophrenia rendered him incapable of reason. This occurred not only through the physical degeneration instigated by the disease 'schizophrenia', but also, according to Foucault, by definition of the very disease itself Martin found his own work doubling back onto itself in a process that repeated only constant contradiction, and ultimately, negation. Ultimately, though one of the first to translate Hegel from German to French, the mentor of Louis Althusser and compatriot of Michel Foucault's, Martin could not distinguish his mad thoughts from his reasonable ones. In truth, Martin, the linguist, scholar and one of the École Normale's top students, could not control his mind. Thus a chaotic pairing of mad and sane ideas emerged in Martin's person and thoughts; yet without the ability to distinguish between them, the value and contributions of both were lost to Martin, lost to the École and lost to history. In one of Martin's final acts of self-destruction, he destroyed all the work he had produced. Hollow, empty, indistinguishable from the voices of unreason, the oeuvre of a near-genius entered the hollow void of nothing from whence all his thoughts always and never came. Without ever explicitly saying so, "Madness, the Absence of Work" is made up from headlines of what was/is/would have been Martin's life story.

To begin with "Madness, the Absence of Work", Foucault projects to an age where perhaps, "...we will no longer now what madness was."[79] In a time such as this, Martin as genius and Martin as madman would not be contradictory statements, but the description of a subject in his fullness. Foucault writes on the distinction between madness and sanity:

> *Only the enigma of this exteriority will remain. What was, then, this strange demarcation, one will ask, that was at work from the heart of the Middle Ages until the twentieth century and possibly beyond? Why did Western culture cast from its field that in which it might just as well have recognized itself, where in fact it had recognized itself obliquely? Why has it formulated so clearly since the nineteenth century, but in a way already since the classical age, that madness was the truth of the human laid bare while nevertheless placing it in a space, neutralized and pale, where it was as it were canceled?*[80]

This strange demarcation of madness against reason, the folding over of reason onto madness and madness onto reason, these distinctions will and have withered for Foucault, but not yet for all of civilization, which still plays in the realm of reason's tricks and contrivances:

> *So the sharp image of reason will wither in flames. The familiar game of mirroring the other side of ourselves in madness and of eavesdropping from our listening posts on voices that, coming from very far, tell us more nearly what we are – this game with its rules, its strategies, its contrivances, its tricks, its tolerated illegalities will once and for all have become nothing but a complex ritual whose significations will have been reduced to ashes.*[81]

---

[79] Ibid., Aware that the urge to medicate might be seen as the fulfillment of Foucault's futuristic vision, he quickly reminds his readers that silence by pharmaceuticals is scarcely more than another version of 17th century confinement.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid, p 101.

While Martin was faced with 'the other side of [himself] in madness', he was himself, also reduced to ashes in the tumbling of reason onto itself in his person. Yet, as long as the refusal of reason's unreasonableness persists, the juxtaposition of terms such reason, unreason, object and subject will persist in all their unrecognized madness. Most of philosophy will be called to account for this split. As discourses, as dialectics which fold back on themselves these opposed terms become involved in the formation of a void and its *reserve* which for future generations, Foucault writes, will be clear signposts of our time: markers of our fear and proximity to madness itself.

Anticipating the Prozac era we now participate in due to both our fear and proximity to madness, Foucault writes that the medicating of madness is not enough to break this constant folding in on itself of reason and unreason.

> *To say that madness is disappearing today means that its implication both in psychiatric knowledge and thought of an anthropological kind is coming undone. But this is not to say that the general form of transgression, whose visible face madness has been for centuries, is also disappearing. Nor does it mean that this transgression is not giving rise to a new experience even as we are asking ourselves what madness is.*[82]

As we begin to ask ourselves what madness is now, what obtains, even in our Prozac age, are strict prohibitions on language which gag and bind the madness/reason distinction before it can be spoken.

> *That which will not take long to die, that which is already dying in us (and whose very death bears our current language) is* homo dilecticus*—the being of departure, of return, and of time; the animal that loses its truth only in order to find it again, illuminated; the self-estranged who once again recovers the unity of the self-same. This figure has been the master subject and the object slave of all the discourses concerning the human, in*

[82] Ibid, p 103.

particular human alienation which have persisted for quite some time. And fortunately it is dying beneath the babble of these discourses.[83]

Foucault then points to a time that is coming, where in mad literature such as that of Artaud is recognized as a simple sign of our era, not a breach in its thinking. This would be the case for the life of Martin as well; the implication being that if madness could enter its proper discourse, that of reason, the fullness of these two forms echoing back on one another would collapse the dichotomies that philosophy has long argued over.

Foucault is not alone in this thinking. Althusser, in his early work on Marx and Lenin, seems to echo very similar thoughts. Althusser attributes to Lenin the ability to rise over and through the top of meaningless and long argued dialectics via movement, via action. While Althusser's relationship to this call is complex, as we shall see in a later chapter, the sharing of this concept may take place in the tripartite friendship each man had with Jacques Martin. Whether influenced by Martin, by one another, or by their historical period, Foucault and Althusser share a reflection on action and language and their subsequent prohibitions in Western History. According to Foucault's text, Western History:

... has long occupied an indeterminate area, difficult for us to specify, between the prohibition directed at action and that directed at language. Hence the exemplary importance of the pair furor-inanitas, *which had practically organized the world of madness along the registers of deed and word up to the end of the Renaissance... Classical confinement envelopes, along with madness, the libertinism of thought and of speech, the obstinacy within impiety or heterodoxy, blasphemy, sorcery, alchemy – in short everything that characterizes the* spoken *and forbidden world of unreason; madness is language that is excluded...*[84]

---

[83] Ibid, p 102.
[84] Ibid.

Here the work of Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis plays an essential role in our investigation of work and its absence. If madness is, according to Foucault, 'language that is excluded' Freud's attempts to deal with everyday madness would seemingly pose further questions for Foucault. In a time when Freud's methods and techniques became household words, this 'exclusion,' in light of Freud, needs further definition. This definition comes in the subject of work, and particularly Freud's method of 'working-through'.

The concept and procedure of working-through was highlighted by Sigmund Freud's 1914 article: "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psychoanalysis II)," in which Freud describes the progressive improvements that the practice of Psychoanalysis has undergone since its conception. While enabling the analysand to remember traumatic events and their surrounding circumstances was once sufficient, 1914 practice now recognized that the seemingly 'forgotten' memory was never truly forgotten. In a process known as acting-out, the analysand replayed and repeated the initial trauma in a sometimes unrelated behavior.

> *He reproduces it not as a memory but as an action; he* repeats *it, without, of course, knowing that he is repeating it... For instance, the patient does not say that he remembers that he used to be defiant and critical towards his parents' authority; instead, he behaves in that way to the doctor. He does not remember how he came to a helpless and hopeless deadlock in his infantile sexual researches; but he produces a mass of confused dreams and associations, complains that he cannot succeed in anything and asserts that he is fated never to carry through what he undertakes.*[85]

[85] Freud, Sigmund. "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psychoanalysis II)." *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud.* Volume 12, p 150.

And this process of acting-out (defined as repetition through transference) describes, for Freud, the initial stage of working-through a traumatic event via the procedures of psychoanalysis. The second phase comes in not only allowing this acting-out to occur but in encouraging it to do so in a transference from analysand to analyst:

> *We render the compulsion harmless, and indeed useful, by giving it the right to assert itself in a definite field. We admit it into the transference as a playground in which it is allowed to expand in almost complete freedom and in which it is expected to display to us everything in the way of pathogenic instincts that is hidden in the patients' mind.*[86]

By giving the compulsion to repeat a playground of sorts, the repetition now finds a new home in the transference, where it is treated as a curable pseudo-illness. By removing resistances to the analysand's compulsion, the compulsion is played out and the memory below the repetition is free to rise to the surface. Again, working-through occurs as the analyst and analysand address and free compulsions and their resistances.

What does this work have to do with Foucault and Martin's formulations? That question is not simply answered, but perhaps the 'work' which takes place in working-through allows us at least one response. Like the work that occurs in the gap between subject and object in Kant's formation, working-through, according to Freud, is a work that takes place between reality and illness[87]. When the analysand's resistance is at its height, when the gap between his compulsion and reality come together in the acting-out of transference, Freud relies on rational storytelling to evoke past memories, address them as trauma in order to replace consequent repressions and their symptomatic repetitions. This coherent, linear storytelling comes, again, very close to Descartes' work; that of

[86] Ibid, p 154.
[87] Ibid. 152.

lining up what is known with what is rational. But somehow, this time around, Descartes' error is Freud's virtue – naturally the work of psychoanalysis is to separate madness from rationality. The work of the analysand is precisely this process of separating, blocking internal resistances, separating again... but where does this leave us in regard to the absence of work if the separation between madness and rationality is a false one?

In Freud's 1915 piece titled "Mourning and Melancholia" the economics of work, psychoanalytic work, conclude, prior to Foucault and with less clarity, that madness and reason can be one and the same. This conclusion arises in the process of comparing mourning and melancholia, as Freud seeks to derive the abnormal origin of melancholia from the normal processes of grief and mourning. One of Freud's most enduring process definitions of mourning is as follows:

> *Mourning originates under the influence of reality testing, which demands categorically that one must part from the object because the object no longer exists. Now it is the task of mourning to carry out this retreat from the object in all situations in which the object was the recipient of an intense cathexis. The painful character of this separation accords with the explanation just given – that is, it is explained by the intense and unrealizable longingful cathexis of the object during the reproduction of the situations in which the tie to the object has to be dissolved*[88].

Using Freud's definition, we see that in the customary act or task of mourning, the mourning subject heals, over time, through the work of what Freud calls 'reality testing', i.e.: affirming the absence of the lost object while systematically de-cathecting through

[88] Sigmund Freud, The Problem of Anxiety. Chapter 11

the work of memory. Melancholia, however, takes mourning through a covert, yet often violently different mourning process:

> *Melancholia, or more accurately the melancholic attack: In this disease, about whose causes and mechanism we know far too little, the most remarkable characteristic is the way in which the superego – you may call it, but in a whisper, the conscience – treats the ego. The melancholic during periods of health can, like any one else, be more or less severe towards himself; but when he has a melancholic attack, his superego becomes over-severe, abuses, humiliates, and ill-treats his unfortunate ego, threatens it with the severest punishments, reproaches it for long forgotten actions which were at the time regarded quite lightly, and behaves as though it had spent the whole interval in amazing complaint and was only waiting for its present increase in strength to bring them forward, and to condemn the ego on their account. The super-ego has the ego at its mercy and applies the most severe moral standards to it... after a certain number of months the whole moral fuss is at an end, the critical voice of the super-ego is silent, the ego is reinstated, and enjoys once more all the rights of man until the next attack*[89].

Throughout the violence described by Freud above, the ego goes to work on two fronts. The first of these fronts works in the unconscious, while the second task of work occurs as the ego masquerades a fragile, 'normal,' façade of mourning. In "Mourning and Melancholia," Freud states that in the unconscious work of the melancholic subject, the subject-libido refuses to disconnect from the lost-object due to an ambivalence on the part of the subject, in regard to the lost-object itself. While this ambivalence results from repressed anger toward the object, the subject sadistically turns this anger onto its own ego, living out the very act or acts which angered the subject in the first place and castigating itself for the causes of its own ambivalence toward the lost object. This entire melancholic process is masked: only the work of a mourner is seen on the surface of a violent unconscious ego castigation.

---

[89] Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis. Chapter 3

> *In mourning we found that the inhibition and loss of interest are fully accounted for by the work of mourning in which the ego is absorbed. In melancholia, the unknown loss will result in a similar internal work and will therefore be responsible for the melancholic inhibition. The difference is that the inhibition of the melancholic seems puzzling to us because we cannot see what it is that is absorbing him so entirely. The melancholic displays something else besides which is lacing in mourning – an extraordinary diminution of his self-regard, an impoverishment of his ego on a grand scale. In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself.*[90]

What is revealed on the surface of melancholia, which is distinct from mourning are professions of self-degradation on the part of the subject. It is in these reprimands that the cross-over between madness and reason is sighted in Freud:

> *When in his heightened self-criticism he* [the subject] *describes himself as petty, egoistic, dishonest, lacking in independence, one whose sole aim has been to hide the weaknesses of his own nature, it may be, so far as we know, that he has come pretty near to understanding himself; we only wonder why a man has to be ill before he can be accessible to a truth of this kind. For there can be no doubt that if anyone holds and expresses to others and opinion of himself such as this (an opinion which Hamlet held both of himself and of everyone else) he is ill, whether he is speaking the truth or whether he is being more or less unfair to himself.*[91]

As Freud points out, it is in illness, in madness that the analysand speaks most accurately about himself. Yet as Freud points out, this self-understanding requires 'illness,' or as Foucault later attests, it requires a folding of madness and reason in order that one might see the fullness of himself if the absence of that reason, in the absence of that work.

While the work of melancholia works to appear as the work of mourning, yet a third task of work emerges in the position of the analyst: which work is he to work with? If the

---

[90] Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia", *The Standard Edition of Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV.* Trans. Stachey, James. London: Hogarth Press, 1957. p 246.
[91] Ibid, pp 246-247.

grieving subject is in fact mourning, then, as Freud points out, no treatment is required. Yet if melancholia is masquerading as mourning, then it is the analysts' task to uncover that unconscious work so that it might be properly analyzed and properly treated. Should the analyst mistake the work of mourning for that of melancholia, the degree of trauma that melancholic treatment would induce is severe. Yet if melancholia works so well in its masquerade as to convince the analyst of its false truth, the success of this mask may lead to the eventual suicide of a patient whose ambivalence toward its own ego may supersede this ego's desire to live. Freud claims:

> *In melancholia the relation to the object is no simple one; it is complicated by the conflict due to ambivalence... In melancholia, accordingly, countless separate struggles are carried on over the object, in which hate and love contend with each other; the one seeks to detach the libido from the object, the other to maintain this position of the libido against the assault. In mourning too, the efforts to detach the libido are made in this same system; but in it nothing hinders these processes form proceeding along the normal path... This path is blocked for the work of melancholia... So by taking flight into the ego love escapes extinction.*

If Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak claims that Freud's work is an attempt to revisit Kant, it is in passages like these from Freud's work that such claims appear justified. The work described in Kant as the process by which the subject seeks to know objects *as such*, appears here in Freud's melancholia in the subject of the ego that will not let go of its ideal, and has narcissistically cathected itself to a reality it cannot access. This love – an ambivalent narcissistic desire for the reality of the other in itself, this madness, described here by Freud, is the madness of the classical age, of modernity, of Foucault's uncovering and Martin's possession: it is work and it is work's absence, appear and dissolving again... and again... and again.

In light of Freud's work on work, Foucault reiterates a modern understanding of madness which still struggles in the border between shadow and light, as it did in 17th century terms. Yet now, Freud's procedures have increased the amount of folding which the prohibition against speaking the truth of madness necessitates:

> *Therefore Freud's work ought to be taken for what it is; it does not discover that madness is apprehended in a web of significations it shares with everyday language, thereby granting the license to speak of it in the common platitudes of psychological vocabulary.*[92]

In other words, Freud does not give voice to the silent. Instead, he:

> *...dislodges the European experience of madness in order to situate it in this perilous region, still transgressive (therefore still forbidden but in a rather peculiar fashion), which is the region of languages that implicate themselves; that is to say, they enunciate in their utterances the linguistic code in which they enunciate those utterances.*[93]

Freud, like Foucault is simply illuminating the mechanisms by which madness is known. And therefore;

> *Freud did not discover the lost identity of a meaning; he carved out the disruptive image of a signifier that is* absolutely not *like the others. ...And, for the same reason, madness has appeared not like the ruse of a hidden signification but like a prodigious* reserve *of meaning.*[94]

This "signifier that is *absolutely not* like the others" echoes back to Foucault's own definition of madness in civilization: it is reason that marches to its own drum. It is a signification with a myriad of references, referents, and signs – none of which claim any more or any less being than any others. It is a reasonableness that negates reason. It is

[92] Ibid, p 102.
[93] Ibid, p 102.
[94] Ibid, p 102.

the life of Jacques Martin as it creases, covers, doubles and blinds its own production in the process of its own negation. As Foucault claims[95]:

> *Since Freud, Western madness has become a nonlanguage as it turned into a double language (a linguistic code that does not exist except in this utterance, an utterance that does not say anything other than its linguistic code) – that is to say, a matrix of a language that, in a strict sense, does not say anything. A fold of the spoken that is an absence of work.*[96]

Here, finally, we draw close to the meaning of an absence of work in Foucault, both as it is exemplified in his text and as it is exemplified in Martin and in his madness. 'The fold of the spoken' is also the fold of the written, the fold of the thought, the fold of work itself, which becomes un-work. By definition it is this false distinction between reason and unreason that is the heart of Foucault's argument, and as he claims, is the involuted basis on which civilization both builds and simultaneously destroys itself, just as Kant's *Critiques* destroyed themselves in their 'working' definition. The absence of work therefore, is not a system of seeing the work of an author as a whole or as fragmentation, it is not a system of understanding Foucault's own literature or life's works. Foucault scholars such as Shoshana Felman and Jacob Fischer have looked at Foucault's description of the absence of work, or as Felman translates it: 'unaccomplishment at work' as a key to Foucault's work as an oeuvre in itself. Whether or not one agrees with Foucault's definition of madness as absence of work, such mismatched applications of *l'absence d'oeuvre* as methods to define method are like those that strive to show that Hegel's concept of the dialectic is also his style of writing, or his method of constructing

---

[95] Foucault writes: *And, for the same reason, madness has appeared not like the ruse of a hidden signifaction but like a prodigious reserve of meaning. We still have to grasp how fitting this word reserve is. Much more than a mere supply, it is a figure that retains and suspends meaning, laying out an emptiness where nothing is proposed but the yet-incomplete possibility that some meaning or another may come to lodge there, or still a third, and this may perhaps continue to infinity.* Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

his own archive. Such miscontruals miss the force of Foucault's argument and the impact of Martin's life, not to mention the implications Kant's own *absence of work* had on Foucault's ideas and writings. The absence of work is not the method by which Foucault wrote his books, it is, he claims, the silent method by which all books are written and all lives lived.

Thankfully, not all readings of *l'absence d'oeuvre* are attempts to aestheticize Foucault's method. Eleanor Kaufman describes absence of work "as unnamable as repetition.[97]"

> *Madness opens up a lacunar reserve that designates and exposes that chasm where linguistic code and utterance become entangled, shaping each other and speaking of nothing but their still silent rapport.*

This 'lacunar reserve' is alluded to throughout "Madness, the Absence of Work," and plays a significant role in Foucault's definition of madness itself. In the doubling into nothing which is madness, a void, or as Foucault says, a reserve is recognized. The term reserve was already evoked in prior readings of Kant's theories of Work, particularly in the writings of one Foucault's strongest most silent influences: Martin Heidegger. Therefore, to complete our discussion on work and its absence, it is worth a brief turn to Heidegger's concept of reserve in order to better understand and fill out its meaning in the writings of Foucault.

In 1953, Martin Heidegger looked at Kant's distinction between work and Work, between technical production and the making of an *oeuvre* and reformulated Kant's thinking using technology as a turning point. While the social implications of Heidegger's writings are

[97] Eleanor Kaufman, P. 66

at least highly questionable, his influence over Michel Foucault is strongly reflected in Foucault's own reading of Kant on the question of work, of genius, of production as a voiding *reserve* and of the absence of the production as a doubling back of that same void. "The Question Concerning Technology"[98] is one of four lectures that Heidegger delivered to the Bremen Club in 1953. In this startling essay Heidegger examined future technology-based societies, looking for what, in essence, technology *is*. Heidegger's work concerning technology is in fact, according to Wolfgang Schirmacher, the study of a metaphor. If the modern period represents the end of metaphysics:

> *...post-modernism is simply a metaphorical expression of this end, after which there will be no new beginning ...Heidegger's thinking is still fascinated by technology as an 'unassailable substitute for metaphysics' (Heidegger, 1976).*[99]

Fascinated, as Schirmacher purports, by technology as metaphysics' replacement, Heidegger then searches for the technology's foundation and finds that it, in essence, is not technological. What technology *is* Heidegger states, is a presencing forth and a revealing:

> *What is modern technology? It too is a revealing. Only when we allow our attention to rest on this fundamental characteristic does that which is new in modern technology show itself to us.*[100]

Having established the fundamental characteristic of technology as something other than technological, Heidegger presses on toward the implications of what this essence means and what it does in the world, stating:

---

[98] Heidegger, Martin. "The Question Concerning Technology," *Basic Writings.* Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., New York : New York, 1977.
[99] Schirmacher, Wolfgang. "The End of Metaphysics – What does this mean?" *Social Science Information,* 23 (3) 1984.
[100] Heidegger, Martin. (1953), 1977.

> *...the revealing that holds sway throughout modern technology does not unfold into a bringing-forth in the sense of* poiēsis. *The revealing that rules in modern technology is a challenging, [Herausfordern], which puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy which can be extracted and stored as such.*[101]

Exemplifying this claim to technology as challenging-forth, Heidegger asks his listeners to consider the Rhine River. Once a hydro-electric plant is set upon the Rhine, the river is no longer what it was before. With the import of technology in the form of the hydro-electric plant, the river now becomes a "water-power supplier, [and] derives its essence from the power station."[102] This conception of technology, as a challenging forth of nature into a position of submission and supply is ultimately, according to Heidegger, the challenging of nature and human kind. And while technology is dictating the role of humankind, we are yet deceived into thinking that we are in control of technology.[103] Is it possible that reason, in Foucault, plays a very similar an equally deceptive role?

> *The coming to presence of technology threatens revealing, threatens it with the possibility that all revealing will be consumed in ordering and that everything will present itself only in the unconcealedness of standing-reserve. Human activity can never directly counter this danger. Human achievement alone can never banish it. But human reflection can ponder the fact that all saving power must be of a higher essence than what is endangered, though at the same time, kindred to it.*[104]

Therefore, Heidegger's conception of the world as a supply base for technology is not without hope. In the final words of this "Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger

---

[101] Ibid. (1953) 1977.
[102] Ibid. (1953) 1977.
[103] Lest this sound like a conspiracy theory, it only takes a moments reflection to note how dependant on technology the western world, at least, has become. Whether or not one believes that this dependency constitutes a fundamental shift in our essence, as Heidegger purports, is certainly up for debate. Nonetheless, if we consider the writings of Adorno, in "Enlightenment as Mass Deception," Heidegger's claims concerning the control of technology over nature and humankind may seem less extreme.
[104] Ibid. (1953) 1977.

holds that art and the domain of artistic production was once akin to technology through their origins in the Greek word *technē,* meaning 'the art of bringing forth':

> *There was once a time when it was not technology alone that bore the name* technē*... Once there was a time when the bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful was called* technē*. The* poiēsis *of the fine arts was also called* technē.

This 'once upon a time' to which Heidegger refers echoes in the words of Kant. The technis of work, simple reasonable work in Kant is not far from Heidegger's *technē.* And for Foucault, the deep threatened unconcealedness may be the region where madness and reason mirror one another completely. Where technology cannot be distinguished from a masterwork, where a woman of glass shares her thoughts with Nobel Laureates. The dichotomies that Heidegger evokes as he tries to work his way through and out of metaphysics are mirrored in the Foucault's delineation of his efforts to dig up the bones of metaphysics' and reason's influence on thought in history. Therefore, the *reserve* for Foucault, and the unconcealedness for Heidegger, are the space from which work and its absence circle forth in history, in the reason/madness couple, and as shown above, in the life and symbolism that was Jacques Martin.

It has been alluded to by Magritte and others that often it is the vast amount of nothing that is the creation of a work in itself. For Foucault, all that Martin destroyed he also created, leaving both a body of work and a person himself that is both absent and all the more poignant and present in the state of his missing. Yet after Heidegger, after Kant, and after work, the easy question still remains: Why doesn't Foucault speak Martin's name? Is his silence a doubling as well? But perhaps the more difficult answer comes

from Foucault himself, who best speaks to his own silence in a way that incorporates (incriminates?) Althusser and Martin as well:

> *The history of systems of thought is neither the history of men nor that of the men who think them. Ultimately, it is because it remains trapped in the terms of that alternative that the conflict between materialism and spiritualism is one between fraternal enemies... one takes as the subject of thought either individuals or groups, but they are still subjects... The abandonment of dualism and the constitution of a non-Cartesian subject demands more: eliminating the subject, but keeping thoughts; and attempting to construct a history with no human nature.*[105]

Foucault's project was not to write biographies. He dug up the structures that produced producers of biographies. Both Foucault and Althusser clearly shared with Martin complex notions of subjectivity and an ambivalence toward personal idea attribution and fixed definitions in both biographical and autobiographical style. It may be for this reason that Martin remains at once revealed and deeply hidden within the work of his friend Foucault. Or, it may be that Martin is not hidden in Foucault at all, but acted out in a life-long process of working-through. This possibility leads us to a final discussion on Freud before we can begin to finish the work started herein.

While Moulier Boutang claims it was Martin's failure that both Foucault and Althusser saw over their shoulders through life, and Kaufman claims that it was actually Martin's genius they hoped to fulfill, perhaps the story is more elusive and at once, more involved than either of these claims acknowledge. Is it not, in fact, Moulier Boutang, Eleanor Kaufman, myself and a possible handful of others who are expanding the silences of Foucault, Althusser and Martin? Perhaps presumptive histories such as ours cannot be

[105] Macey, David, *The Lives of Michel Foucault.* p. 235. This quote comes from Foucault's successful proposal to the Collège de France, reviewed on the 30th of November, 1969.

written without first acknowledging that it is our own hands, our own keyboards and our own scripts which speak in excess of particular and invented Martins, Althussers and Foucaults: while the rest of the tome of these men's lives remains circling, collapsing and reviving themselves in the reserve of reason and madness in the absence of work.

> *"Once uncovered as a language silenced by its superposition upon itself, madness neither manifests nor narrates the birth of a work (or of something which, by genius or by change, could have become a work); it outlines an empty form from where this work comes, in other words, the place from where it never ceases to be absent, where it will never by found because it had never been located there to begin with. There in that pale region, in that essential hiding place, the twinlike incompatibility of the work and of madness become unveiled; this is the blind spot of the possibility of each to become the other and of their mutual exclusion."*[106]

[106] Foucault, "Madness, the Absence of Work" . p 104

Chapter 4

Attempts are often made to compare and contrast the work of two scholars by looking for points of union and points of disjuncture. The temptation to align the ideas of Foucault and Althusser is pressing as both men students of Bachelard, both were trained at the École Normale, both were friends and colleagues of Jacques Martin, both made their careers in thoughts now classified as post-structuralist, and both men were absent in the pivotal and almost revolutionary events of May 1968... Before I have begun to stake a claim for avoiding such a side by side comparison, I have been caught in the process by the same deceptive interest in storytelling that plagues this thesis as a whole. Althusser described this comparative process well in a 'thank you' to his friend and mentor, Jean Guitton:

> *'You have taught me how to enter into contact with a concept, with two; to combine them, oppose the, unite them, untie them, to toss them like a pancake on a frying pan and then serve them so that they are edible.'*[107]

Whether the process of frying was conscious or not, Althusser remained true to his above described procedure in his analysis of Marx. Mixing his experiences as a Catholic Youth and what would grow into a full body of Marxist critiques, at least one of Althusser's most famous concepts, that of the 'break' in Marx's own writing, may have direct connections to the break between the Old and New Testament, as outlined by the Church's best theology. 'Serving up something edible', in this case, brought Althusser out of obscurity to prominence, albeit rebellion of a sort, within the French Communist

[107] Webster, Paul. 1988.

Party (PCF). But this prominence was dashed when Althusser failed to mix theory and action. Or, rather, when his theory was one of inaction, as we will see below.

I will now trap myself in the compare and contrast mode that I am trying to avoid when I say that Foucault did not adhere to Althusser's idealism. Leary of 'concepts' in general Foucault spent quite a pages of his work illustrating just how a process like Althusser's might come about.

> *At the beginning of the seventeenth century, during the period that has been termed, rightly or wrongly, the Baroque, thought ceases to move in the element of resemblance... We already find a critique of resemblance in Bacon... He shows them, shimmering before our eyes, vanishing as one draws near, then re-forming again a moment later, a little further off. They are* idols.[108]

Idolatry, worshipping false gods, is the everyday practice of classical thinking, according to Foucault.

> *The relation of the sign to the signified now resides in a space in which there is no longer any intermediary figure to connect them: what connects them is a bond established, inside knowledge, between the i*dea of one thing *and* the idea of another.[109]

So perhaps I am being to hard to criticize Althusser for an act that I, as part of the classical heritage Foucault describes, cannot avoid myself. Nonetheless, with something of Foucault's license for error, in this chapter I would like to look at Foucault, Althusser and when appropriate, Jacques Martin's work as one would look at separate paintings in a joint exhibition: not as similarities and differences, but as works with crossing and intersecting interests of their own. From their time at the École Normale, to Foucault and

[108] Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things.* Random House, Inc.: New York, 1970, p 51.
[109] Ibid, p 63.

Althusser's individual absences during one of the most influential political upheavals of their time, the May 1968 revolts, I hope to set these men side by side without implication. My hope is that by avoiding direct processes of comparison and contrast, questionably equal to the process of knowledge production, this chapter will create multiple contexts of collective works in the times and writings of Michel Foucault and Louis Althusser.

'Oú Althusser est-il?':

'Where is Althusser?' was both a chorus chanted through the streets May 6th, 1968 and a profound statement of self doubt: Louis Althusser's life and career were both marked by a willingness to revisit, revise and shift his own positions. Though it may have been a joke, or a test, Althusser was known in the halls of the École Normale as the professor who stopped students just to ask them: "Who am I?" Yet within Althusser's individual writings, questions such as 'where is he?' and 'who am I?' rarely arise. His style is clear, legible, questioning and challenging. He repeats the difficult points in order to help his audience understand the intent, even if he may radically change his own ideas from one work to the next. This same clear yet shifting style goes for his biography as well. A good student, he did his best to please his teachers as he did his best to enter the École Normale and to please his Heavenly Father: Althusser was a fervent catholic before he was a fervent Marxist... devotion spilled from a desire to know, to change, to belong... to belong.

Althusser's collective experiences began in the Catholic Church, but his search for a father figure began just after his birth. Maybe 'father figure' is not precise; Althusser

says of himself that he was looking for acceptance, he was looking for meaning, he was looking for his own individual self:

> *When I was born, I was christened Louis. I know it only too well... Above all, it contained the sound of the third person pronoun ('lui'), which deprived me of any personality of my own, summoning as it did an anonymous other. It referred to my uncle, the man who stood behind me: 'Lui' was Louis. It was him my mother loved, not me.*[110]

Althusser's mother, Lucienne Berger, was from childhood betrothed to a kindred spirit in Louis' uncle, the other Louis Althusser.[111] When Louis was killed over Verdun, his older brother, Charles, proposed to Lucienne so that he might take care of Lucienne in Louis' stead. The result was a devastating match, both for Lucienne, and for her first son.[112]

> *Both in* [my mother's] *presence and away from her, I always had the feeling that I did not exist in or for myself... I always felt there had been a mistake, and that it was not really me she loved or was even looking at... When she looked at me, it was not me she saw, but* another person, *the* other *Louis, who was not me... He stood behind me, in some infinite and imaginary sky which was for ever marked by his death. It was as if she looked through me. I disappeared under her gaze...*[113]

Althusser sought, throughout his life, to both escape out of and into personal invisibility. As a boy, Louis Althusser got involved with the Catholic Youth Movement and his early writings reflect a fervent interest to remake the Church, and particularly its language, in

---

[110] The larger quote, found in Althusser, Louis. *The Future Lasts Forever,* reads: *When I was born, I was christened Louis. I know it only too well. For a long time, Louis was a name I literally detested. It was too short, had only one vowel and ended in the sharp 'ee' sound which offended me (bear this in mind when I later come on to my fantasy of the stake). Doubtless it also said yes a little too readily on my behalf, and I rebelled against this 'yes', which corresponded to my mother's desire rather than to mine. Above all, it contained the sound of the third person pronoun ('lui'), which deprived me of any personality of my own, summoning as it did an anonymous other. It referred to my uncle, the man who stood behind me: 'Lui' was Louis. It was him my mother loved, not me.* p. 39

[111] "On a Sunday the Althussers would sometimes 'go up' to the forestry house and, as their respective children were growing up and relatively well matched in age... the parents agreed they should marry. I do not know why, but Louis, the younger boy, was paired with Lucienne, and Charles, the elder with Juliette. *In fact I know quite well;* it was because their natural affinity was obvious from the start." Ibid, p 35.

[112] Ibid, in Chapters 3 and 4, Althusser describes Lucienne's unhappiness, her disgust for all things sexual, and her continued love for the deceased Louis.

[113] Ibid, p 53.

order to reach out to those who were not within the fold. As a young proselytizer, Althusser first engaged in a process by which he would later be well known: he became the rebel son of Catholic Youth Movement, not by action or by violence, but through strong and often scorching critique that somehow always remained faithful to the cause, even while questioning its very existence. This pattern of internal criticism would follow Althusser into the French Communist Party (PCF), a move that no one but his future wife, Hélène Légotien, and his close friend, Jacques Martin, could have predicted.

Like Jacques Martin and countless other young French men of the time, Althusser's entrance to the École Normale was interrupted by national service duties. Yet, whereas Martin was called to work in Germany, Althusser was called for French military service. Much to his happiness, Althusser never saw battle. Instead, his brigade was taken hostage by the Germans and held in a prison camp for five years which Althusser describes as some of the best of his life. Among 'real working men', who must have reminded him of his grandfather's salt-of-the-earth Algerian workers and his boy scout compatriots, Althusser claims he first learned how to masturbate, speak German and resist even his own attempts to escape imprisonment. Althusser also recalls that he met his first Marxist in that camp, though a friend who passed through the same confines later recalled that when he spoke of the communists and Marx's writings, Althusser showed absolutely no interest or knowledge of the subjects at hand.

Upon Althusser's return to Paris however, he did show considerable, if not coy, interest in an older Jewish girl named Hélène Rytman who had fought in the resistance and was

known as Hélène Légotien.[114] A radical former militant communist, Hélène was out of standing with the PCF by the time she met Althusser, though she ached to be reaccepted and pined for the rights of the working proletariat. The stories about Althusser's relationship with Ms. Légotien are not often pretty. Described as a controlling editor of Althusser's work, a possessive, isolating and brooding girlfriend by Althusser's friends, Althusser himself describes Hélène as a patient melancholic who would no more influence his work than the work of President de Gaulle. She had conflicts with Jacques Martin as well. While at the École normale, Martin lived at 7 Rue D'Ulm strategically situated next door to Althusser and Hélène in #6. Initially, the situation between Hélène and Martin was rivalrous. Both were fighting for the sole attention of Althusser, though it is unknown whether or not Martin ever truly fell for Althusser. Eventually, however, Martin was "admis comme un member de la famille, comme le petit frère qui a toujour des ennuis.[115]" He translated Hegel and then Marx, and while he sold these translations it is implied that he undertook them for Althusser's benefit. Martin's influence on Althusser's Marxism was immense, yet his interest in Communism is almost always attributed to the influence of Hélène.[116]

It is then sometime around 1945 and the end of the war that Althusser begins to shift from an aspiring Catholic theologian and philosopher to a Marxist exegete. Althusser's

---

[114] Hélène's original last name was Rytman, which she changed to Légotien before meeting Althusser.

[115] Moulier-Boutang, Yann. *Louis Althusser.* P 456. In English: [He was] "admitted like a member of the family, like a little brother who was always in troubles/worries."

[116] One of Althusser's life long friends and Catholic mentors, Jean Guitton noted the origin of Helene's influence as follows: "Althusser's Marxist thinking appears to have been dominated by Helene's hatred of the French Communist Party's 'bourgeois Marxism'. Althusser 'wanted to take Marxism to its absolute, that is to mysticism,' Guitton says, while revealing that his former pupil never came to terms with his loss of Christian faith. He told the Catholic writer: 'I do not know what caused it. Perhaps I am like the man whom Oscar Wilde spoke of who, being obliged to teach the perfect knowledge of God, lost the perfect love of God.'" Webster, Paul. "Paris Diary: Victim of a Broken Mind" *The Guardian*, Oct. 8, 1988.

final thesis for the École Normale on Hegel reflects this shift: it is one of the early and telling writings of the man who would later formulate a split in the works of Marx that, I believe, mirrors the bisection of the Bible between the Old and the New Testaments. The following quotation, though lengthy, is revealing in its language, tone and desire to illustrate Catholic theology in Marxist terms. It is also a critical and unique discourse on 'work' in both Catholicism and Marxism, which is necessary to our quest for understanding the nature and absence of 'work' in Althusser and the broader collective scene of his times. Althusser begins this discussion on work through a discussion of its alienation as follows:

> *"The plunge of the product into Nature, which occurs as soon as the product escapes the producer's control and is no longer posited as being identical with him, gives us a better grasp of the creation myth. On the purest conception, God is the circularity of Love; he is sufficient unto himself and has no outside. The creation is literally a rupture in this circularity: God does not need the creation, so that it is, by definition, different from him. This non-identity of the Creator and his creature is the emergence of Nature. The product of the God-who-works escapes his control (because it is superfluous for him). This fall is Nature, or God's outside. In the creation, then, men unwittingly repress the essence of work. But they do still more: they try to eliminate the very origins of work, which, in its daily exercise, appears to them as a natural necessity (one has to work in order to live, work is a natural law entailed by the Fall – as appears in the myth of Eve: 'you will earn your bread by the sweat of your brow').*[117]

This startlingly Catholic language finds Louis Althusser making the transition from the Youth Movement to Marxism. The shift is marked in the analogies that Althusser creates between the fall from Eden story of the Old Testament and humanity's alienation from the products of their work. By marking God as a unity in himself, nature becomes the alienated creation of a unified being. In the process of childbirth, of toiling in the soil to

[117] Louis Althusser, *The Spectre of Hegel: Early Writings*, Trans. G.M. Goshgarian, (London: Verso, 1997), 168, n. 252.

create crops and in any form of production, this process of alienation is repeated, though Althusser claims that knowledge of its origins is constantly repressed. Is it then inherent and natural that man and woman should always work? In the early Marx Althusser was reading at the time of his thesis, the answer is no. Althusser explains this conundrum as a misconception of work as necessary through the repression of its origin:

> *Moreover, work is inherently conditioned by nature, since the worker transforms a nature that is given. In the creation myth, this natural character of work disappears, because the Creator is not subject to any law, and creates the world ex nihilo. In God the Creator, men not only think the birth of nature, but attempt to overcome the natural character of this birth by demonstrating that the creation has no origin (since God creates without obligation or need); that the fall has no nature; and that the very nature which seems to dominate work is, fundamentally, only as necessary as the (produced) nature which results from work..."*[118]

While it arrives in slightly different terms than we saw in Foucault, Althusser begins to describe a doubling back of work upon itself. Negating its origins and perpetuating its labor, a repression of the origins of creation and a glorification of production *ex nihilo* denies the reality that work is a ceaseless and ultimately impossible process of unalienating the creator and his creation.

> *"Developing and deepening this myth would perhaps enable us to anticipate what Marx means by 'the identity of man and nature in work'. Approached in this way, that identity would have two aspects. On the one hand, men are identical with nature in that they are identical with what they produce; their products become nature for them (this immediate identity through labour re-emerges in revolutionary action; one may therefore say that this alienation is already overcome in thought – men no longer need a myth to represent it, since it has become the object of economic science).*

This new 'economic science' was, for the early Althusser and his mentor Gaston Bachelard, the result of an epistemological rupture with practice-oriented systems of

[118] Ibid.

thought. In the *Humanist Controversy,* Althusser defines the 'economic science' of revolutionary action as the theory which lags behind, and posthumously defines revolution. In an attempt to resolve the dichotomies of theory and practice, Althusser writes that it is the class struggle which is history, defined in the evolving space between revolutionary action and its theorization which integrates product and producer. But this space made way for a strong critique of Althusser's theorization, and:

> *By summer 1966, Althusser had admitted that his critics were right in one crucial respect: the logic of the break isolated the theory required to make the revolution from the realm of the non-theoretical practices in which the revolution had (also) to be made. Theory became theory by virtue of a distantiation that ruled out both its internal determination* by *ideology and its direct intervention* in *ideology: a theory, by definition, had no* practical *relation to the ideological practices with which it broke.*[119]

To erase this loophole, Althusser pivoted, rejected the 'epistemological break' theory, and sought to resolve the theory and practice dichotomy by more or less reducing theory to practice. In doing so, Althusser is attempting to rescue historical materialism as a science capable of producing absolute knowledge.[120] This shift is also illustrated in the continuation of Althusser's exegesis of the Fall in Genesis and alienation in Marx, as he unites man to his work and makes them identical:

> *On the other hand, men would also be identical with the nature that forces them to work, and which they transform through work; this second identity would be clarified through reflection of the first. Here, however, we would have only an embryonic anticipation, for, in the obvious, elementary sense, identity is still beyond men's grasp. Men see clearly enough that the natural world is given to them, and that they themselves exist because they*

---

[119] Goshgarian, G.M. *The Humanist Controversy. ed.* Matheron, F. and *trans.* Goshgarian, G.M. Verso: New York, 2003. pp. xiii-xiv.
[120] Ibid, p. xv.

> *exercise a measure of control over it, thanks to their knowledge and industry;*[121]

Here in Althusser's early work, a degree of control due to 'knowledge and industry' is still possible, while a critical thesis of his later work will be the negation of this possibility. Yet for the time being, Althusser takes a cautionary, though humanist position which defers the completion of work to a future utopic appearance:

> *However, they [men] have not completely overcome natural alienation: they are subject to the elements, illness, and old age, and obliged to work in order to live. Moreover, if the work of scientific knowledge and of the transformation of the world is itself a recurrence of, and recovery from [reprise], natural alienation, the recovery is not complete: circularity is not re-established, and human circularity will no doubt be established before natural circularity (in a socialist world, say the Marxists, one will still have to overcome natural alienation). This deficiency explains why it is still necessary to revert to myth in order to conceive a totality which has not yet attained its concept; it is in the story of creation, on this view, that men contemplate the reprise of natural alienation."*[122]

On the subject of myth, Althusser may have retained its function for precisely or far more than Marx had intended. Until 1965, Althusser was relatively unknown figure in French philosophy. Yet in 1965, just after the death of Jacques Martin, Althusser launched a radical dissent against the soft humanist interpretations of Karl Marx's writings which had enveloped PCF discourse. The crux of Althusser's dissention is again another break, but rather than an epistemological turn in history, this break and change appears, for Althusser, between the early and late writings of Marx. Much like the shift between the Old and New Testaments, Althusser marks out a break between a stage of Marxist humanism of Hegelian origins and a radical theory of anti-humanist, nearly structuralist

---

[121] Ibid.
[122] Louis Althusser, *The Spectre of Hegel: Early Writings*, Trans. G.M. Goshgarian, (London: Verso, 1997), 168, n. 252.

period of writings, (though Althusser would later defend Marx against structuralism, delineating a difference between structuralism per se and structure as he found it in Marx). From the so-called latter period of Marx writings, which began in 1845, Althusser defines notions such as the conjuncture; a concept which effectively produces history as a 'process without a subject'. Emphasizing this point, Althusser saw himself as a mouthpiece, set in a particular time and place of history, blown through by an almost holy wind that set his tongue in motion. In a speech made at the École Normale, Althusser stated:

> *...We will attend to the question of the author first. This play is a play without an author. If we are here, it is as the effects of a theoretical conjuncture. The person who is addressing you is, like all the rest of us, merely a particular structural effect of this conjuncture, an effect that , like each and every one of us, has a proper name. The theoretical conjuncture that dominates us has produced an Althusserian-effect, as it has produced a Rancière effect, a Balibar effect, a Macherey-effect, and Establet-effect, a Bettelheim-effect and so on... I am not joking when I say that the play performed here is a play without an author, and that we are all particular structural effects of the conjuncture. It is the philosophical conjuncture which brings us together here, and provides our meeting with its object. No one should be surprised if, in order to provide a precise definition of the object of our meeting, I dwell on the conjuncture. Here, too, I should like to try to say what naturally goes without saying, and lend my voice to an analysis of the philosophical conjuncture that dominates us.*[123]

Althusser's persistent plays within his own sense of agency must have found a home in this notion which echoes the New Testament prophets who were at once passive receptors of the Holy Spirit and critical actors in the ushering in the Kingdom of God. Yet, as we will see in the latter half of this chapter, the conjuncture is closely aligned to Foucault's theory of 'subjectivation'. Yet while Foucault's work was a search after the

[123] G.M.Goshgarian, *The Humanist Controversy.* pp. 16-17.

'techniques of self making', Althusser set his task as that of reconciling the practice of the PCF with his completion of the theory of Marxist theory:

> *This theoretical distinction made no practical difference. Althusserian philosophy's task was the transformation of ideology; to transform ideology, it had to reform the Party's understanding, translating philosophy into politics by tutoring the modern Prince.*[124]

Althusser carried out this tutoring in small group research and seminars before preaching to the French Communist Party himself. Meanwhile, Althusser's students formed the *Cahiers Marxistes-léninistes* journal which helped publicize an anti-humanist Althusserian brand of Marxism. As interest in the journal and Althusserianism escalated, Althusser was certain that large groups would finally see the light of his elucidations.

> *The 'young lions' of the École normale would now proceed, their professor exulted, to make a 'practical application' of his principles. This 'direct translation from theory to politics' was 'wholly within the norms': no arms were as powerful as those provided by 'a correct conception of things'.*[125]

Yet what happens when a prophet fails to appear for his own baptism by fire? If we consider that Althusser's Marxist interpretations were so closely figured on his Catholic origins and theology, Althusser's disappearance in May 1968 left his sheep without a shepherd. While Althusser did much to help unite the PCF and the Catholic Church in France and it seems possible that he struggled until the end of his life with tensions between Marxism and Catholicism. Like a rebellious, but dependent child, when push came to shove, Althusser would retreat back into the shelter of the 'parent' group he felt safe to criticize. Yet in both the Communist Party and the Catholic Church, Althusser's critiques would never set foot outside the security of the collective. Before murdering his

---

[124] Goshgarian, introduction to *The Humanist Controversy,* p. xxxii.
[125] Ibid, xxxiii.

wife, Hélène, in 1980, he asked and was granted an audience with Pope John Paul II, but before his greatest audience, Louis Althusser never arrived.[126] In May 1968, to the disappointment of his students, Althusser adhered to the official PCF party line that what was happening in the streets was not genuine revolution. Althusser later rescinded his decision, writing that there was a real sense of action and change in May 1968, yet by this time, his students had already lost faith in the Professor who spoke of revolution and checked himself into a hospital the night before it might have arrived. Did Althusser's work retain anything worth reading after he failed to join the upheaval he helped to incite? Part of defining Althusser comes from the absence of work, of his work, and of his presence in the following events.

Some place the start of May 1968 in Germany, 1966. In this year the Situationists Internationale circulated inflammatory pamphlets which lead to a student revolt within Strasburg University.[127] Others attribute primary responsibility to the increasingly restrictive government of Charles De Gaulle in post-war France. Despite these disagreements, with 12 million French workers on strike and student occupations of all the major Universities inside France, most historians, sociologists and 68'ers have claimed that for some moments in 1968, change was possible. Described as the 'revolution that never took place' May 1968 was pre- and pro-ceeded by extraordinary events. An archived publication of *Le Monde* recounts and chronologizes those events:

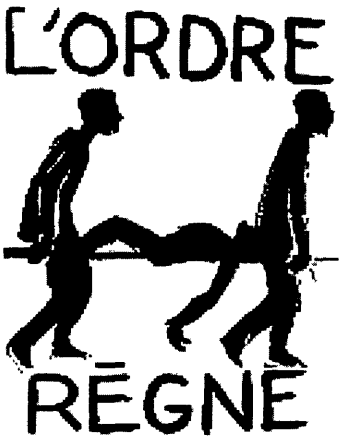
---

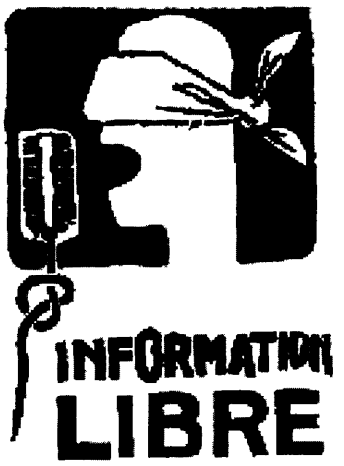
[126] "...Louis believed that the only way to save the world was by arranging a meeting between Moscow and Rome - a reflection of the two extremes tearing at Althusser's mind. With Guitton's help, the Marxist philosopher met one of Pope Jean-Paul's senior cardinals in Rome and then Guitton himself went to see the Pope to ask him to talk to Althusser. The Pope's reply, according to Guitton, was 'I know your friend. He's a logican who goes to the limit of his thoughts. I will receive him willingly.' That discussion never took place. A month later, Louis Althusser strangled his companion of 35 years."

[127] "On the Poverty of Student Life", a pamphlet published and distributed by the group Situationiste Internationale.

8. January –	the Minister for Youth and Sports is forced by students to leave the inauguration of a swimming pool at Nanterre.
26. January –	There are violent exchanges during a demonstration by strikers at Caen.
7. February –	An anti-Vietnam committee organizes a counter-demonstration against supporters of US Vietnam policy, resulting in violent exchanges with the police. A pro-North Vietnam demonstration takes place on 13 February.
14. February –	Incidents at universities throughout France by students demanding freedom of speech and movement.
22. February -	The Minister of Education announces a limited liberalization of access to universities.
19. March -	A convention at Amiens attempts to sketch a design for educational reforms.
22. March -	At Nanterre University, the administrative tower is occupied by 150 students, who say they are anarchists. Courses are suspended until 1. April.
12. April -	The attack on student leader Rudi Dutschke in Germany results in riots there and supporting demonstrations in France.
27. April -	Daniel Cohn-Bendit, 23, student leader at the University of Nanterre, is arrested.
2. May –	Prime Minister Georges Pompidou leaves for official visits to Iran and Afghanistan. Courses at the faculty of letters are suspended at Nanterre after incidents there.
3. May -	Police clear the courtyard at the Sorbonne. Violence in the Quartier Latin results in more than 100 injured and 596 arrested.

By May 3rd, nearly every sector of French life and bureaucracy had been turned on its head. As students occupied every major university office in France, even De Gaulle feared a student occupation in his own office and fled to safety in the ranks of the army. After seizing control of the École De Beaux Arts, students painted the posters to give symbolism to the seizures taking place in universities and factories across France. With up to 12 million workers on strike, the month of May 1968 paralyzed the government of France as De Gaulle tucked himself into seclusion; depending on the military to protect him from an anticipated student take over.





The language of the signage and the graffiti was clearly influenced by Marxism, though most of the people on the street, the workers in occupied factories had never touched his writings. What did touch the people, however was the response of the Communist Party, or lack thereof, to the people on the streets that May. As the calendar moved forward, hundreds were injured in police attacks and assaults:

4. May -	Courses at the Sorbonne are suspended. The UNEF and the Snesup call for unlimited strikes.
5. May -	Courts convict 13 demonstrators; give four jail terms.
6. May -	Battles in the Quartier Latin: 422 arrests; 345 police and about 600 students are hurt. Students at universities throughout France pledge support.
7. May -	At the tomb of the unknown soldier at Etoile: 30,000 students sing the 'Marseillaise.'
9. May -	The Minister of Education forbids the re-opening of the faculties.
10. May -	Night of riot in the Quartier Latin: police assault 60 barricades. 367 are hospitalized of which 251 are police; 720 others hurt and 468 arrested. Cars burned were 60 and 188 others were damaged. The Minister of Education says of the protestors, "Ni doctrine, ni foi, ni loi."
11. May -	The major unions, the CGT, the CFDT and the FEN, call for a general strike on 13. May. Back in Paris, George Pompidou, announces the re-opening of the Sorbonne, also for the 13. May.
13. May -	The general strike puts hundreds of thousands of students and workers in the streets of Paris; the Sorbonne is occupied by students.
14. May -	The National Assembly discusses the university crises and the battles of the Quartier Latin. President Charles de Gaulle leaves for Romania. Workers occupy Sud-Aviation in Nantes.
15. May -	The theatre de l'Odéon is occupied by 2,500 students and the Renault factory at Cléon is occupied by workers.
16. May -	Strikes hit other factories throughout France, plus air transport, the RATP and the SNCF. Newspapers fail to be distributed.
18. May -	President de Gaulle arrives back from Romania, 12 hours earlier than

expected. Cinema professionals occupy the Cannes Film Festival. Major French directors withdraw their films from competition and the jury resigns, closing the festival.

19. May - At the Elysée palace, President de Gaulle says, "La réforme, oui; la chienlit, non"

20. May - An estimated 10 million workers are on strike; France is practically paralysed.

22. May – A censure motion by opposition leftists falls 11 votes short of a majority in the National Assembly. Union confederations say they are willing the negotiate with the employer's association and the government. An amnesty for demonstrators is passed by the Assembly. A demonstration is held in Paris to protest the withdrawal of Daniel Cohn-Bendit's residence permit for France.

As strikes continued throughout France, the French Communist Party made striking decisions of another sort. When students at Nanterre University protested the arrest of 5 anti-Vietnam activists, the Communist Party dismissed the University take over. As workers and students took to the streets, gaining control over countless factories and universities, the PCF waited. Not until the 13th of May did the French Communist make a statement in support of the strikes and barricade fighters, when it called a general strike – something that had been afoot long before their proclamation. As the strikes continued, the PCF feared for their positions of leadership. Workers and students called for their own direct involvement in government representation, and as the PCF faltered, De Gaulle took advantage of their fear. Realizing that the Communist Party alone would be able to get people back to work, negotiations between employers and the Party began. The offers, when brought to the factory works, were refused with laughter and jeering. The Party had to act. And on May 25th, hiding behind the rhetoric of victory through higher wages, the PCF issued their first communiqué:

> *As was confessed by General de Gaulle himself, the current government has been very much weakened...Millions of blue- and white-collar workers are on strike; the aspiration of an entire people for a true regime change continues to grow. Negotiations with union organizations are going to begin, but what millions of strikers and their families are waiting for is the rapid satisfaction of their essential demands...This is why the*

French Communist Party, considering it necessary that a step be taken towards socialism, proposes not only the nationalization of the big banks, but also that of the great industrial enterprises that are part of the monopolies that dominate the key sectors of the economy... I stress that the Communists aren't proposing reforms in order to bury — under Left-wing phrases — essential demands of the workers, such as a general increase in wages, the progressive reduction of the work day, the abrogation of anti-social ordinances, and full employment for all.

Contrary to the assertions of certain Leftists affiliated with anarchism, these demands have not been superseded; they must be satisfied without delay... May 24, 1968[128]

The first of three May communiqués, the Party's fear and readiness to negotiate was wholly unacceptable to the people fighting for change. Yet the PCF played a critical role in returning France to the status quo, and thereby ensuring the Communist's and the Left's political defeat.

24. May -	President de Gaulle announces a referendum on radio and television. Overnight rioting in Paris sees 795 arrests, and 456 injured. An attempt to torch the Bourse is made. Other incidents throughout France; a Commissaire de Police is killed in Lyon by a truck. Committees for the Defense of the Republic - CDR - are launched.
25. May -	France's state radio and television - the ORTF - goes on strike: no TV-news at 20:00. Prime Minister Georges Pompidou negotiates with everybody.
27. May -	Agreement is reached between the unions, employer's associations and the government. Minimum wage is to be raised, working hours cut, reduction in the age of retirement, and the right to organize. Workers at Renault and other big firms refuse to return to work. At 17:00, 30,000 students and workers march from Gobelins to the Charléty stadium, where they hold a meeting, which Pierre Mendés-France attends.
28. May -	Georges Pompidou accepts the resignation of the Minister of Education.
29. May -	President de Gaulle cancels weekly ministerial meeting and arrives at Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises at 18:00, after making secret visit to General Massu, who leads French troops stationed in Baden-Wurttemberg. A demonstration called for by the CGT brings out several hundreds of thousands in Paris.
30. May -	By radio, President de Gaulle announces the dissolution of the National

[128] For the full communiqué, see Appendix 2: "Declaration by PCF Secretary General Waldeck-Rochet" *L'Humanité*, May 25, 1968. Trans. Mitch Abidor.

	Assembly and says the elections will take place within the normal timetable. Georges Pompidou remain Prime Minister. An allusion is made that force will be used to maintain order, if necessary. Tens of thousands of government supporters march from Concorde to the Etoile.
31. May - 30. June.	The cabinet is reshuffled and elections are announced for the 23. and Exchange controls are re-established and demonstrations of support for the government are held throughout France.
1. June -	The Pentecost long weekend is welcomed with the return of fuel to gas stations and truly huge taffic jams throughout Paris and France. The minimum wage is raised to three francs an hour.

By Tuesday, June 1st, under PCF negotiations clemencies were granted to most of the strikers, who left their points of protest behind and headed back to work. That same day President de Gaulle confessed that he had considered resignation on May 29th. By June 10th, though election campaigns had begun, even as the violence persisted.

The course of elections was a devastating blow to the people fighting on the streets in May 68'. First, the communists and leftists as a whole lost 100 seats and ample ground while the right won full majority. When Georges Pompidou resigned on July 10th, his replacement stated that by the end of the year 'grand réformes' would begin to take place. As journalists were fired for participating in the May events and 'austerity measures' were installed by the National Assembly, the promised 'réformes' looked increasingly more ominous. And by April of 1969:

> *An extraordinary election was held in France.... President de Gaulle asked voters to decide whether he was to continue as President of France. On 27. April, 10,901,753 voted 'oui,' and 12,007,102 voted 'non.' At his residence in Colombey-le-Deux-Eglises on 28. April 1969, he said, "Je cesse d'exercer mes fonctions de président de la République. Cette décision prend effet aujourd'hui à midi."*[129]

[129] *Le Monde* "Dossiers & Documents", number 264.

On June 16th, 1969, Georges Pompidou was elected president. Despite all that had happened, the right and their grand reforms re-ascended. The events had come full circle.

But again, where was Althusser? By the time he checked himself out of the hospital, long after the revolution that never occurred, he had lost standing with his students and, ironically, within the Communist Party itself. Though American papers and obitiuaries of Althusser remember him as one of the strongest denouncers of the French Communist Party, such construals of Althusser's outbursts are misunderstood. From within the walls of the Party, as within the walls of the Church and the École Normale, Althusser had always played the gadfly. Yet when the rebel returned home to the party line in May 1968, his prior critiques were written off as petty outbursts. Althusser's inaction silenced himself, and helped, albeit inadvertently, with the gradual decline and silencing of the PCF itself. In the years that followed, Althusser contributed minor articles on Marx which were largely ignored. What finally brought him back into the limelight ended both his career as a professor and scholar and the life of Hélène Légotien.

For Althusser, despite his rebellions, there had always been the Catholic Church, there had always been the École Normale and the Communist Party, and there was always been Hélène. Until, as Althusser describes:

> *...on this occasion I was massaging the front of her neck. I pressed my thumbs into the hollow at the top of her breastbone and then, still pressing, slowly moved them both, one to the left, the other to the right...The muscles in my forearms began to feel very tired... Hélène's face was calm and motionless, her eyes were open and staring at the ceiling. Suddenly, I was terror struck. Her eyes stared interminably, and*

I noticed the tip of her tongue was showing between her teeth and lips, strange and still...[130]

At this point, Althusser ran from his apartment to the house of his long-term friend and doctor, Dr. Étienne of the École. Yelling from #6 Rue d'Ulm to Dr. Etienne's flat, "I've strangled Hélène," Althusser soon found himself at Sainte-Anne's Hospital after a quick, unanticipated shot of sedative from Dr. Etienne. Under the doctor's diagnosis he was diagnosed with mental instability, rendering him unsuitable to stand trial or imprisonment. He was sent, instead, to a mental hospital for treatment.

And in Hélène's death, again, where was Althusser? As his autobiography describes his wife's death his person, his agency, is somehow eerily absent. Countless reasons for this strangulation have been mounted, and such a story can never be clear. But was this Althusser's first attempt to break out of the invisibility he had built around himself? Did he hate her for keeping him inside, or did he truly lose his mind and kill someone he loved dearly. Ironically and disturbingly, even at the point of Hélène's death Althusser is identifying with someone outside himself, as he recalls:

The long, worn-out curtains hung in tatters on each side of the window – the one on the right brushing against the bottom of the bed. I recalled seeing our friend Jacques Martin in his tiny bedroom in the Sixteenth District. He was found dead one day in August 1964 and had been stretched out on his bed for several days. On his chest lay the long stem of a scarlet rose. It was a silent message from beyond the grave to the two of us who had been his friends for twenty years, a reminder of Beloyannis. At that moment I took a ribbon of curtain and without tearing it placed it diagonally across Hélène's chest, from her right shoulder to her left breast.[131]

---

[130] Althusser, Louis. *The Future Lasts Forever,* pp. 15-16.
[131] Althusser, Louis. *The Future Lasts Forever,* p. 16.

It was the end of her life, the end of Althusser's career, but once again the École had pulled him into its fold as Dr. Etienne saved him from public trial and humiliation. Even his autobiographies carry on in the style of rebellion he knew so well, as Althusser clambered, years later for recognition of the sanity Dr. Etienne and others denied in order to save him.

Now, almost 40 years past May 1968, and 25 years after he strangled Hélène, Althusser has again found an audience. Yet, as one reviewer points out in what follows, Althusser's tendency to review and revise his own ideas years afterward have enable unorthodox interpretations of all kinds to emerge from his writings. Althusser's own question, "Who am I?" again leads us to a multiplicity of personages who may or may not be humanist, anti-humanist, Catholic, Marxist, scientific or founded.

> *The publication of The Humanist Controversy and Other Writings adds another installment to the posthumous reckoning with Louis Althusser that began after the theorist died on October 22, 1990... However, the labour of treatment developed quickly into a project directed towards the revitalization of the Althusserian legacy tout court: a reinterpretation, under the sign of the posthumous bracketed "s" for Althusser(s)— Hegelian, Spinozist, Leninist, Lacanian, Machiavellian and aleatory Marxist... What these ten years of academic labour demonstrate is that we should have no illusion as to the topicality of this collection... Instead, we might focus on the discernable outline of a certain tactical plan in development: first, produce a body of commentary that contextually reorients the theorist towards more palatable figures such as Jacques Lacan, Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, and Guy Debord, etc; second, use the publication of "new" archival texts from the 1950s and 1980s as a means to disturb the "canon" upon which the dominant monolithic anti-structural and anti-Althusserian view rests. A third element now comes into play. In order for a new reading to really take wing, the project will have to move beyond the exercise of displacement and ensure that the "old" Althusser is exorcised completely...* [132]

[132] Julian Holland. 'Pour Althusser(s): Review of Louis Althusser, The Humanist Controversy and Other Writings, ed. Francois Matheron, trans. G.M. Goshgarian (Verso, 2003).

The "old" Althusser? This sort of critique, while valid and tempting, relies on the reality of a point in history when the 'real' Althusser was known and made himself known. But as we have seen from countless efforts from Althusser himself, 'Where is Althusser?' 'Who is Althusser?': these questions of identity persist through myriad of collective enterprises that embrace and protect the multiplicity of men who lived by the name of Louis Althusser.

But why the recent rush to associate Althusser with Foucault? In reality it was Althusser who taught Foucault at the École Normale, and Althusser who lead Foucault to join the Communist Party in 1950[133]. But of course it was Foucault, who, two years later left the PCF:

> *When I left the PCF, it was after the famous plot by Stalin's doctors in the winter of 1952, and it came about because of a persistent feeling of uneasiness. Shortly before Stalin's death the news was spread that a group of doctors had made an attempt on his life....Even though we were not convinced, we all tried our hardest to believe what we had been told. This too was part of what I would describe as a disastrous attitude, but one I shared. That was my way of being in the party. Being obliged to stand behind a fact that was the total opposite of credible was part of that exercise of "ego dissolution," part of the search for some way to be "other." ...Three months after Stalin's death, however, we learned that the*

[133] On the friendship of Foucault and Althusser, David Macey writes: *Foucault and Althusser became close friends in the late 1940's and the former profited greatly from the older man's counsels. It was on Althusser's advice that Foucault rejected hospitalization as a solution to his depressive problems, and his early career was to be heavily influence by 'old Alt', as he was affectionately known at ENS. The very real friendship that developed was to be proof against all political differences and disagreements and was to survive bitter personal tragedies too. It was also proof against the sarcasm Althusser often directed against those around him. Not all Althusser's comments on Foucault were charitable. When he learned that Foucault was studying madness and was spending time at the Sainte-Anne psychiatric hospital, he remarked in the presence of the young English historian Douglas Johnson, who spent the years 1947-1949 at ENS, that he should be kept there...* p. 25. Macey also writes: *Althusser and Foucault had a mutual friend in Jacques Martin, ' a distressed homosexual, but a warm man despite the distance of his latent schizophrenia... Michel Foucault loved him as much as I did.'* p.25 .

> *doctors' plot had been sheer invention. What happened? ...We never had an answer. You will say that it was something they did all the time, nothing out of the ordinary. ...The fact is that from that moment I moved away from the PCF.*[134]

At the same time, the PCF issued a statement that 'homosexuality was a bourgeois vice and sign of decadence.' While the government itself had issues similar edicts, is there something appealing about Foucault's unwillingness to stay within a party that was unknowingly judging him *carte blanche?*

Somehow, more than the recent 'coolness' of Foucault's resistance, it may shared intellectual influences which encourages historians to align Althusser with his legacy. Edward Said writes:

> *Foucault emerged out of a strange revolutionary concatenation of Parisian aesthetic and political currents which for about thirty years produced such a concentration of brilliant work as we are not likely to see again for generations. In what amounted to a genuine upheaval in modern thought, the barriers between disciplines and indeed languages were broken, then the fields separated by these barriers were reshaped from beneath the surface to their most complex superstructures.*[135]

While Foucault played a crucial role in breaking the barriers between disciplines, his mentorship under figures like Gaston Bachelard and Jean Hyppolite was common to Althusser as well. Said continues:

> *Theory, images of astonishing fecundity, and vast formal systems--to say nothing of idioms that seemed barbarous at first but soon became fashionable--poured out from these figures, whose ancestry was a contradictory amalgam of the academic and the insurrectionary. All seemed to have been deeply affected by Marx and individually to a greater or lesser degree by Freud; most were rhetorical tacticians and obsessed by language as a way of seeing, if not actually constituting, reality; many*

---

[134] Trombadori, *Colloqui*, 33; Eribon, 56.)

[135] 'La situation de Cuvier dans l'histoire de la biologie', paper read to the 'Journées Cuvier' conference held on 30-31 May 1969.

> *were influenced by university courses and almost legendary teachers--the names of Gaston Bachelard, Georges Dumézil, Emile Benveniste, Jean Hyppolite, and Alexandre Kojève...recur with frequency--as much as they were influenced by surrealist poets and novelists like Andre Bréton and Raymond Roussel, as well as by the maverick writer-philosophers Georges Bataille and Maurice Blanchot.*[136]

Through one of the primary voices of Henri-IV, (Foucault and Martin's equivalent of 'high school'), Jean Hyppolite would introduce the young scholars to their first readings of Hegel. Though Martin was four years older than Foucault, both students passed through Hyppolite's instruction, and later, Jacques Martin would translate Hegel for Althusser.

> *The importance of Hegel for the generation that attended ENS in the immediate aftermath of the war can be gauged by the titles of the DEA dissertations written by three* normaliens *between 1947 and 1949: Louis Althusser,* La Notion de contenu dans la philosophie de G.W.F. Hegel; *Jacques Martin,* La Notion d'individu chez Hegel; *Michel Foucault,* La constitution d'un transcendental dans 'la Phénoménologie de l'esprit' de Hegel. [137]

The road to Marx was most direct for Jacques Martin, who passed him on to Althusser, who passed him on to Foucault. Marx opened the door to German philosophy for all three *normaliens.* Yet:

> *...all of these Parisian intellectuals were deeply rooted in the political actualities of French life, the great milestones of which were World War II, the response to European communism, the Vietnamese and Algerian colonial wars, May 1968. Beyond France it was Germany and German thought that mattered most, rarely the work of British or American writers.*[138]

As the above PCF membership example suggests, Foucault's own political response differed wildly from Althusser's. While both were absent from the May 1968 events,

---

[136] Ibid.
[137] Macey, p. 32
[138] Ibid.

Foucault was in Tunisia, fighting different, but no less politically significant battles. Foucault described the events of 1967-68 uprisings in Tunisia as follows:

> *A good fifty fires. 150-200 shops looted – the poorest ones, obviously; the timeless spectacle of the synagogue gutted, carpets dragged into the street, trampled on and burned; people running through the streets, taking refuge in a block that the mob wanted to set on fire. Since the, silence, the shutters down, no one or almost no one in the area, children playing with broken knick knacks... Nationalism plus racism adds up to something very nasty. And if you add that, because of the* gauchisme*, the students lent a hand (and a bit more than a hand) to it all, you feel quite profoundly sad. And one wonders by what strange ruse or (stupidity) of history, Marxism could give rise to that (and supply a vocabulary for it).*[139]

As the anti-Semitic current rose in Tunisia, Foucault stepped back into political action. Lending print machinery for the production of anti-government fliers coincided with a heightened presence of unconvincing and surveillance savvy homeless constantly outside Foucault's home and doorway. The final warning came when Foucault's car was stopped and Foucault was subjected to a "savage beating"[140]. He persisted in supporting students who underwent trials and persecutions in the Tunisian courts and quickly became a nail in the foot of the Tunisian government. In light of his involvement and experiences, Foucault saw the events of May 1968 in Paris with fascination and skepticism, stating:

> *There is no comparison between the barricades of the Latin Quarter and the real risk of doing fifteen years in prison, in Tunisia.*[141]

Yet, when Foucault was in Paris on May 17th 1968, he joined with 50,000 others to support both workers and students' rights.

---

[139] 'La situation de Cuvier dans l'histoire de la biologie', paper read to the 'Journées Cuvier' conference held on 30-31 May 1969.
[140] Macey, p 205.
[141] Macey, pp. 205-206.

Foucault's political activity inspired many to re-read *La Histoire de la Folie* as a tool of revolution within staid institutions. Foucault didn't deny these readings and over the course of his life, he continued to sign petitions, to march, to make formal and written statements in the press and to the state on the behalf of a wide array of persons suffering from 'injustice'. He didn't pick a cause, or an organization, nor did he always take up the cases directly pertaining to his last political action. His variable moves and choices make it difficult to tell the story of 'Foucault, opponent of the X' or 'Foucault, defender of the Y or Z'. This inherent resistance may have something to do with Foucault's own definitions of subject and statement making.

Foucault's concern in statement making is with the process of discourse formation, not object naming. Accordingly, David Macey points out that, for Foucault, a statement is:

> *A function of existence which belongs specifically to signs and on the basis of which one can decide, through analysis or intuition, if they 'make sense' or not, according to the order in which they follow one another or are juxtaposed, of what they are the sign and what kind of act is effected by their formulation (oral or written).*[142]

And further:

> *To describe a formulation as a statement does not consist in analyzing relations between the author and what he says... but of determining the position any individual can and must occupy in order to be its subject.*[143]

Like Derrida, another figure at the École Normale during Althusser, Foucault and Martin's studies, Foucault's work is one of decentering the subject in time, in history. To do this, Foucault's archeology is a study of the historical discourses that make subject

---

[142] Macey, David. p 202.
[143] Ibid.

making, or subjectivation possible. Foucault's subject is a product of history, not a limited or autonomous figure. In this construction alone, as we saw in Chapter 3, Foucault is challenging Kant and the Modernist conception of genius.

What results is a nearness to Althusser in his description not only of ideology, but also of the conjuncture. While we earlier described the conjuncture as a concept which effectively views history as a 'process without a subject', Althusser's passivity is not altogether present in Foucault's process of subjectivation:

> *A process of subjectivation, that is, a production of a mode of existence, cannot be confused with a subject, unless it is to discharge the latter from all interiority and even from all identity. Subjectivation does not even have anything to do with a 'person': it is an individuation, specific or collective, that characterizes an event (a time of day, a river, a wind, a life...) It is an intensive mode and not a personal subject.*[144]

The anti-humanism of this passage and countless others like it in both Althusser and Foucault's writing may be related to each scholars' choice of reading material. As Althusser and Foucault turned to Germany for their literature, Heidegger and Nietzsche's influences are clear. And with them, is the pervading shadow of the Catholic Church.

Catholic theology has generally and traditionally taken an anti-humanist viewpoint by defaulting to the omnipotence of the godhead. Yet the term anti-humanist is most closely related to the work of Martin Heidegger, who was, in no small way, influenced by his early Catholic theological training. Yet, while Heidegger's work is not strictly Catholic,

---

[144] This quote originated in the writing of Gilles Deleuze, "La vie comme oeurvre d'art" in *Pourparlers,* 138 pp 100-101, but is discussed in an insightful writing by Eleanor Kaufman entitled "Madness and Repetition" in *The Delirium of Praise*, p 70.

it is anti-humanist and this influence procured strange 20th century philosophical progeny for the Weimar Scholar and Nazi sympathizer.

> *Since World War II, literary theory, especially among German-influenced French thinkers and their American disciples, has moved rapidly from one "antihumanist" fad to another, from structuralism to semiotics to hermeneutics to poststructuralism and deconstruction. Among the leading tenets of the final product are: "the dissolution of the self"; the claim that the individual is a "fiction", or that the individual is the creation of bourgeois ideology, or that the "subject" must be deconstructed; the denial of transcendence (or of the transcendent subject); and the belief, derived from Nietzsche and filtered through Heidegger, that there are no facts, only interpretation.*[145].

Many Heideggerian historians and scholars make a tie between Heidegger's anti-humanism and his ability to live through, support and participate in radical human atrocities. The origins of not only Catholic, but religious theologies worldwide are often oriented toward resolving a brutally inhumane world with inner constructions of justice, freedom and happiness; most do so, ultimately by again, defaulting to the omnipotence of a godhead whose reasoning is beyond human capacity.

> *Looming behind this antihumanist viewpoint is.. Nazism and the Holocaust. Auschwitz provides the historical context for understanding recent literary criticism; [The author] suggests substituting the "historically rooted term, 'post-Auschwitz'" for the "vague and misleading category, 'postmodern.'" He apparently has several things in mind when he speaks of our intellectual landscape as "post-Auschwitz". First, Auschwitz "is the symbol of the total collapse of a high culture" (p. 85), a collapse that literature, science, and art could do nothing to prevent.4 Second, [the author] has detected "certain affinities to totalitarian ways of thinking" in postmodern theory; Auschwitz stands as a horrible reminder that bad ideas have bad consequences. Auschwitz exercises a more direct influence as well. The ever-shifting edifice of Postwar theory has been constructed by thinkers who either actively collaborated with the Nazis (Heidegger and Paul de Man) or remained indifferent to atrocity. The theories they formulated in the aftermath of the war... (with specific reference to Paul de Man), are "a useful device for*

[145] Ott, Hugo. *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*, trans. Allan Blunden; New York: Basic, 1993. p.17

> *creating an intricate and elaborate set of evasions that would help him nullify his own guilt-ridden past." It is certainly convenient for anyone who has committed gross transgressions to argue that 'value' is a fiction designed to legitimate middle-class oppression of the lower classes.*

This review, while conservative in its review of postmodernism, hits a nerve that readers of Althusser cannot help but notice. For Althusser, anti-humanism was directly equated to the futility of human action. Did Althusser erase his own impotent agency in a larger omnipotence, such as the will of God in his early work, or the shiftings of the class struggle and the conjuncture, as in his Marxist writings?[146] But what of Foucault? Silently and strongly influenced by Heidegger, Foucault did his last writings in the library of a Catholic cloister. These writings made up a four volume consideration of the Catholic influences of morality and norms on the nature of sexuality and subjectivation in the 17th to the 20th centuries. Yet it is not accurate to elide Foucault and Althusser's Catholic influences and receptions: while Althusser deferred to safety under umbrellas of Church, Hélène and the Communist Party, Foucault played on the border of an historical determinism that still allowed for individual political action.

In the larger context of 20th century France however, is it safe to conclude then, as the reviewer above does, that what is missing between Althusser and Foucault's anti-humanisms and the existentialism of Sartre may be, for example, the Protestant revolution? Relying on the commanding discourses or ideologies of history, Foucault and Althusser's theorizations of subjectivation and even the conjuncture differ greatly from the sense of self and individuality that Martin Luther's theses, nailed to the door of

[146] Jean Guitton claims that Althusser was considering a life of the cloth before he met his future wife, and Marxism through her. See Webster, Paul.

the Catholic Church, unwittingly evinced. Yet, for both Catholics and Protestants, the question returns to one of work, within the context of salvation, within the context of ethics, and in the nature of creation – as discussed above. And perhaps, rather than reading the Protestant split onto the ideas of Foucault, Althusser and Martin, the more interesting question, ultimately is still this question of work.

To conclude then, if work is, *á la* Kant, Althusserian Marxism and Catholicism, the action by which one draws oneself' nearer to understanding reality by attempting to dissolve alienation, work is also a necessary, constant, yet ultimately futile attempt at an impossible metaphysical union. Foucault's absence of work, is then, both a recognition of the futility of 'work' and a recognition of the absence which occurs when metaphysics is no longer the frame for rationality or ethics. In May 1968, in the Communist Party, in the French schools and government this absence of work marked the speeches of the PCF, it shadowed the student revolt and hovered in Althusser's hospital cell as he waited until the student's logic doubled back and became the right wing escalation of power. The realty and Foucault's metaphor of Jacques Martin's suicide and schizophrenic self erasure occurs again and again until it too is erased in a fold of logic on logic that contradicts itself to no end. Is Jacques Martin's death and his self erasure then simply a disturbing story of one more painful suicide? Yes, but is it also an absence that marked Foucault and Althusser in its breakdown? My hope, at the end of this thesis, is that these answers are more complicated than they first appeared.

APPENDIX A
École Normale Files on Jacques Martin

M. Martin 10729 / 205

K 6625 8

L.P.

EXPÉDITIONS
PAPIER SPÉCIAL
9F

DROIT d'EXPÉDITION [illegible]

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Préfecture du [illegible] de la Seine

Extrait des Minutes [illegible] de naissance du
14e Arrondissement de PARIS (année 1922

Le dix-huit mai mil neuf cent vingt-deux, cinq heures trente, est né, rue Froidevaux, 6, Henri Jacques Michel François, du sexe masculin, de Félix Henri MARTIN, et de Annette Jeanne Marguerite TOMELLOT, son épouse.-

P.C.C.

Paris le treize, [illegible] mil neuf cent quarante-un

Le Maire

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
MAIRIE
PARIS

C - 74702 2

D.A.

Je soussigné MARTIN Jacques Henri François Michel, né à Paris (14e) le 18 mai 1922, candidat à une bourse d'enseignement supérieur, m'engage à restituer à l'État le montant de la bourse dont j'aurai bénéficié, dans le cas où, par mon fait, je ne servirais pas pendant dix ans dans l'enseignement.

Fait à Paris, le 21 mars 1941

J. Martin

Vu pour autorisation de mon fils

Paris, le 21 mars 1941

6. Place Denfert Rochereau et 204. boulevard Raspail

Vu uniquement pour certification matérielle de la signature de M. Mr Martin apposée ci-contre

[illegible] 21 MARS 1941

[illegible] Commissaire de Police

4

Académie de Paris

LYCÉE HENRI IV

ÉCOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE
ET BOURSES DE LICENCE

Concours de 1941

Section des Lettres

M. Martin Jacques Henri *Candidat*

Conduite : Très bien.
Travail : Très bien.
Aptitudes :
Candidat de première valeur. Nettement en tête d'une excellente classe. Esprit ferme et distingué

Caractère et moralité : Très bien.

Paris, le 15 Mars 1941

LE PROVISEUR,

[illegible]

5

Curriculum vitae

Je, soussigné MARTIN Jacques, Henri, François, Michel, né à Paris (14e) le 18 mai 1922, certifie que mon père exerce la profession de pharmacien, certifie en outre avoir fait mes études au lycée Henri-IV à Paris, et, précédemment au lycée de Nevers et au lycée Blaise Pascal de Clermont-Ferrand, certifie enfin avoir habité depuis l'âge de quinze ans, avec ma famille, à Paris, 6 place Denfert-Rochereau, 14e.

Fait à Paris, le 21 mars 1941.

J. Martin

6

Office du baccalauréat de l'Université de Paris

Faculté des Lettres

A Philosophie

Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement Secondaire

A

Seconde Partie – Première Série : Philosophie

Le Directeur de l'Office du Baccalauréat, soussigné, certifie que monsieur MARTIN, Henri, Jacques, Michel, François, né à Paris, département de Seine, le 18 mai 1922, a été jugé digne du grade de bachelier de l'Enseignement secondaire. (A – Philosophie), le 29 Juin 1939, avec la mention : Très Bien.

Paris, le 30 Juin 1939

Signature de l'intéressé :

Martin

Le Directeur :
Pour l'inspecteur d'académie,
Directeur du Service,
le secrétaire administratif,

illisible

Pour copie certifiée conforme à l'original qui nous a été présenté
Le Maire,
Pour le Maire :
L'Adjoint

VILLE DE CLERMONT-FERRAND (P.-de-D.)

11

Je, soussigné MARTIN Jacques Henri François Michel, né à Paris (14e) le 18 mai 1922, certifie ne pas être visé par la loi du 3 octobre 1940, portant statut des Juifs.

Fait à Paris, le 21 mars 1941,

J. Martin

7

Je, soussigné MARTIN, Jacques, Henri, François, Michel, né à Paris (14e) le 18 mai 1922, certifie ne pas tomber sous le coup de la loi militaire.

Fait à Paris, le 21 mars 1941,

J. Martin

MARTIN, Jacques

ANNÉE SCOLAIRE 1941-1942

DATES	EXAMENS	RÉSULT
Juin	Psychol.	AB
	Philo. gén. et log.	B

Préparation militaire supérieure

Observations

ANNÉE SCOLAIRE 1942-1943

DATES	EXAMENS	RÉSULT
Nov. 42	Morale et sociologie	B.
Juin 1943	Histoire de la philosophie	AB
	Dispensé de l'épreuve spéciale de langues vivantes	

Préparation militaire supérieure

Observations

ECOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE

Notes et appréciations de M. Gusdorf

sur l'Élève MARTIN *(Promotion 194 1)*

Martin est un des meilleurs parmi les agrégatifs de cette année. Solide culture philosophique et capacité de la mettre en valeur. Il possède un bon dictionnaire de construction qui doit lui permettre de réussir des dissertations et des leçons à forte structure dont l'argumentation sera convaincante.

Sauf accident, devrait se classer parmi les premiers au concours

A Paris, le 29 Mai *194 1*

SIGNATURE DU PROFESSEUR,

ACADÉMIE
de
PARIS

LYCÉE HENRI-IV

Paris, le 1 JUIN 1939

Le Proviseur du Lycée Henri-IV, soussigné, certifie que
le jeune Martin Jacques-Henri
né le 18 Mai 1922 à Paris
candidat à l'École Normale supérieure et aux Bourses de Licence (Section des Lettres), paraît remplir toutes les conditions d'aptitude morale aux fonctions de l'Enseignement.

Philosophie (M. Bridoux) Très bon candidat. Sans doute le meilleur sujet de la classe. Mérite de réussir brillamment.
11½ 5e sur 45
13 9e

Français (M. Guéhenno) Excellent élève, du plus grand mérite. Esprit élégant et fort. Ses dissertations témoignent de la plus véritable habileté. Ses versions sont souvent du tour le plus heureux
14½ 1er
15½ 1er

Version latine (M.)
11½ 10e
11½ 9e

Thème latin (M. Rigot) Élève extrêmement distingué; connaissances sûres, traductions élégantes
11 14e
7½ 22e

Grec (M.)
10 3e
12½ 5e

Histoire (M. Alba) Doit très bien faire
12 17e
16½ 1er

Anglais ~~Allemand~~ (M. Lemonnier) Bon élève

M. le Proviseur Excellent candidat à tous égards, se trouve en tête de sa classe.

Le Proviseur.
[signature]

ECOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE

Note et appréciations de M Piobetta

sur l'Elève Martin (Jacques) (Promotion 1941)

(Philosophie)

Martin m'a fait une leçon sur "Qu'est-ce qu'une catégorie ?"

Le défaut essentiel que j'ai pu noter est l'inexpérience de la leçon : Martin lit ses notes, et ne semble pas faire de différence entre la dissertation et la leçon.

Pour le reste, c'est un esprit distingué, pleasant, et les remarques ou interventions qu'il a eu l'occasion de faire lors des exposés de ses camarades prouvent une grande aptitude à la discussion, beaucoup de finesse et de sincérité dans les idées.

A Paris, le 16 Avril 1942

SIGNATURE DU PROFESSEUR.

L. Piobetta

ECOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE

*Notes et appréciations de M*onsieur Cavaillès

sur l'Elève Martin (Jacques) *(Promotion 1941)*

(Philosophie)

<u>L'espace chez Kant</u> Travail consciencieux, intéressant, un peu difficile à suivre en raison de ~~la complexité~~ ~~et~~ de la longueur et de la rapidité de sa présentation. M. Martin a voulu aller au fond des questions, il a précisé heureusement [illegible] et ~~[illegible]~~ présenté nettement certaines ~~[illegible]~~ difficultés. Il a fait preuve d'une ouverture de jugement et de finesse. La forme était un peu gauche, mais on devinait une activité et une maturité plus profondes qui donnent les meilleurs espoirs. Cet exposé était l'un des plus pénétrants de la série.

A Paris, le 3 mai 1942

SIGNATURE DU PROFESSEUR,

Cavaillès

ECOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE

Notes et appréciations de M. Bachelard

sur l'Élève Martin *(Promotion 1941)*

Votre élève. Son diplôme sera un bon travail. Lotman m'en parlera. J'ai pu ainsi faire la connaissance d'un esprit solide.

A Paris, le 16 Mai 1942

SIGNATURE DU PROFESSEUR,

Bachelard

Rapport sur le stage de M. Martin (Jacques)
élève à l'École Normale Supérieure, étudiant en philosophie.

M. Martin a assisté à mon cours du 10 au 15 février et, dès le 15 février, il a commencé à participer aux exercices de la classe en répondant aux questions écrites posées par les élèves dans le « cahier de questions ». Il a répondu avec compétence aux questions posées et ses réponses ont intéressé les élèves.

La semaine suivante, du 17 février au 22 février, il a eu à faire le cours sur la mémoire. L'exposé qu'il a fait de cette question, était bien informé, et même un peu touffu, mais clair et présenté de façon accessible pour des élèves de philosophie. Le fond dénote cependant quelque tendance aux dogmatisme et aux affirmations tranchantes, insuffisamment nuancées. La forme laissait davantage à désirer : le débit de M. Martin était trop précipité ; je lui en ai fait à plusieurs reprises l'observation ; mais il a eu du mal à s'en corriger. Les élèves n'ont pu que difficilement prendre des notes.

Les interrogations ont été un peu rapides. Comme il est naturel d'ailleurs chez un débutant, M. Martin ne laisse pas assez parler l'élève et a tendance à répondre à sa place quand l'élève ne répond pas assez vite.

M. Martin a eu à corriger une dissertation sur le sujet : « La philosophie doit-elle se soucier aux questions qu'elle pose ou aux réponses qu'elle apporte ? ». Ses corrections ont été très soignées, et ses appréciations très judicieuses ; ses notes s'accordaient, dans l'ensemble, avec les miennes. Il a donné du sujet un compte-rendu très vivant et qui a vraiment enthousiasmé les élèves.

A. Cuvillier

Paris 17 avril 1943

Monsieur le Directeur,

Je m'excuse, par suite d'une indisposition, de vous adresser en retard la note de M. J. Martin, candidat à la Chaire de Philosophie. Il a remis un bon travail (dissertation notée 15), c'est un esprit vif et solide ; il réussira, je crois, très bien.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Directeur, mes respectueux hommages

Emile Bréhier

Nom.................. MARTIN

Prénoms .... Jacques-Henri

A.- Situation de famille

1/ Né de père français

a) Père français à titre originel,

né le 20 avril 1885 à La Chapelle Engerbold (Calvados)

b) ~~Père naturalisé avant la naissance du candidat~~,

Père né le à

naturalisé par décret en date du............

~~2/ Né de père naturalisé après la naissance du candidat~~,

a) Père né le à

naturalisé par décret en date du.................

3/ ~~Né de père étranger~~

B.- Je déclare ne pas tomber sous le coup des lois portant statut des Juifs.

~~Je déclare tomber sous le coup des lois portant statut des Juifs.~~

C.- Avez-vous été mobilisé pendant la dernière guerre, et de quelle à quelle date ?

Certifié l'exactitude des renseignements ci-dessus.

Signature :

J. Martin

(Rayer les mentions inutiles)

MARTIN Jacques Promotion 1941

Distingué, esprit très nuancé, très scrupuleux. Avait longuement hésité l'an dernier entre la philosophie et les lettres, craignant de ne pas trouver dans le "métier" de philodophe les satisfactions que lui semblaient devoir fournir la philosophie prise en elle-même.
Prépare cette année son certficat d'histoire de la Philosophie (a travaillé notamment pour M. Bréhier), et par ailleurs lit et se documente sérieusement.

APPENDIX B
PCF Statements, May 1968

Declaration by PCF Secretary General Waldeck-Rochet

L'Humanité, *Trans. Abidor, Mitch*, May 25, 1968.

As was confessed by General de Gaulle himself, the current government has been very much weakened. And a referendum will not resolve its problems. The government is condemned to come to an early end.

Millions of blue- and white-collar workers are on strike; the aspiration of an entire people for a true regime change continues to grow. Negotiations with union organizations are going to begin, but what millions of strikers and their families are waiting for is the rapid satisfaction of their essential demands.

On the political level, the question of power is posed more than ever. The Gaullist regime has reached its end. It must depart.

In order to answer the aspirations of workers, teachers, and students, the state must end its subjugation by the monopoly capitalists, something that requires profound structural reforms. This is why the French Communist Party, considering it necessary that a step be taken towards socialism, proposes not only the nationalization of the big banks, but also that of the great industrial enterprises that are part of the monopolies that dominate the key sectors of the economy.

In addition, we call for the democratic management of national enterprises, and the establishment — at all levels of economic life — of a controlling power by workers, beginning with the extension of the powers of enterprise committees, and the unhindered activity of union branches in the enterprises.

I stress that the Communists aren't proposing reforms in order to bury — under Left-wing phrases — essential demands of the workers, such as a general increase in wages, the progressive reduction of the work day, the abrogation of anti-social ordinances, and full employment for all.

Contrary to the assertions of certain Leftists affiliated with anarchism, these demands have not been superseded; they must be satisfied without delay.

In order to completely change policies, and to realize real structural reforms, we must have done with the power of the monopolies, with Gaullist power, and promote a popular government that relies on the will of the people.

The Communist Party, which is ready to take its place in such a government, has never ceased proposing to other parties of the Left, as well as democratic organizations, an

agreement on the basis of a common program of government. It's not our fault if this agreement has not yet been reached.

It's in order that this objective be quickly reached that the Communist Party invites the creation of numerous action committees for a popular government and for democratic unity. May 24, 1968

Unity in Struggle

Waldeck Rochet, *L'Humanité*, trans. Abidor, Mitch May 31, 1968.

Dear Friends and Comrades:

Our country is currently living through events of considerable importance. A movement of exceptional breadth and strength is stirring up all the working strata of the nation. While profits grow, the workers have seen their standard of living stagnate or even get worse. Price increases, increases in taxes and rents, the dismantling of Social Security, 500,000 unemployed: these are the fruits of the anti-social policies of Gaullist power.
An out of date educational system, wildly insufficient social and cultural equipment, tens of thousands of young people — workers and students — without jobs: this is what Gaullist power has given French youth.

A unanimous cry today resounds through the factories, the offices, and the universities: "Ten years are enough!" (Applause). Nine million workers have gone on strike in order to demand that their most urgent demands finally be met. They call for a general increase in salaries, the guarantee of employment and resources, the reduction of the work day without a decrease in salary, the abrogation of ordinances, the defense of Social Security, the moving up of the retirement age, the rebirth and the extension of union rights in the enterprise.

At the same time, students and teachers are engaged in a great fight for a democratic and modern reform of the educational system. They want a new university; its structures, content, and methods adapted to modern methods and the needs of the country.

The working class — only 10% of whose children have access to the universities — are in entire solidarity with this just demand of the students. The peasants, too, are manifesting their discontent. They demand the ability to sell their products at remunerative prices, and the abandonment of an agricultural policy that deliberately exposes them to the blows of competition from big landowners and private banks.

The French Communist Party, which, from the beginning, has denounced the malfeasance of the Gaullist regime, supports the demands of the workers, the students and the peasants without reserve. These demands, far from being outdated, are just.
They must be satisfied.

The strength and the cohesion of the strike movement are such that state power and the bosses have been forced to enter into negotiations and make certain concessions.
Workers, employees, and civil servants have said they will return to work once they feel that, in the current state of their struggle, the negotiations currently under way will give them satisfaction.

We Communists fully support their determination to finally see their legitimate demands met. We say to them: your resolution is all the more justified in that big capital's regime is in trouble. It has continuously grown weaker over the last few years under the repeated blows delivered by worker and democratic struggles, struggles in which the Communists have played a determining role.

Today this power shows itself incapable of resolving the pressing problems that the workers, students and peasants pose: all the social strata that are victims of the monopolies that have literally squeezed them for the past ten years. It's been ten years that Gaullist management has done everything possible to liquidate all forms of democracy in France, to prevent the French from having their say in the managing of the affairs of the country, which is to say their own affairs. And this is why the question that is posed today is that of Gaullist power itself. Incapable of resolving the problems that are posed, General de Gaulle — in his last speech — in a way declared war on the workers who are on strike for their demands; on the students and teachers in struggle for a democratic university; on the millions of Frenchmen who want political change.

Here is the essence of the declaration adopted by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party immediately after General de Gaulle's speech:
"In order to oppose the workers, de Gaulle has violently gone after the Communist Party, which has always defended the interests of the working class, interests inseparable from those of the nation. The attack against our Party tries to mask the General's will to impose his own dictatorship."

The truth is that the working class and its organizations have demonstrated amazing calm; they've expanded their protest movement and mass political struggle while taking care to reject any kind of provocation. This is true in the factories occupied by millions of strikers, as well as in the impressive street demonstrations organized by the CGT, the other unions, and the Communist Party.

Showing his contempt for blue and white-collar workers, the chief of state hasn't thought it worth his while to say the least word concerning their demands. But the first condition to be met in order to settle the immense conflict provoked by the harmful policies of a power in service to the trusts, is to meet the legitimate and unanimous union demands. It's also that of the French Communist Party.

De Gaulle has announced his intention to proceed to new elections.

The French Communist Party did not wait for this speech to demand that the people be permitted their say as soon as possible. Our Party will go to this vote stating its program of social progress and peace, as well as its policy of union of all democratic forces. It immediately calls on the millions of Frenchmen and women to have confidence in it, to push back Gaullist power, and to install a true democracy that will be in the service of the interests of the workers. It calls on the workers, on all democratic forces to strengthen and extend their union, in the interests of the people and of France. Despite the threats in de Gaulle's speech, the workers will not allow themselves to be intimidated.
May 31, 1968

Communiqué of the CGT

l'Humanité, trans., Abidor, Mitch, June 7, 1968. p.1

The millions of workers of the public and nationalized sectors, as well as of diverse industries in the private sector whose demands have been met, have returned to work strengthened by a remarkable victory. The National Bureau salutes the unity, the combativeness, and the great maturity of the workers who have thus concluded an essential phase of their battle under the best conditions, opening up great prospects for even wider democratic conquests.

The only workers remaining on strike are those who have come up against particularly retrograde bosses, who persist in their refusal to grant what has elsewhere been obtained.
The National Bureau of the CGT firmly declares that the settling of demands in metallurgy, construction, rubber, and a certain number of enterprises in other branches of industry in the same spirit as that which occurred in other large sectors of the economy, is an affair that involves the responsibility of the government and the CNPF [1]

The most reactionary elements among the bosses are forcing the continuation of the strikes in these sectors and act as veritable provocateurs. In denouncing them as such, the National Bureau of the CGT insists on pointing out the grave responsibilities of the government, which acts as their protector.

The threatening declarations of the Minister of Information, the various attempts to break a justified strike, the recourse to the hired strong-arm men of the so-called "civic action committees" of M. Frey, police intervention against strikers, all of this situates this as a government of the most sordid bosses, of which Citroen and Michelin, among others, are the symbol.

Its conduct at Renault, a nationalized enterprise under its responsibility, and most notably the brutal police intervention at Flins, is a demonstration of this, and indicates an unacceptable desire for vengeance against those who gave the signal to set in motion the general strike. That which the government did not dare to do against the workers of the large nationalized industries and the civil servants, the working class and public opinion will not tolerate that they be done against the steel- and other workers, who ask for nothing but that which has been obtained by all the others.

The National Bureau salutes the workers of the arsenals, the gas workers and the electrical workers who, at the appeal of their CGT federations, are contributing a day of their salaries for their comrades forced to pursue their strikes. It calls on the all the workers who have victoriously returned to work to take inspiration from these examples, and to immediately demonstrate the most active material and moral solidarity.

It calls on all of public opinion, which has had the occasion to appreciate the spirit of responsibility of the CGT and the calm of the millions of workers in struggle, in order that it bring its powerful support to those who are victims of a scandalous injustice and of

discrimination. The recalcitrant bosses must be forced to seriously and quickly negotiate in order to satisfy, as was done for the others, the legitimate demands of their employees.
1. *Conseil National du Patronat Français — national employer's association.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Althusser:

Althusser, Louis. *Essays in Self-Criticism.* Pantheon, 1976.

------- *For Marx.* Trans.: Brewster, Ben. Pantheon Books: New York, 1969.

------- *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays.* trans.: Ben Brewster. Monthly Review Press: 2001.

------- & Balibar, Etienne. *Reading Capital.* trans.: Ben Brewster. Verso: New York, 1998.

------- *The Future Lasts Forever.* eds.: Yann Moulier- Boutang, Olivier Corpet, trans: Richard Veasey, New Press: New York, 1992

------- *The Humanist Controversy. ed.* Matheron, F. and *trans.* Goshgarian, G.M., Verso: New York, 2003.

------- *The Spectre of Hegel: Early Writings*, Trans. G.M. Goshgarian, London: Verso, 1997, 168, n. 252.

Boer, Roland. "Althusser, Myth & Genesis1-3," *Journal of Philosophy and Scripture.* Villanova University: Spring 2004, Vol. 1, Iss. #2.

Kirshner, Lewis A. "The Man Who Didn't Exist: The Case of Lewis Althusser." *American Imago*. Baltimore: Summer 2003. Vol. 60, Iss. 2.

Marx, Karl. The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon Preface to the Second Edition, 1869.

Moulier Boutang, Yann. *Louis Althusser: Une Biographie.* Bernard Grasset: Paris, 1992.

Webster, Paul. "Paris Diary: Victim of a Broken Mind" *The Guardian*, Oct. 8, 1988.

Foucault:

Foucault, Michel. *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984, Vol. II.* eds.: Paul Rabinow, Robert Hurley. New Press: New York, 2001.

------- *Archeology of Knowledge.* Pantheon: 1982.

------- *Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception.* Vintage: New York, 1994.

------- *Discipline & Punish : The Birth of the Prison.* Vintage: New York, 1995.

------- *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984, Vol 1.*

------- *History of Sexuality : An Introduction.* Vintage: New York, 1990.

------- *History of Sexuality : The Use of Pleasure.* Vintage: New York, 1990.

------- *History of Sexuality : The Care of the Self.* Vintage: New York, 1988.

------- *L'Histoire de la Folie à l'age Classique.* Schoenhof Foreign Books, 1972.

------- "Madness, the Absence of Work." *Foucault and His Interlocutors.* Ed.: Davidson, Arnold I. University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1997. pp. 97-106.

------- *Order of Things.* Random House, Inc.: New York, 1970, p 51.

------- *Power: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984, Vol. III.* eds.: James D.Faubion, Robert Hurley, Paul Rabinow New Press: New York, 2001.

------- "Subjectivity and Truth, " *Michel Foucault: Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth.* ed. Rabinow, Paul. trans. Robert Hurley, et al. New Press: New York, 1997.

------- "Writing the Self," *Foucault and His Interlocutors.* Ed.: Davidson, Arnold I University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1997. pp. 234-248.

Fisher, Jacob S. "What Is an Oeuvre? Foucault and Literature," *Configurations.* Vol. 7:2, 1999. pp. 279-290

Macey, David. *The Lives of Michel Foucault.* Pantheon Books: New York, 1993.

Ranson, John S. *Foucault's Discipline: The Politics of Subjectivity.* Duke University Press: Durham 1997.

Said, Edward. "*La situation de Cuvier dans l'histoire de la biologie*", 'Journées Cuvier' conference, May 30-31, 1969.

Martin and The Absence of Work:

Derrida, Jacques. "Cogito et histoire de la folie," *L'écriture et la difference.* Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1967, pp. 51-97.

------ *Memoires For Paul de Man.* Columbia University Press, 1989.

Deutscher, P. "Mourning the Other, Cultural Cannibalism, and the Politics of Friendship (Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray)." differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies, 1998 Vol. 10, #3 pp. 159-184.

Gilles Deleuze. "La vie comme oeurvre d'art" in *Pourparlers,* #138, pp.100-101.

Felman, Shoshana. "Madness and Philosophy or Literature's Reason" *Yale French Studies*, no. 52 Graphesis: Perspectives in Literature and Philosophy, 1975, pp. 206-228.

Foucault, Michel. "Madness, the Absence of Work." *Foucault and His Interlocutors.* Ed.: Davidson, Arnold I. University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1997. pp. 97-106.

------- *L'Histoire de la Folie à l'age Classique.* Schoenhof Foreign Books, 1972.

Kaufman, Eleanor. "Madness and Repetition. The Absence of Work in Deleuze, Foucault, and Jacques Martin," *The Delirium of Praise: Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, Klossowski.* John Hopkins University Press: Maryland, 2001.

Macey, David. *The Lives of Michel Foucault.* Pantheon Books: New York, 1993.

Moulier Boutang, Yann. *Louis Althusser: Une Biographie.* Bernard Grasset: Paris,1992.

Work and the Germans:

Engels, Frederick. "Schelling On Hegel" *Telegraph für Deutschland* Nos. 207/208, December 1841, reprinted in: *WEMC,* Volume 2.

Freud, Sigmund. "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psychoanalysis II)." *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud.* Volume 12, p 150.

------- "On Mourning and Melancholia." *Collected Papers, Vol. IV.* Hogarth Press, London, 1949.

------- "On Mourning and Melancholia." *The Standard Edition of Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV.* Trans. Stachey, James. London: Hogarth Press, 1957.

------- "Narcissism." *Collected Papers, Vol. IV.* Hogarth Press, London, 1949.

------- "Three Contribution to the Theory of Sex." Random House, Inc.: New York, 1938.

Kant , Immanuel. *Introduction to the Critique of Pure Reason, First Edition, 1781.*

------- *The Critique of Judgment.* Trans. J.H. Bernard. Prometheus Books: New York, 2000.

Hegel, G.W.F. "Friedrich Schelling, On the History of Modern Philosophy," *G.W.F. Hegel, Critical Assessments.* Eds.: Stern, Robert. trans.: Bowie, Andrew R. Routledge University Press, 1994.

Heidegger, Martin. "The Question Concerning Technology," *Basic Writings.* Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., New York : New York, 1977.

------- "The Origin of the Work of Art," *Poetry, Language, Thought.* Trans. Hofstadter, Albert. Harper & Row : New York, 1971.

------- *Basic Writings.* eds: Krell, David Farrell. Harper & Row : New York, 1977.

------- *Four Seminars.* trans: Mitchell, Andrew and Raffoul, François. Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 2003

Hirsch, David. *Deconstruction of Literature: Criticism after Auschwitz.* Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1991.

Leithart, Peter J. *Contra Mundum*, No. 13, Fall 1994.

Nietzsche, F. *Human, All Too Human.* Cambridge University Press, Re-print edition, 1996.

------- *Beyond Good and Evil.* Penguin Books, New York, 1973.

------- *On the Geneology of Morals.* Oxford University Press, Re-print edition, 1999.

O'Sullivan, Gerry. "Confronting Heidegger," *Postmodern Culture.* University of Pennsylvania, Sept. 1991, Vol. 2 n.1.

Ott, Hugo. *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*, trans. Allan Blunden; New York: Basic, 1993.

Schelling, Freidrich. "System of Transcendental Philosophy," *System of Transcendental Idealism*. trans.: Heath, Peter. Charlottesville University Press: Virginia, 1978.

Schirmacher, Wolfgang. "The End of Metaphysics – What Does This Mean?" XVIIth World Congress of Philosophy, Montreal 1983. *Social Science Information*, 23 (3): 1984, pp. 603-609.

Schönfeld, Martin. *Kant's Philosophical Development.* University of Florida, 2003.

Sluga, Hans. *Heidegger's Crisis: Philosophy and Politics in Nazi Germany*, Cambridge: Harvard, 1993.

May 1968:

Dickey, Christopher., Warner, Judith. "You Said You Wanted a Revolution," *Newsweek.* New York: Jun 1, 1998. Vol. 131, Iss. 22; p.45.

Deleuze, Gilles. « L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze, » *G comme Gauche* : 1988.

Le Monde: Dossiers & Documents, number 264.

Ross, Kristin. "Establishing Consensus: May '68 in France as seen from the 1980s," *Critical Inquiry.* Chicago, Spring 2002. Vol. 28, Iss. 3; pp. 650-675.

Schreiber, Michael. "The Almost French Revolution of May 1968," *Socialist Action.* Youth for Socialist Action: June 1998.

"On the Poverty of Student Life", a pamphlet published and distributed by the group Situationiste Internationale.

Waldeck- Rochet. "Declaration by PCF Secretary General Waldeck-Rochet" *L'Humanité*, trans.: Abidor, Mitch, May 25, 1968.