Postanarchism and Critical Art Practices

The Postanarchist Horizon of Artistic Practices

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Today one of the major questions that artists confront is how to retain a critical distance from the system of social and economic relations they are at the same time caught up in. How are they to maintain an autonomous position in relation to institutions they depend on for recognition or for funding? How are they to resist the commodification of their work and the recuperation of their ideas and practice by the capitalist market whose hegemony they oppose and yet whose circulation they are necessarily involved in and perpetuate? As Guy Debord showed in the 1960s with his analysis of the 'spectacular society', the fetishism of commodities under late capitalism takes the form of the circulation of images. Commodification finds its most extreme and nihilistic form today in NFTs or non-fungible tokens, where the artwork is reduced to a digital simulacrum that becomes a pure object of investment, similar to the operation of cryptocurrencies. As many theorists and artists have argued, the critical political capacities of art today are rendered highly ambiguous in the era of total market subsumption. The diminishment of the critical power and autonomy of art is especially true when the political realm itself has become virtually indistinguishable from the mediatic spectacle, and when the proliferation of 'fake news', disinformation and conspiracy theories becomes something like an art form. When political power becomes a parody itself, when the alt-right has effectively become today's radical countercultural movement[1], surely the critical role of the artist in unmasking power's imposture becomes somewhat redundant. When power itself becomes anarchic and starts dismantling the established rules and norms of political discourse, what kind of role remains for the critical artist?[2]

In this book, we interrogate the critical capacities of art today. What does it mean to be a critical artist and what role can contemporary art play in exposing and resisting domination, economic inequality, racial injustice, state violence and ecological destruction? The question of the relationship between art and the political is a crucial one today given the current climate of ideological polarization, 'culture wars', and new forms of authoritarianism. After decades of political consensus around neoliberal economic policy and the preservation of an international system based on globalization and free trade agreements, the liberal order today finds itself suffering a major and perhaps terminal crisis of legitimacy, challenged on all sides by right-wing populists as well as by new social movements for economic, racial and environmental justice. In a time of political upheaval and instability, art finds itself called upon to respond. This book seeks to answer the question: what is the political vocation of art today?

Many contemporary artists see themselves as creating a new kind of critical political space in which major issues such as war and state violence, authoritarianism, surveillance, consumerism, the exclusion of

migrants, and ecological devastation are explored. It may be that art offers one of the few remaining spaces today for philosophical and critical reflection on major political questions. Perhaps critical art can open up an alternative public space - one that exists in the interstices or cracks between state institutions and the marketplace. This is not exactly a utopia (this is too permanent a state) but something more like what Foucault called a 'heterotopia' in which existing social relations are temporarily suspended and alternatives experimented with.[3] There are numerous examples of this in contemporary art. Indeed, some time ago Nicholas Bourriaud coined the term 'relational aesthetics' to describe the emerging form taken by contemporary art. Art comes to be seen as a sort of laboratory for experimenting with new relationships outside normal social existence. He calls these 'hands on utopias'.[4]

Of course, we should not be naïve about the critical power of these 'utopias'. Such participatory practices and experimental spaces are often caught up in the institutional and market dynamics they seek to escape. Claire Bishop has pointed to the ambiguous nature of much of participatory art today, questioning its political importance and its emancipatory claims.[5] She shows that the obsession with artistic collaboration and public participation in art is often reflective of a neoliberal rationality that measures aesthetic value in terms of audience engagement. There is a risk, in other words, that contemporary art becomes a model not so much for critical political practice and thought, but rather for the sort of public/private partnerships and discourses of social inclusion and community cohesion that neoliberalism has sought to promote in place of the welfare state. Moreover, the idea of 'participation' has become something of a fetish in the age of communicative capitalism, the era of perpetual connectivity and instantaneous communication, where we are expected to be actively engaged and perpetually stimulated. Here one is inclined to agree with Jacques Ranciére, that there is something condescending and even infantilizing in the premise, upon which certain forms of participatory art are based, that private aesthetic experience is a form of apathy, an ideological slumber that the audience must be violently shaken out of.[6]

At the same time, we would argue that there is a genuinely radical potential in many contemporary art practices, particularly those aimed at creating alternative spaces and autonomous zones. As Bourriaud puts it, the role of artworks today 'is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities, but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real…'[7] In other words, they constitute new forms of life and social interaction. The idea of the artistic space as a new kind of public sphere, a space of critical political engagement and experimentation - where the walls between the public and the artist, between the gallery and the city, between the art exhibition and everyday life are broken down or at least questioned - is particularly important and urgent in the world today.

In this book we seek to theorize this new nexus that is emerging between art and politics. Our claim is that anarchism - or what we call postanarchism - is the most appropriate way of interpreting critical art

practices today. Why anarchism? There is a clear affinity between critical art practices and anarchism, even if this link has not been fully explored, and even if anarchism, as a political philosophy, has been largely overlooked in contemporary debates about art and politics. Many artists today and in the past have drawn inspiration from the anti-authoritarian ethos of anarchism, from its emphasis on radical freedom and autonomy, as well as its revolutionary project of overthrowing the existing order of power, hierarchy and domination.

However, what makes the relationship between anarchism and critical art practice particularly relevant is the notion of prefiguration - something that has always been central to anarchist theory. Prefiguration is the idea that the type of politics one engages in should already reflect or *prefigure* the type of society, the kind of social relations, one wishes to create; that there should be a close relationship between revolutionary action and the principles of a post-revolutionary society. Prefiguration is therefore a kind of anti-strategic and ethical practice. It is the idea that one's moral principles should not be sacrificed to the exigencies of politics, that the ends do not always justify the means. For instance, if one aims to build a society without violence, then one should not use violent means to achieve this. If one seeks a society without domination, then one should not employ authoritarian measures in one's revolutionary strategy. Understood in this way, prefiguration also means creating the conditions for a liberated society in the present, in the *here and now,* rather than waiting for the great revolutionary event. The nineteenth century Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin drew an important distinction between the *political* revolution, which was about seizing state power and using the institutions of the state to build socialism – the strategy of Marxians and socialists of the First International and, later, of Lenin and the Bolsheviks – and the anarchist *social* revolution, which was about the transformation of social relations (not just political institutions) in such a way that centralized power would be overcome. The danger of the first strategy (the political revolution) was that in seizing state power and using it as an instrument of revolutionary transformation, one risked simply perpetuating it. There would be no 'withering away' of the state as Marx imagined would occur in a communist society. On the contrary, state power would become entrenched and would lead to new forms of domination and hierarchy. In the words of Bakunin, 'They [Marxists] do not know that despotism resides not so much in the form of the State but in the very principle of the State and political power.'[8] Even if the state were controlled by the revolutionary party in the name of the proletariat (the 'workers' state'), the principle of sovereignty and the centralized structure of power would simply reproduce itself and create new class divisions, between the proletariat and a governing technocratic class. By contrast, the social revolution aimed not at the capturing of state power but, rather, at its dissolution. It also meant a kind of spontaneous revolt of the whole of society against the state, rather than one organized and led by a vanguard party. The social revolution would also, Bakunin believed, lead to a kind of moral transformation of society and human interactions. The anarchist Peter

Kropotkin believed that the social revolution would allow our natural disposition towards mutual aid and assistance to come to the fore. The ethics of mutual aid – solidarity, autonomy, collective action – would become the basis for a self-governing society based on voluntary cooperation and sociability that would replace the state.[9] It was this ethical and non-strategic aspect of the revolution that had been forgotten in the Marxian understanding.

The notion of prefiguration can also tell us something important about critical art practices today.[10] In transforming collective spaces, in the relationships between artist and audience, between objects, images and spectators, artists also try to create a kind of social revolution in the present, in the here and now. They try to effect new forms of autonomous relations between people that are outside the immediate control of institutions and which, in their very existence – even if temporary and confined to particular localized spaces – aim at the suspension of capitalist and state relations. In seeking to modify relationships in the aesthetic register, this has the potential to modify ethical and political relations as well. At the very least, they are intended to make us question and reflect ethically on our everyday behaviour. In particular, the aim of many critical art practices is to foster relations of *non-domination* between individuals and to develop non-hierarchical spaces for interaction. An important aspect of anarchist practice involves, for instance, setting up autonomous organizations and alternative spaces in the form of communes, free schools, squats, social centres, activist networks, food and housing cooperatives, libraries and so on - experiments in cooperative interacting and living that are also reflected in artistic collaborations. Anarchism is as much an everyday practice and a way of life[11] as it is a political ideology.

To give an example of anarchist inspired contemporary art, we can refer to the work of Adelita Husni-Bey, who explores the possibilities of radical pedagogy. Central to her work is the question of how we relate to one another in collective settings, and how the dynamics of power can sometimes disrupt and distort utopian, emancipatory projects. Her 2010-11 video installation, 'Postcards from the Desert Island',[12] involved workshops with schoolchildren who were asked to build an alternative utopian community on an imagined desert island, and who had to grapple with the difficulties of political decision-making and the relations of power and authority which inevitably came into play. In this way, the possibilities of alternative anarchistic relationships are tested through an encounter with their limits. Husni-Bey's intention is not to demonstrate the impossibility of such alternative communities, but to make us aware of their tensions, difficulties and limitations so that we can develop more effective strategies and ways of circumventing power. It is to show us the importance of transforming relations between people at a micropolitical and ethical level, if any kind of broader social transformation is to be achieved. This is reflective of the German anarchist Gustav Landauer's idea that 'the state is a social

relationship; a certain way of people relating to one another. It can be destroyed by creating new social relationships; i.e., by people relating to one another differently.'[13] Power is not an object or a 'thing' but a social relationship. However, *as* a social relationship it forms and changes the subjectivity of those who participate in it. This is especially the case with more hierarchically instituted structures of power, which tend to reproduce and intensify authoritarian desires, as well as submissive behaviours, in those caught within their networks. Thus, the revolutionary who seeks to capture power, to control the state, will inevitably become caught up in the state's rationality. As Bakunin put it: 'We of course are all sincere socialists and revolutionists and still, were we to be endowed with power . . . we would not be where we are now.'[14]

A more recent example can be taken from the contribution of the Russian art collective Chto Delat (What is to be Done?) to the exhibition of the Kunsthalle Wien called, 'And if I devoted my life to one of its feathers' (2021).[15] Here they explore the anarchist-inspired idea of Zapatismo as a way of life. By drawing on indigenous Mexican symbols, local traditions and myths, as well as reenacting the activist practices of the Zapatista autonomous communities in Chiapas - including setting up a kind of Zapatista summer training school in Russia - Chto Delat engage with themes of survival and resistance, developing ideas of alternative counter-communities and forms of existence outside capitalist and state relations.

It is no surprise, then, that there has always been a strong affinity between anarchism and experimental art. The critical impulse of modernist art - its desire to break with artistic traditions as well as to engage in broader social critique - has drawn on anarchist themes of autonomy, individual freedom, and the rejection of hierarchy and domination. The close relationship between anarchist politics and philosophy, and modernist and avant-garde art forms, has been well documented by art historians. Allan Antliff argues in *Anarchist Modernism* that there is an intrinsic connection between anarchism and art, suggesting that modernism in art was essentially a kind of anarchism in cultural form. Anarchism is not simply an anti-state, anti-authoritarian politics, but a whole movement of cultural rebellion and individual self-expression.[16] Similarly, David Weir, in his book *Anarchy and Culture*, highlighted the importance of anarchism to modernist culture. Indeed, Weir goes as far as to claim that modernist culture is essentially modelled on the anarchist idea of autonomy and difference.[17] Yet, he argues that the cultural influence of anarchism was in direct reverse proportion to its declining influence on politics and to its ultimate defeat as an ideology and mass movement. In other words, anarchism became a *cultural* movement when it could no longer be an effective political movement.

The political relevance of anarchism today is a question we shall return to. But there can be no doubt about anarchism's historical impact on the cultural and aesthetic domain. Many artists have drawn

inspiration from anarchism – and vice versa. We think of social realists like Gustav Courbet in the nineteenth century, who depicted, without romanticization, the lives of ordinary peasants and working-class people, and who was himself involved in revolutionary politics, particularly the Paris Commune of 1871. The French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon - the first to openly declare himself an anarchist - wrote an essay on Courbet in 1857, while Courbet, inspired in turn by Proudhon, painted his portrait in 1865 as a tribute after his death. The Impressionist painter Camille Pissarro identified strongly with anarchism, as did Paul Signac. Neo-impressionism - a term coined by the anarchist art critic Félix Fénéon in the late nineteenth-century and associated with the work of Georges Seurat - was a movement that was influenced by anarchism's scientific and positivist view of social relations. Here the natural world was seen to provide the rational principles for harmonious and spontaneous social organization without the need for state authority.[18]

Other avant-garde movements, like Surrealism and Dada - particularly Duchamp - also took inspiration from anarchism. Bakunin's dictum that the 'urge to destroy was also a creative urge' found resonance in artistic practices that sought to break with established aesthetic tastes and institutional settings, and to invent something entirely new in their place. Political anarchy was transformed into a revolt against traditional forms of artistic expression. While Dada and Surrealism were not explicitly political, they nevertheless invoked the creative-destructive powers of the autonomous individual who seeks to free him- or herself from all social constraints. Dadaism, which emerged in the ruins of the First World War, was a combination of romanticism - the desire for a more spiritually pure way of life - and the internationalist and pacifist sentiments of anarchism. Dada was a form of protest against militarism and the state. It was both an aesthetic and a political revolt.[19]

Amongst the Russian avant-garde, the Suprematist movement - Rodchenko, Malevich, Rozanova - drew direct inspiration from the nineteenth-century individualist anarchist, Max Stirner. Stirner's idea of the 'ego' (der Einzige, or the Unique One) as a 'creative nothing' - a kind of emptiness out of which contingent, multiple forms of subjectivity can emerge - was reflected in the work of Kazimir Malevich, who sought to represent, through his Black Square, this unrepresentable void. Stirner's 'ego' thus became a site of uniqueness and singularity, in which the individual liberated him- or herself from all external standards, norms and relations, affirming a position of pure nothingness.[20] Like Stirner's autonomous 'ego', which rejects all sense of a calling - of being called to sacrifice him- or herself in the name of some sacred ideal or duty[21] - Malevich's work was a form of 'non-objective art', art without goals or *telos*.[22]

Post-World War Two modernism also drew on anarchist themes, particularly in the United States.[23] In the 1960s, in France, the art movement the Situationist International not only developed its analysis of the 'spectacular society'[24] but also found ways of attacking it - namely through the strategy of *detournement*,

in which the advertising image would be parodied and subverted. The SI, while formally Marxist, in reality espoused a more anti-authoritarian and heterodox form of Marxism that was actually much closer to anarchism. Raoul Vaneigem, one of the leading figures of the SI, talked of the 'revolution of everyday life'[25] - a cultural, political, and aesthetic revolt against all aspects of state oppression and capitalist alienation, including work, technology, the family, and religion. This was, in effect, an anarchist, rather than a Marxist, vision of politics that went against the principle of revolutionary vanguards and parties, and which would later inspire the spontaneous revolts of the students and workers of May '68.

The 1980s saw new forms of politically engaged art such as the Critical Art Ensemble, an art collective that combined electronic media, digital and performing art with activism to highlight the risks of biotechnology and military hardware.[26] More recently, collectives and networks such as The Invisible Committee - who wrote the anarchistic text 'The Coming Insurrection'[27] - and the anarchist group Crimethinc, combine radical activism, literary production and performance art as part of a critique of state violence, surveillance and control, and the alienation of life under capitalism. The organizational structures of such groups reflect anarchist principles of horizontalism, decentralization and affinity. Furthermore, the gesture of anonymity and invisibility adopted by some of these collectives – the wearing of masks and the concealing of identities – is a very powerful form of political performing art, about which we shall have more to say in this book. Such collectives are reminiscent of what Bakunin called, perhaps ironically, 'invisible dictatorships', to describe the clandestine networks of revolutionaries that he believed would play a key role in the anarchist revolution. We could also refer to the anarchist graffiti art of Banksy who, too, keeps his identity hidden.

Another example of anarchist art would be the Russian street art collective Voina (which means war in Russian), whose members have staged politically provocative public performance art critical of the Russian government, highlighting issues of corruption, authoritarianism, homophobic and racist policies, and the treatment of migrants. Some of their members later formed the better-known feminist group Pussy Riot, whose anarchic and disruptive punk performance in a Russian Orthodox church in 2012 - in which they denounced Putin's regime - saw them arrested for hooliganism. Voina's remaining members are now political refugees who live a nomadic existence, squatting, stealing food from high end shops, and crossing EU borders illegally, thus turning their daily life into an artistic performance. Voina's interventions – many of which have seen them arrested and even imprisoned - have included: painting a giant phallus on a bridge in St Petersburg; staging a mock execution of migrant workers in a Moscow supermarket; overturning police cars with the officers inside in a 'Palace Revolution'; and using a laser to project a giant skull and cross bones on a Russian government building. These are anarchistic

confrontations with state power. Voina openly identify with anarchism and declare themselves Makhnovites (followers of the Ukranian revolutionary anarchist Nestor Makhno).

There is clearly an important and profound connection, then, between the anti-authoritarian impulse of anarchism - with its focus on autonomy - and that of modern and, indeed, contemporary art. In the words of David Weir,

> Anarchism proposes a type of politics that allows individuals an unprecedented degree of social autonomy… I hold that this political model has had widespread cultural effects. Modernist culture, for example, is characterized by nothing so much as a tendency toward fragmentation and autonomy, a dual formula that holds regardless of whether the topic is the behavior of individual artists and writers or the works they produced. The anarchist strain in modernist culture is no less manifest today, for nothing could be further from contemporary conceptions of culture than homogeneity.[28]

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Yet, what of Weir's claim that the success of anarchism in the cultural domain was at the same time a reflection of its dwindling influence and defeat in the political domain? Is anarchism still a politically consequential movement? There is no doubt that after the military defeats of the anarchist republics of Catalonia in the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s, and with the repression of anarchist movements around the world, the political power of anarchism, as a workers' movement based on trade unions and labour organizations, declined. After the Second World War, anarchism become more of a counter-cultural movement rather than a distinct political force, although its ideas still had a major influence on the student uprisings of May '68 and the global protests against the Vietnam War and the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The British anarchist Colin Ward argued that post-World War Two anarchism was best thought of in terms of practical experiments in day to day living and practical problem solving - from food cooperatives to housing associations - rather than as a workers' revolutionary movement founded on a coherent set of theories.[29]

Yet, anarchism experiences historical cycles of revolt. The Seattle and post-Seattle uprisings (Genoa, Prague, Gleneagles) against the WTO and the G8 summits in the late 1990s and early 2000s - associated with the global revolt against neoliberal globalization - signalled a new wave of anarchist insurrections. David Graeber spoke of the 'New Anarchists' as 'attempting to invent what many call a 'new language' of civil disobedience, combining elements of street theatre, festival and what can only be called non-violent warfare.'[30] Here, political struggle becomes a form of performance art featuring giant puppet displays, clown armies, fairies with feather dusters, spontaneous street parties, bicycle blockades, non-violent confrontations with the police, the destruction of corporate property, as well as the ubiquitous Black Bloc

with their masked faces symbolizing a new politics of invisibility. Anarchist principles of horizontality and direct action were applied to the organizational structure of the global anti-neoliberal movement. Decentralized networks of activists resembled something like Stirner's 'union of egoists'[31] - free, voluntary collaborations of singularities based on affinity and shared goals, rather than a top-down, hierarchical, ideologically rigid vanguard party; a rhizomatic structure that was also characteristic of artistic collectives.

Anarchist principles of decentralization also became prominent in the later Occupy movement (New York, London and other major cities) which emerged in reaction to the Global Financial Crisis of 2007-8 and to the bail-out of the global banking system. Important here was not only a new wave of resistance to neoliberal economic policies and to the power of the financial industry and oligarchic political elites, but also the desire to create a new kind of autonomous political space based on direct democracy and citizen assemblies. As Yates McKee has argued in his study of the conjunction between contemporary radical politics and art activism, Occupy could itself be considered an artistic project, one that was, moreover, directly inspired by anarchism. Many artists were involved in the Occupy and post-Occupy movements, and have engaged in interventions targeting the power of major art institutions such as MoMA and the Guggenheim museums in New York. Such interventions drew attention to the complicity of these institutions with unethical labour practices around the world. Moreover, they embodied anarchist principles of direct action and autonomous organization. This type of 'insurgent' art, which grew out of Occupy Wall Street, constituted, according to McKee, a renaissance of activist art that involved a radical critique of the art system and the desire to create a new political space:

> On the one hand, this renaissance involves the *unmaking* of art as it exists within the discourses, economies, and institutions of the contemporary art system - including its progressive sectors nominally concerned with public participation and civic dialogue. At the same time, it involves the reinvention of art as direct action, collective effort, and political subjectivization embedded in radical movements working to reconstruct the commons in the face of both localized injustices and systemic crises that characterize the contemporary capitalist order. [32]

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The construction of new, autonomous political spaces was also the aim of the movements of squares, in Spain (15M), Greece (Aganaktismenoi), France (Nuits Debouts) and elsewhere. The mass occupation of public spaces - indeed the reclaiming of spaces *as* genuinely public and belonging to the people - was the start of a new and unprecedented form of political experimentation which could only be described as anarchistic: citizen assemblies, spokes-councils and procedures of consensus decision-making and direct democracy were intended to democratize and decentralize power.[33] The chant of the Occupy movement

was 'This is what democracy looks like!', highlighting the democratic deficit of actually existing democracy and expressing the desire to reinvent the practice of democracy outside of the representative structures and institutions of the state. The anti-representative message was echoed in the slogan of the Indignados (the Indignant Ones), the anti-austerity movement in Spain: 'They do not represent us!' In other words, the political elites do not represent the interests of ordinary people. But what was conveyed here was not only disenchantment with politics as usual, but also the desire to invent a different form of politics beyond representation.[34] While anti-austerity political parties, like Podemos, grew out of some of these social movements, the movements themselves remained largely autonomous from them, rejecting the role of leaders and even rejecting the idea of political agendas and demands, as this would have inserted them back into the representative system they sought to escape.

Experiments in autonomous political spaces, practices and interactions outside the sovereign state system can also be seen in the idea of the Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ), which has featured in insurrections around the world - whether in the form of autonomous social centres of Exarchia in Athens, the Zapatista communes in Chiapas, the Rojava Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, or the Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone (CHAZ) in Seattle which emerged in 2020 in protest against ongoing police violence against black people. We could also point to experiments - in many ways flawed and ambiguous[35] - in creating autonomous virtual spaces on the internet, or digital currencies and decentralized forms of exchange.[36] The idea of the TAZ comes from the anarchist writer Hakim Bey (aka Peter Lamborn Wilson) who, in his lyrical account of pirate utopias, poetic terrorism, pagan practices, tantric pornography, shamanism and sorcery, evokes temporary spaces of liberation and autonomy outside the control of the state and the capitalist market. The TAZ is both a political space, as well as an aesthetic space, in which new forms of freedom and subjectivity can be invented.[37]

Anarchistic modes of politics can also be found in more recent and kinetic forms of revolt, such as the Gillet Jaunes (Yellow Vests) in France, Black Lives Matter in the United States, and Extinction Rebellion, Insulate Britain and Just Stop Oil in the United Kingdom. These are movements of dissent that have mobilized around issues of economic precarity, racially-motivated police violence, and climate justice, respectively. They have been accelerated by the experience of the Covid pandemic, which brought to fore questions of racial inequality, state power and environmental concerns. Importantly, lockdown measures imposed by governments did not quell these spontaneous protests and public gatherings, but seemed only to intensify them, turning them into 'viral' insurrections that exploded across borders. Mass civil disobedience signified a revolt against the political order and a withdrawal of allegiance from the sovereign state. They were also highly symbolic and had an aesthetic dimension. The high-visibility yellow vest of the Gillet Jaunes became a symbol of working-class rebellion. Just Stop Oil climate

activists have staged protests inside art museums, including throwing a can of soup over a Van Gogh and supergluing themselves to other famous works of art. Contemporary radical politics becomes a kind of anarchist performance art.

It is therefore too early to issue anarchism's death certificate. If anything, with the breakdown of the Marxist revolutionary metanarrative that was associated with the collapse of the Communist regimes in the 1990s, anarchism has become the new paradigm for contemporary forms of radical politics. While these movements are not consciously or explicitly identified as anarchist, they nevertheless evoke anarchist ideas and principles of autonomy, spontaneity, direct action, horizontal organization, and the refusal of representation. This last point, in particular, reflects a distinctly anarchist orientation. Central to anarchism is the critique of the logic of political representation. The idea that one can speak for another, that a political organization - whether a party or a revolutionary vanguard - can represent or stand in for, without alienation or distortion, the voice of ordinary people, was an illusion. As Proudhon complained:

> what are all these elections to me? What need have I of proxies, or indeed of representatives? And since I must set out my wishes, can I not articulate them without help from anyone? Will the cost to me be any greater, and will I not be all the surer of myself than of my advocate?[38]

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The idea of representation undermined the autonomy of the individual, one's ability to speak for oneself. Democracy was thus simply the guise for the rule of elites and the transfer of political power from absolutist monarchs to a new set of masters. While representative democracy was meant to enshrine political equality – the equality of all citizens – it simply alienated the will of the people and institutionalized a new form of inequality between the people and the governing class.

From anarchism to postanarchism in art and politics

The refusal of the usual channels of political representation and communication makes contemporary radical political struggles anarchistic. Yet what sort of anarchism are we talking of here? This is surely not the 'classical' anarchism of the nineteenth century - the anarchism of Bakunin, Kropotkin and Proudhon, the anarchism of the great revolutionary workers' movements that had as their horizon the destruction of state power and the creation of the anarchist federated society in its place. This revolutionary narrative was based on a positivist view of social relations: for instance, the idea that natural laws can replace the 'artificial' man-made laws of the state, providing the rational and moral principles of justice and equity that would found a new social order[39]; or, the biological, evolutionary principle of 'mutual aid', which Kropotkin detected in animal species and which he believed would form the basis of human cooperation and solidarity without the need for state authority.[40] Central here is the idea that the seeds of the future

anarchist society were somehow latent in existing social relations, lying dormant beneath the oppressive, artificial machinery of power, and would flower once this order were overthrown. The idea of a spontaneous natural order therefore provides the foundation for the classical anarchist critique of authority and for its contention that an alternative stateless society is possible. The potential for human freedom and autonomy was contained within natural and material forces, that were immanent to social processes. This universal vision of anarchism is no longer the guiding principle of contemporary radical struggles. A certain shift has taken place within anarchist theory around the question of the representability of the whole of society - and whether the entirety of social relations can be understood and expressed in terms of rationalist principles and a particular model of human nature and interaction. The claim of the philosopher Jean-Francois Lyotard about the 'postmodern condition' being associated with 'incredulity towards metanarratives' - in other words, with the breakdown of the universal grand narratives such as Revolution and the idea of Society as a totality whose truth can be objectively known[41] - applies also to anarchism. Anarchism, like Marxism, can no longer see itself as a science of social relations. Its ideas of emancipation, autonomy and solidarity must be elaborated around other principles.

This epistemological and ontological shift in anarchist theory - which we refer to in terms of the transition from anarchism to postanarchism[42] - is also reflected in art theory. Once again, the question here is whether there is an objective social reality out there that needs simply to be represented, or whether social reality is something to be created and invented. In art – particularly art inspired and influenced by anarchism – we can chart the move from social realism in the nineteenth century to avant-garde art (especially Surrealism, Dada, Suprematism) which specifically rejected the idea that the role of art was to represent existing reality. Rather its purpose was to *reimagine* reality. In the nineteenth century, anarchists like Proudhon and Bakunin believed that art should serve the cause of revolution by accurately depicting the real conditions of the working class at the time. It should therefore play a role in our sentimental education. The idea of the freedom of expression of the individual artist, while important, should be secondary to the collective interest and the revolutionary struggle. Kropotkin believed that artists should be recruited to the cause of revolution, that they should use their creative power as cultural workers for propagandistic purposes. Bakunin's attitude to art – seen in the (possibly apocryphal) story that during the Dresden uprising of 1849 he proposed that the Sistine Madonna should be hung on the barricades as a deterrent against further attacks (perhaps the ultimate form of performance art) – seemed to be that art should be wholly sacrificed to the needs of the revolution. Ironically, this was the same 'anti-art' gesture later adopted by many avant-garde artists themselves. Bakunin's somewhat nihilistic slogan - 'the urge to destroy is also a creative urge' - may be taken as the ultimate expression of the revolutionary role of art, turning the destructive impulse of revolution into a work of art in itself.[43]

Nevertheless, in nineteenth century classical anarchism we generally find the idea that art, in its ability to portray social reality, has a role in our moral and political education, and was therefore important to revolutionary struggle but, at the same time, was secondary to collective political goals. However, later artistic movements – starting with Dada – challenged some of these earlier attitudes. In the case of Dada, we can talk about a genuinely anarchistic art form rather than one that was simply recruited to the political cause of anarchism. We find in Duchamp, Man Ray and others an *anarchism of the aesthetic register*: a desire to play around with established aesthetic norms and, of course, to break down the traditional hierarchies and institutions that dominated the artworld, such as the art gallery as a rarefied and exclusive space of 'fine art'. Central here is the break with the very notion of representation as such, with the expectation that art should simply depict social reality. The purpose of art, in effecting displacements in the aesthetic register, is to construct new visions of reality rather than to simply reflect it. As we have mentioned, Stirner's individualist and egoist anarchism had an important influence on Dada, as well as on other avant-garde movements. Artists such as Duchamp, Ernst, Malevich and Rodchenko were inspired by Stirner's radical assault on the philosophical structures and moral ideals of modernity. Values and ideals such as humanity, morality, truth, society, freedom, even revolution, were what Stirner called 'spooks', ideological spectres, abstractions that were a hangover from Christian idealism. Stirner's project was to strip away these illusions – to not only liberate the individual from the state and other oppressive social institutions, but also from an alienated idea of him- or herself. The focus in Stirner is on our power to not simply reflect external conditions, but to radically reconstruct them, by first recreating ourselves.[44] In this emphasis on individual autonomy, the iconoclastic rejection of all established values, norms, ideals and institutions - including those of art itself[45] - and in the idea of self-creation, we can see why Stirner's 'egoistic' thinking appealed to avant-garde artists who also sought to defy social norms and aesthetic conventions.[46]

Ontological anarchism

How should we understand this shift in both art theory and in the political theory of anarchism? Central here is the idea of *ontological anarchy* - a term that has been deployed by some anarchist writers, like the aforementioned Hakim Bey, to describe a form of anarchism founded on *nothing*.[47] Anarchism, which for Bey is as much as aesthetic as a political project, is not to be based on some idea of a stable social order found in nature that would come to replace the state, but rather on an autonomous and spontaneous creative project: 'Any form of "order" which we have not imagined and produced directly and spontaneously in sheer "existential freedom" for our own celebratory purposes - is an illusion.'[48] The idea of ontological anarchy can also be found in a much more developed form in the Heideggerian philosopher Reiner Schürmann. In his book, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy,* Schürmann

argued that late modern experience is characterized by *an-archy* - the absence of origin or foundation. This is a condition he relates to Heidegger's idea of the closure of metaphysics and the fading away of epochal principles. Unlike in metaphysical thinking, where action has always to be derived from and determined by a first principle, the *arché*, "anarchy' . . . always designates the withering away of such a rule, the relaxing of its hold':

> The anarchy that will be at issue here is the name of a history affecting the ground or foundation of action, a history where the bedrock yields and where it becomes obvious that the principle of cohesion, be it authoritarian or 'rational', is no longer anything more than a blank space deprived of legislative, normative, power.[49]

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This gesture of de-grounding, removing or questioning the *arché* – the original source or ground of authority - is characteristic of theoretical moves such as deconstruction, which reveals the historicity and discursivity of our accepted structures of thought and experience, thus dislodging the centrality of the figure of Man and what Derrida terms the 'metaphysics of presence'. For Schürmann, the ontological ground has been pulled out from under our feet. Political institutions can no longer derive their authority from a single ruling principle or point of origin, whether that be 'substance, God, cogito, discursive community', or the 'hierarchy of virtues, hierarchy of laws - divine, natural, and human - hierarchy of imperatives, and hierarchy of discursive interests'.[50] Yet, for Schürmann, the experience of anarchy is one of a certain kind of freedom, where action is no longer determined by first principles or by a certain *telos*. Action thus becomes contingent and anarchic.

Anarchism, of course, derives from the Greek word *anarchos*, meaning 'without rule' or 'without ruler'. And this can be understood in an ontological sense, as being without a single point of origin, as well as in a political sense, as being without political authority. Schürmann distances himself from the political anarchism of Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Proudhon, whom he sees as merely substituting rational authority for political authority and thus remaining within the same metaphysical framework.[51] Yet, we can also see how this anarchy principle might have political implications. If all forms of political and social authority and hierarchy derive from a sovereign principle, then the hollowing out of this principle would deny them their consistency and legitimacy.

Aside from politics, ontological anarchy has significant implications for our understanding of critical art. Nina Gurianova uses the notion of ontological anarchy to analyze the ideology and aesthetics of the early Russian avant-garde (neo-Primitivism, Cubism, Symbolism and Suprematism). Like Schürmann, she

makes a distinction between anarchy and anarchism, which, although they derive from the same root - *anarchos* - do not necessarily equate with one another. She distinguishes *anarchy* from anarchism (as a new form of social order), on the one hand, and from chaos or disorder, on the other. Instead, anarchy - understood in the ontological sense - is a *deconstruction* of order, and this signifies a return to origins: 'That is why the necessary element for anarchy is an element of destruction that precedes new creation, not for the sake of destruction, but rather for deconstruction, reinterpretation, rereading, and so on.'[52]

While Gurianova also distances herself from political anarchism, we would argue that ontological anarchy *does* have political implications and gives us an alternative account of radical anti-authoritarian politics. Of course, ontological anarchy needs to be treated with some caution. A world without firm foundations, stable institutions and fixed normative coordinates seems in some ways to be very much like the world we live in now. And of course, this opens the way for new and more totalizing forms of power to fill this emptying void. Ontological anarchy can incite conservative and authoritarian forms of politics as a psychotic reaction to the loss of fixed foundations. However, it also allows us to think radical politics - particularly anarchism - in new and more productive ways. This ambiguity in the notion of ontological anarchy is best summed up by the anarchist-inspired philosopher Catherine Malabou and her concept of 'plasticity':

> What would interest me is to see how we can solve the contradiction, philosophically and politically, of why we resist plasticity. How is it that some people can still be in control in a very non-plastic way of plasticity itself? How does this lead to fascisms and the new forms of extreme authoritarian regimes which all define themselves as anti-plastic? I would expect different ways of exploring what I now call 'the possibility of 'anarchy'.[53]

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Postanarchism is the form that anarchism takes when understood in an ontologically anarchic way. It is the attempt to think what an anarchist politics looks like without being grounded in ontological certainties - like science, human nature, or natural law - and without being determined by a particular vision of a future anarchist society. It is, instead, an anarchism of contingent practices taking place in the here and now; of multiple, differentiated experiments in creating new forms of freedom and autonomy; of the invention of new ethical practices and new forms of subjectivity.

Non-power

One way to think about this is through Foucault's notion of 'non-power'. As Foucault says when describing his 'anarchaeological' approach: 'there is no universal, immediate, and obvious right that can everywhere and always support any kind of relation of power.'[54] This ethico-political standpoint is one that is largely consistent with most forms of anarchism. However, where it differs is in making the non-acceptability of power one's *point of departure,* rather than where one finishes up. In other words, perhaps we need think of anarchism today not so much as a specific project determined by a certain end goal – a fully liberated, non-alienated society without power relations – but, rather, as an open-ended and contingent enterprise that takes the non-acceptance of power as its starting point. As Foucault says:

> it is not a question of having in view, at the end of a project, a society without power relations. It is rather a matter of putting non-power or the non-acceptability of power, not at the end of the enterprise, but rather at the beginning of the work in the form a questioning of all the ways in which power is in actual fact accepted.[55]

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Perhaps we can understand anarchism as an enterprise that starts, rather than (necessarily) ends up with, anarchy. Anarchist politics today is not determined by fixed objectives, a rational *telos*, or universal normative criteria, but is instead founded on a certain contingency, open-endedness and freedom of thought and action. This means that it does not have a specific ideological shape, and it may take different forms and follow different courses of action at different moments. It might resist and contest specific relations of power at localized points of intensity, on the grounds of their illegitimacy and violence. It might work against certain institutions and institutional practices by either working within and in support of other kinds of institutions, or through creating alternative practices and forms of organization. In other words, in taking anarchy or non-power as its starting point, postanarchism - as a form of autonomous thinking and acting - can work on multiple fronts, in a variety of different settings, institutional and non-institutional, producing reversals and interruptions of existing relations of domination. So, rather than thinking of postanarchism as a distinct project, it seems more useful today to see it in terms of a certain mode of thought and action, and as a creative endeavour through which relations of domination, in their specificity, are interrogated, contested and, where possible, overturned. What is central to postanarchism is the idea of autonomous thinking and acting which transforms social spaces in the present, but which is at the same time contingent in the sense of not being subject to pre-determined logics and goals. This does not of course mean that anarchism should not have ethical principles – but rather that it should not, and perhaps any longer *cannot*, see itself as a specific program of revolution and political organization.

Postanarchist subjectivity

This way of approaching and thinking about politics also has implications for our understanding of subjectivity. The subject is not a pre-given identity, but rather an open project of becoming and autonomous self-creation, elaborated through ongoing practices of freedom. As we have seen, Stirner's notion of the ego (or the 'unique one') does not equate the individual with a stable set of properties, characteristics and interests - as in, for instance, the liberal model of the individual - but is, rather, a 'creative nothingness', an ontological void out of which different expressions of subjectivity emerge. It would be better thought of as a *singularity*, rather than a fixed identity based on essential, universal characteristics. Stirner believed that the concept of Man found in humanism was an ideological illusion, a religious 'spook', a sort of hangover from Christianity and a transplantation of the idea of God, that must be dispelled. Man could no longer be seen to represent the absolute singularity of the individual ego: 'They say of God, "names name thee not". That holds good of me: no concept expresses me, nothing that is designated as my essence exhausts me; they are only names.'[56] This way of thinking about the subject can also be found in poststructuralist theory. For Foucault, who rejected any idea of a universal Subject behind the various historically specific ways in which subjectivity is constituted by power and discursive regimes of truth, the unity of the subject as a transhistorical entity had been placed in doubt. For Derrida, the figure of Man was part of a defunct 'metaphysics of presence', the presumption of an essential identity behind multiple layers of discourse. The decentering of the subject is also found in the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, who saw the unconscious as 'structured like a language' - that is, by the external Symbolic Order - and as founded on a fundamental lack and incompleteness. For Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, desire itself is a multiplicity of social forces that cut across and fragment the individual.

All these different perspectives cast doubt on the question of whether there are privileged revolutionary identities today, and indeed whether radical politics can or should be based on any identity at all. In late modernity, the idea of the revolutionary subject is opaque; we can no longer have much faith in the idea of a revolution of the whole of the working class against capitalism. As Foucault once put it: 'There is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary.'[57]

On the other hand, it would be a mistake to seek an alternative to this in the politics of recognition and the rights of marginalized identities. 'Identity politics' - found on both the left and the right today - amounts to nothing more than a liberal or neoliberal biopolitics that does little to challenge structures of domination and capitalism. Postanarchism rejects the idea that subjectivity can be reduced to the category of fixed, essential identities - whether minoritarian or majoritarian - or that politics should be confined to

the representation of different groups. Rather, the subject should be thought in a contingent way, as a threshold of *becoming*, as a singularity that is always in flux. To reduce politics to the struggle for institutional inclusion of ever more marginal identities only ties the subject to the legal-political framework of the state.

The limitations of 'identity politics' can be observed in the art industry itself, where museums and art institutions openly promote a 'diversity agenda' as a way of styling themselves as 'progressive'. Today, art institutions, like many other organizations, both private and public - especially universities - promote agendas and discourses of decolonization, 'safe spaces', 'equality and diversity', and the representation of different minorities - whether racial, cultural, sexual, (trans)gender. Yet, as Laura Raicovic argues, this commitment to progressive causes on the part of art museums is superficial and often masks unethical practices and commercial interests.[58] This is not to say that the inclusion of the marginalized in institutional settings is not itself a laudable endeavour, or that there is nothing of value in the struggle for equal legal rights and recognition; simply that this is a limited aspiration for radical politics as it leaves untouched existing structures of power, domination and economic inequality.

Instead of struggles for the recognition of different identities and their visibility within institutions, a politics of postanarchism involves struggles around what it means to be a subject, beyond the category of identity. It involves a refusal, as Foucault says, of who we are, a refusal to define ourselves according to biopolitical categories established by the state and by other social institutions, and a resignification of subjectivity in ways that evade these strategies. Indeed, Foucault calls these 'anarchistic struggles'.[59] When we think about the way that our subjectivity is fundamentally shaped by more anonymous and amorphous forms of power and control – big data, internet algorithms, social media platforms, decentralized forms of surveillance and information gathering with which we are all complicit – the ethical and political task of re-signifying subjectivity in ways that escape these forms of control is perhaps more difficult today. Here many contemporary artists are engaged in critically exploring these new modes of surveillance and control. For instance, Hito Steyerl's 2013 exhibition 'How Not to Be Seen' makes us think about the ubiquity of surveillance, and experiments with themes of visibility and invisibility.[60] Therefore, as an alternative to the politics of identity, postanarchism proposes a politics of *disidentification* in which, through various strategies of invisibility and anonymity practiced by both activists and critical artists, the subject detaches him- or herself from fixed categories of identity and invents something different.

The invention of a new politics of subjectivity can be seen as an insurrectionary act. This is where Stirner's key idea of the insurrection, or *Uprising* [Empörung] becomes important to postanarchist theory.

Following on from a number of themes outlined above, the insurrection might be seen as a kind of revolt not so much against the external world of power – although that might be a consequence of it – but as a kind of ethical form of self-transformation, a revolt against fixed identities, modes of action and forms of life that power imposes upon us or which we have freely internalized.

We will elaborate on Stirner's notion of the insurrection, and the distinction he draws with the revolution, in a later chapter - but we see this idea as being particularly important for today's critical artists. In creating alternative spaces at the margins of institutional power, where autonomous relations can be fostered and where the existing order can be momentarily suspended, contemporary artists are engaging in an insurrection in the manner that Stirner describes. In encouraging an ethical interrogation of our relations with others, and most fundamentally of ourselves, and getting us to confront our own voluntary servitude, critical artists participate in a micropolitical revolt aimed not *in the first instance* at changing external conditions, but at changing oneself and detaching oneself from modes of subjectivity through which we are dominated: a 'working forth of me out of the established' as Stirner would say.[61] This is the experience we might go through when we enter the participatory critical space of the artist: we might experience a kind of jarring effect on ourselves, one that might lead to critical reflection on the conditions around us.

But we would suggest that something more than mere critique is taking place here. Stirner himself was aware of the limitations of simply being 'critical', an attitude that in a strange way only reaffirms the power of what one is critical of. Rather, perhaps the role of the critical artist today is to go *beyond critique* and to show us how we might actually *live differently*; to show us how freedom can be practiced on an everyday level as a lived experience; and how self-government might be turned from an idea or a revolutionary aspiration into a readymade art-form that is available to all of us at any moment.

Destituent action

Following on from this idea of the insurrection in art and politics, we would suggest that (post)critical art practices engage in a form of *destituent* action. What do we mean by this? We will explore this in greater detail on a later chapter - but the idea derives from Giorgio Agamben's notion of destituent or destituting power, a concept he takes from Walter Benjamin's idea of 'divine violence', a form of violence which deposes the sovereign order of power and law. The key distinction Agamben draws is between destituent power and constituent power.[62] Constituent power is the power to found a new political-legal order, a new state. In its original formulation in the French revolutionary thinker Abbe Sieyès, the power to dissolve an existing order of authority and to create a new one in its place (*pouvoir constituant*) always lay with the

people and was, by definition, outside the existing legal-political order, instead deriving its law-making power from nature. Yet, the problem is that this extra-legal authority embodied in the people never persists in a pure, immanent revolutionary form - as is supposed by thinkers like Antonio Negri[63] - but always as a new state, a new sovereign order (*pouvoir constitué*). As the anarchist literary collective, The Invisible Committee puts it: 'Constituent power names that monstrous piece of magic that turns the state into an entity that's never wrong'. In contrast, 'To destitute power is to deprive it of its foundation. That is precisely what insurrections do.'[64] We can see how this idea of destituting power reflects (post)anarchist ideas of the social revolution against state authority (as opposed to the political revolution) and to the creation of autonomous relations and forms of life rather than the seizure of political power. Furthermore, it implies a form of action - suggested in Agamben's key notion of *inoperativity* - that is close to our thesis of ontological anarchy: a kind of prefigurative political action which is not determined by a *telos* or oriented around strategic goals or a particular vision of social relations, but is, rather, open and contingent - a way of acting in and on the present. Conceiving of politics as a project, as a goal-oriented form of activity which subordinates means to ends, is precisely what Agamben is getting at when he refers to 'work', to politics as work. Instead, he proposes a kind of withdrawal from the ontological order of power and from all overarching political projects. Destituent power may be understood, then, as an *exodus* from the order of sovereignty altogether, neither operating within it, nor seeking to capture it in a revolutionary sense, nor even seeking to destroy it: all these moves are, in a sense, caught up within the paradigm of sovereignty. Rather, destituent power suspends the very order of sovereignty and invokes a form of life, activity and politics that is autonomous from it.

This, as we argue, is precisely how critical artists see their own practice and its relation to politics. Their practice is not understood in terms of 'work' and is not seen as a tool to be used to achieve a certain political end, but is, rather, a creation of an alternative space in which new kinds of social relationships and new and autonomous forms of subjectivity and ways of living in the world can be explored. This is reflected in Agamben's idea that both politics and art should be considered a form of 'activity without work' - that is, an activity without specific goal, a kind of pure *praxis*, which is really the creation of new modes of life and existence: a new form-of-life.[65]

How does this idea of destituent action differ from other approaches to theorizing the relationship between art and politics? Chantal Mouffe has also presented a view of critical art practices as creating an alternative public space. The role of critical art, she argues, is to make visible, through resistant practices, the relations of power and antagonism that constitute the social field and yet which are otherwise obscured by political consensus.[66] Similar to our postanarchist approach, Mouffe sees social relations in terms of a contingent, rather than an essential, set of arrangements. Social structures and institutions are

the result of hegemonic political struggles which have become sedimented. Bringing this antagonistic dimension of the political to light, and thus conceiving alternative arrangements, is the function of democratic struggles for hegemony. This antagonistic, or what she calls *agonistic*, dimension of the political is precisely what is hidden beneath liberal or neoliberal consensus politics, which seeks technocratic solutions to social problems, and which imagines a common public sphere of rational deliberation that can resolve political conflicts. By contrast, critical art practice has a role to play in creating *dissensus*, in bringing to the fore this antagonistic dimension as part of a democratic struggle for hegemony, and thus re-signifying the public space as one of conflict rather than agreement.[67] As Mouffe puts it:

> According to the agonistic approach, critical art is art that foments dissensus, that makes visible what the dominant consensus tends to obscure and obliterate. It is constituted by a manifold of artistic practices aiming at giving a voice to all those who are silenced within the framework of the existing hegemony.[68]

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While we might want to question the degree to which the liberal or neoliberal technocratic consensus still prevails today - the current climate of ideological polarization and the 'culture wars' suggests the breakdown of this model and the 'return of the repressed' in politics - Mouffe's 'agonistic' theory is nevertheless important for understanding how critical artists contest the political order and open up alternative realities.

However, from our perspective, Mouffe's account suffers from a number of serious limitations. Its ontology of antagonism - or 'agonism' - is derived from the conservative theorist Carl Schmitt's friend/enemy opposition, which he saw as the defining element of the political.[69] While Mouffe's agonistic model of democratic politics is a kind of sublimation of Schmittian antagonism - the existential struggle between friend and foe becomes a sort of polemical conflict between different discursive positions - nevertheless, political activity is essentially reduced here to the struggle for power, that is, the struggle to hegemonize the social terrain by constructing a political frontier in the name of 'the people' against a common enemy. Mouffe is largely influenced here by Schmitt's anti-liberal and authoritarian conception of democracy as being only about the unified, homogeneous, sovereign 'will of the people' (rather than about pluralism, the rule of law, the respect for individual rights and other features that we might associate with modern democracy). 'The people' is necessarily an exclusionary concept whose

identity is defined by what is not included within it. For Schmitt, democratic equality was premised on *inequality* and the privileging of one group over another.[70]

This Schmittian influence is clear from a discussion conducted with Mouffe, where she talks about artist Hans Haacke's 2000 work, *Der Bevőlkerung* (*The Population*). In this work, the word 'population' was placed alongside the existing inscription on the Reichstag, 'Dem Deutschen Volke' ('To the German People'). This was to propose an alternative figure upon which to found German parliamentary democracy - one that was more pluralistic and inclusive (of foreigners and immigrants for example) than the exclusionary, homogeneous and (given its associations with Germany's Nazi past) authoritarian figure of 'the people'. However, Mouffe's response to this gesture was to say that:

> If Haacke were proposing to replace the inscription *Dem Deutschen Volke* by *Der Bevőlkerung*, I wouldn't find this adequate. I don't think that *der Bevőlkerung*, 'the population,' is a political concept…The existence of a certain type of exclusion is something that politics cannot do without…. That is one of the questions I've been trying to address in my thinking about Schmitt and the idea of 'the demos.' You cannot have a demos if it is not in some sense exclusive. The very idea of 'the demos' simultaneously implies both a logic of inclusion within and exclusion without.[71]

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While Mouffe suggests that the notion of the people could be broadened to include certain identities that are currently excluded, her point is that political rights can only be granted to those within a national polity. This insistence upon the exclusionary identity of 'the people' essentially follows Schmitt's understanding of politics as being based on national identity and belonging, and as being opposed to any notion of universal human rights or cosmopolitan citizenship.[72] It also chimes in with so much of today's right-wing populism, where the identity of the sovereign 'people' - opposed to the elites - always excludes certain types of people (namely foreigners, immigrants, minorities, etc). Mouffe's Schmittian-inspired notion of democratic agonism leaves us with little more than a politics of identitarian populism. Of course, Mouffe proposes an alternative form of left-wing populism as an antidote to the populism of the right.[73] Yet, while there are significant differences between left- and right-wing populism, the point is that politics is still organized around the idea of 'the people', and, as all theories of populism acknowledge[74], the people always requires a leader and can only be represented through this figure. The sovereign 'will of the people', as articulated by a leader, always contains the potential for authoritarian and exclusionary forms of politics.

Mouffe's approach is really based on the idea of constituent power. Following Schmitt, the sovereign will of the people has the power to constitute a new political-legal order[75] or, in Mouffe's terms, to hegemonize the social terrain. Postanarchist politics, by contrast, is not about the struggle for power or hegemony, but the *struggle against* it. The anarchist social revolution - which we re-interpret in terms of the insurrection or destituent action - proposes a wholly different form of politics, in which the aim is to *depose* rather than to capture power, and to create autonomous spaces and interactions outside the framework of nation-state sovereignty. This does not mean that postanarchism is against institutions per se. Critical artists and activists engage with the art institutions whose practices they at the same time contest, using them as spaces to stage public interventions. Art institutions - museums and galleries - have an important role to play in redefining the public space of politics. We therefore have no problem with Mouffe's contention that, 'By staging a confrontation between conflicting positions, museums and art institutions could make a decisive contribution to the proliferation of new public spaces open to agonistic forms of participation where radical democratic alternatives to neoliberalism could, once again, be imagined and cultivated.'[76] Yet, where our postanarchist approach departs from Mouffe's is in drawing attention to the way that critical political and artistic practices seek to go beyond the instituting principle of sovereign authority by creating spaces that are genuinely autonomous and horizontally organized.

Mouffe's approach to the politics of critical art practice proposes a new way of thinking about the public space: one that is ontologically based on difference and antagonism rather than on deliberation and consensus, as in the liberal (Rawlsian or Habermasian) model.[77] Another way of understanding the public space can be found in Jacques Rancière's politics of aesthetics. Like Mouffe, Rancière sees aesthetics and politics as inseparable, thus rejecting the demand that art must be explicitly political or 'critical'[78]: art is *implicitly* political in opening up what he calls a new 'distribution of the sensible'. In other words, art has the potential to disrupt the existing order of things and to create the possibility of new kinds of sensory community: 'What is common is "sensation". Human beings are tied together by a certain sensory fabric, a certain distribution of the sensible which defines their way of being together; and politics is about the transformation of the sensory fabric of "being together".'[79] Similarly to Mouffe, then, Rancière believes that the political effect of art is to create *dissensus* - that is, to interrupt the status quo, the existing order of reality, and to create a new collective space. Politics is always the egalitarian disruption of what Rancière calls the 'police order' - referring here not to the specific repressive function of policing, but rather to the symbolic constitution of the social order: 'Its essence lies in a certain way of dividing up the sensible', in other words, of determining roles, functions, places and identities that make up the social order.[80] Because politics, particularly democratic politics, is based on the presupposition of equality - that is, on the equal right and capacity of anyone to speak, to participate, to make political decisions, to govern

and to be governed - this disturbs the police order, 'anarchically' interrupting hierarchies and modes of consensus that have become naturalized.

There is an important link here with our conception of ontological anarchy, which we see as central to the understanding of the politics of critical art practice. As Rancière puts it, *'Politics is a specific break with the logic of the arkhê. It does not simply presuppose a break with the 'normal' distribution of positions that defines who exercises power and who is subject to it. It also requires a break with the idea that there exist dispositions 'specific' to these positions*.'[81] Therefore, according to Rancière,

> Rather than a power of self, democracy is the disruption of such a power and of the circularity of the *arkhê*. It is an anarchic principle that must be presupposed for politics to exist at all and insofar as it is anarchic it precludes the self-grounding of politics, establishing it instead as the seat of a division.[82]

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While Rancière would not necessarily understand his approach to politics as anarchist - at least not in the same way as classical revolutionary anarchism - the important point here is that it proceeds from the premise of ontological anarchy, that is, from the absence of a ruling principle of authority. Like Foucault's conception of 'non-power' discussed above, it proceeds from anarchy but does not necessarily end up there, and it is not predetermined by a certain rationalist vision of an anarchist social order (which, for Rancière, would simply be another order of the 'police').[83]

Rancière's ontologically anarchic approach to the politics of critical art in many ways accords with our own. Importantly, he refuses to equate politics with the exercise of power or the struggle for power - as Mouffe does - but instead sees it as a form of action that produces new subjects, new forms of subjectivation, that is, new ways of living together and relating to one another. Indeed, politics aims at what Rancière calls *disidentification* - a process by which the subject disengages from pre-defined roles and identities, as determined by the police order, and constructs alternative ways of being and acting in the world. He says: 'Any subjectification is a disidentification, removal from the naturalness of a place, the opening up of a subject space where anyone can be counted since it is the space where those of no account are counted, where a connection is made between having a part and having no part.'[84] Here there is a refusal of what might be called 'identity politics' - in other words, a rejection of the idea that politics is about the demand for the recognition and rights of pre-given identities and sets of interests. Even when the subject makes rights claims, he or she becomes something new and different.[85] This idea of

disidentification in some ways aligns with our notion of the insurrection, in which the subject detaches him- or herself from predefined roles and identities that characterize the 'police order'.

At the same time, Rancière 's view of politics is premised on the idea of *visibility*. The police order determines what kind of subjects are visible - that is, what kinds of subjects are qualified to speak, to appear in the public domain as political subjects - and what kinds of subjects remain invisible. The practice of politics, and indeed, critical art, is to create a new regime of visibility - in other words, to re-distribute the existing social order so that the previously excluded can now appear and be recognized as political subjects. This emphasis on the redistribution of the order of the visible is what brings together the aesthetics of politics and the politics of aesthetics, for Rancière.[86] The notion of visibility is no doubt important, indeed central, to most conceptions of the public space which, following the views of Arendt, involves citizens appearing in public and exercising their equal right to speak and be heard. However, is it not possible - indeed necessary - to take a somewhat broader view of what political subjectivation might mean today? Above we have referred to a new dissident politics of invisibility associated with the gesture of anonymity, of covering one's face with a mask and concealing one's identity: a refusal to be counted. The new forms of dissent and insurrection that we are interested in - and which are also reflected and expressed in certain critical art practices and collectives - involve invisibility and anonymity (and here we could talk about collectives like Anonymous, as well as practices like hacktivism and electronic whistleblowing). They explode the traditional notion of the public sphere and indeed of politics as a necessarily visible activity. These new disobedient practices operate in a clandestine space, engaging in a withdrawal or 'exodus' from the state order. However, this does not make their action any less political. Indeed, anonymity, the concealing of identity, the refusal of visibility and representation becomes a new kind of political action and constitutes an alternative space for freedom and autonomy. As Geoffroy de Lagasnerie says: 'The practice of anonymity enables one to act politically without constituting oneself as an identifiable subject. Anonymous subjects are not subjects who appear. On the contrary they dissolve as public subjects and organize their own invisibility.'[87] Or, as Donatella di Cesare puts it, subjects who conceal their identity, as an anarchist gesture and as a counter-surveillance measure, claim for themselves 'the right to opacity.'[88] We will have more to say about the politics of anonymity and invisibility in the following chapter.

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[1] This is the thesis of Angela Nagle in her book on alt-right internet sub-cultures, *Kill All Normies: Online Culture Wars from 4chan and Tumblr to Trump and the Alt-right* Winchester UK: Zero Books, 2017. She argues that the 'alt-right' has effected a kind of cultural revolution by becoming 'punk' - that is, openly

transgressive, irreverent and libertarian, and thus coopting the traditional ground of the left, which now finds itself on the side of 'political correctness' and defending the established norms and codes of political discourse.

[2] This question has led some to the conclusion that art today should - *or has already* - become 'post-critical', in the sense of constructing new social realities rather than simply the ideological unveiling of existing realities. See for instance, Pamela Fraser and Roger Rothman eds., *Beyond Critique: Contemporary Art in Theory, Practice, and Instruction*, New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2017. While our approach also emphasises the capacity of art to create alternative social and political realities through autonomous action, it does not separate this from the critique of institutional authority, whether that of cultural or political institutions.

[3] See Michel Foucault, 'Different Spaces', *Aesthetics. The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984. Volume 2.* Ed., James Faubion, London: Penguin, 2000, 175-185.

[4] See Nicholas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics,* trans., Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods, Les Presses de Réel, 2002.

[5] See Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship,* London: Verso, 2012.

[6] See Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator,* trans., Gregory Elliot, London: Verso, 2009.

[7] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics,* p. 5.

[8] Bakunin, *Political Philosophy,* ed., G. P Maximoff, London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1953, p. 221.

[9] See Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: a Factor in Evolution,* McCure, Phillips & Co. 1902.

[10] Mark Mattern argues that certain contemporary art forms - such as graffiti, DIY, punk music and street art, prefigure anarchist principles and democratic future possibilities. See *Anarchism and Art.*

[11] Indeed, Elena Loizidou sees anarchism as a certain 'art' of living without authority, in which one actively creates new relationships with oneself and with others. See *Anarchism: an Art of Living without Law*, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2023.

[12] See Adelita Husni-Bey, 'Postcards from the Desert Island', Vdrome (2011): https://www.vdrome.org/adelita-husni-bey-postcards-from-the-desert-island/ (accessed 23/05/2023)

[13] Gustav Landauer, *Revolution and Other Writings: A Political Reader*. Edited and Translated by Gabriel Kuhn. Oakland: PM Press, 2010, p. 214.

[14] Mikhail Bakunin, *Marxism, Freedom and the State,* trans. K. J. Kenafick, London: Freedom Press, 1950, p. 47

[15] Chto Delat and Kunsthalle Wien, 'And if I Devoted My Life to One of its Feathers' (2021): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRgI0BjdSG8 (accessed 24/05/2023)

[16] Antliff, *Anarchist Modernism; and Anarchy and Art.*

[17] See David Weir, *Anarchy and Culture: The Aesthetic Politics of Modernism,* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.

[18] Robyn Roslak argues that neo-impressionist employed techniques in painting that sought to reflect the anarchist idea of natural harmony and unity in diversity. See *Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France,* Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007.

[19] See Daniela Padularosa, 'Anti-Art? Dada and Anarchy', *Anarchism and Art: Radical Arts and Politics in Perspective, ed.*, Carolin Kosuch, Leiden, Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2020, pp. 99-126.

[20] See Boris Groys, *In the Flow,* London: Verso, 2016, pp. 55-65.

[21] See Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own,* trans., David Leopold, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 71.

[22] Ibid., p. 65.

[23] See Antliff, *Anarchist Modernism.*

[24] See Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle.*

[25] See Raoul Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life,* trans., Donald Nicholson-Smith, 1983.

[26] In an interview, CAE said it that while it identified with anarchist principles of decentralization, individualism and anti-statism, at the same time it characterizes its approach as one of 'practical anarchy', a form of everyday activism and resistance, rather than the anarchism of revolution and social utopias. See Mark Little, 'Practical Anarchy: an Interview with Critical Art Ensemble', *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities,* 4:2 (1999): 93-201.

[27] See Comité Invisible, 'The Coming Insurrection', *(2007) The Anarchist Library* < https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/comite-invisible-the-coming-insurrection>

[28] See Weir, *Anarchy and Culture.*

[29] See Colin Ward. See *Anarchy in Action,* San Francisco: PM Press, 2017.

[30] David Graeber, 'The New Anarchists', *New Left Review* 13 Jan-Feb 2002.

[31] Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own,* pp. 160-161.

[32] McKee, *Strike Art,* p. 12.

[33] Many of these democratic experiments are described in David Graeber's book on Occupy Wall Street, *The Democracy Project: a History, a Crisis, a Movement,* London: Penguin 2014.

[34] See Simon Tormey, *The End of Representative Politics,* Polity, 2015. See also Paolo Gerbaudo, *The Mask and the Flag: Populism, Citizenism and Global Protest,* Oxford University Press USA, 2017.

[35] See Rai Ling, 'Anarchism and Cryptocurrency', *The Anarchist Library* (October 2022): https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/rai-ling-anarchism-and-cryptocurrency

[36] See Peter Ludlow, ed., *Crypto Anarchy, Cyber States, and Pirate Utopias,* Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2001. Here it is interesting to note that the philosopher Catherine Malabou, who has recently written on

anarchism (see *Au Voleur! Anarchisme et Philosophie,* Paris: PUF 2022) supported - on anarchist grounds - a global declaration in defence of cryptocurrencies. See 'Cryptocurrencies: Anarchist Turn or Strengthening of Surveillance Capitalism? From Bitcoin to Libra' trans., Robert Boncardo, *Australian Humanities Review*: http://australianhumanitiesreview.org/2020/05/31/cryptocurrencies-anarchist-turn-or-strengthening-of-surveillance-capitalism-from-bitcoin-to-libra/ (accessed 30/01/2023)

[37] See Hakim Bey, *T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism, 2nd ed*ition. New York: Autonomedia, 2017.

[38] Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, 'The Authority Principle', Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, 'The Authority Principle', in Daniel Guérin, ed., *No Gods, No Masters: An Anthology of Anarchism,* trans., Paul Sharkey, Oakland.: AK Press, 2006, 81-98, p. 93.

[39] Bakunin, *Political Philosophy,* 1953, p. 168.

[40] See Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid.*

[41] See Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge,* trans., Geoffrey Bennington and Brian Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

[42] See Saul Newman, *From Bakunin to Lacan: Anti-authoritarianism and the Dislocation of Power,* Lanham Way.: Lexington Books, 2001; and *The Politics of Postanarchism,* Edinburgh University Press, 2011.

[43] Perhaps here we can agree with Jesse Cohn, who argues that anarchism is a critique not only of political representation, but also of symbolic representation. See Jesse S. Cohn, *Anarchism and the Crisis of Representation: Hermeneutics, Aesthetics, Politics*, Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2006, p. 21.

[44] For a discussion on the connections between Stirner's egoism and the artist's act of self-creation, see John Moore's essay ''Lived Poetry: Stirner, Anarchy, Subjectivity and the Art of Living''. *The Anarchist Library* https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/john-moore-lived-poetry (accessed 1 February 2023).

[45] See Max Stirner ''Art and Religion'' ('Kunst und Religion' 1842) *The Anarchist Library* < https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/max-stirner-art-and-religion>

[46] As Cohn argues, Stirner's radical critique of the ideological structures of humanism - with its representative category of Man - fundamentally shaped the anti-representational aesthetics of avant-garde art: 'The connection between individualist anarchism and aesthetic abstraction, however paradoxical— Stirner, after all, condemns ''abstraction'' as ''lifeless'' and propounds an instrumentalism seemingly incompatible with the aesthetics of disinterestedness entailed in *l'art pour l'art* —makes sense when framed as the artist's refusal to subject himself or herself to the signifying regime of a social audience by representing a subject'. See Cohn, *Anarchism and the Crisis of Representation,* p. 129.

[47] See Hakim Bey, 'Ontological Anarchy in a Nutshell,' *Immediatism: Essays by Hakim Bey*, AK Press, Edinburg 1994, p. 1–6. For an extended discussion of Bey's ontological anarchism, see Leonard Williams, 'Hakim Bey and Ontological Anarchism', *Journal for the Study of Radicalism,* Fall 2010, Vol. 4, No. 2 (FALL 2010), pp. 109-137.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy,* trans., C-M Gros, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987, p. 6.

[50] Ibid., p. 4.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Nina Gurianova, *The Aesthetics of Anarchy: Art and Ideology in the Early Russian Avant-Garde,* Berkely, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2012, pp. 32-33.

[53] Benjamin Dalton, 'What Should We Do with Plasticity? An Interview with Catherine Malabou', *Paragraph*, 42(2): 238-254. See also 'What Pleasure is there in Thinking Today?' (Interview with Catherine Malabou) *Spike Art Magazine* #64 Summer 2020 < https://www.spikeartmagazine.com/articles/qa-catherine-malabou> (accessed 10 February 2021)

[54] Michel Foucault, *On the Government of the Living, Lectures at the College de France 1979-80,* ed., M. Senellart, trans., G. Burchell, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 77.

[55] Ibid., p. 78.

[56] Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own,* p. 324.

[57] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume One: The Will to Knowledge, trans.*, Robert Hurley, New York: Pantheon Books, 1978, pp. 95-96.

[58] For example, the Guggenheim's links with the Sackler family, which owns the pharmaceutical company that manufactures OxyContin, the drug responsible for the epidemic of opioid addiction in the US. This was the target of photographer and activist, Nan Goldin's protest, which involved dropping thousands of fake prescriptions into the museum's atrium.

[59] Michel Foucault, 'The Subject and Power', *Critical Inquiry,* Vol. 8, No. 4 (Summer, 1982), pp. 777-795.

[60] See Hito Steyerl, 'How Not to be Seen: a Fucking Didactic Educational .MOV file' (2013) MoMA Leaning: https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/hito-steyerl-how-not-to-be-seen-a-fucking-didactic-educational-mov-file-2013/ (accessed 24/05/2023)

[61] Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*., pp. 279-80.

[62] Giorgio Agamben, 'What Is a Destituent Power (or Potentiality)?' trans. Stephanie Wakefield. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32 (2014): 65–74.

[63] See Antonio Negri, *Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State,* trans. M. Boscagli, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

[64] Invisible Committee (2014) To Our Friends. Available at: https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/the-invisiblecommitte-to-our-friends, p. 26.

[65] Giorgio Agamben, *Creation and Anarchy: The Work of Art and the Religion of Capitalism, trans.,* Adam Kotsko, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019,

[66] See Chantal Mouffe, 'Art and Democracy: Art as an Agonistic Intervention in Public Space', 6 Open 2008/No. 14/*Art as a Public Issue,* 6-15.

[67] For a more developed account of this notion of antagonism its relation to activist art, see Oliver Marchart, *Conflictual Aesthetics: Artistic Activism and the Public Sphere*, London: Sternberg Press, 2019.

[68] Mouffe, 'Art and Democracy', p. 12.

[69] See Chantal Mouffe, 'Carl Schmitt and the Paradox of Liberal Democracy', *The Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence* 10(1) 1997: 21-33.

[70] See Carl Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy,* trans., E. Kennedy. Cambridge MA.: MIT Press, 1988, p. 9.

[71] Chantal Mouffe, Rosalyn Deutsche, Branden W. Joseph and Thomas Keenan, 'Every Form of Art Has a Political Dimension', *Grey Room ,* Winter, 2001, No. 2 (Winter, 2001), pp. 98-125.

[72] Mouffe explicitly rejects the idea of cosmopolitan citizenship. See ibid., p. 110.

[73] See Chantal Mouffe, *For a Left Populism*, London: Verso, 2018.

[74] See for instance, Jan-Werner Muller, *What is Populism?* Penn.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019; or Nadia Urbinati's *Me the People: How Populism Transforms Democracy,* Boston: Harvard University Press, 2019.

[75] See Carl Schmitt, *Constitutional Theory,* trans. by J. Seitzer. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

[76] See Chantal Mouffe, ArtForum (Summer 2010) <https://www.artforum.com/print/201006/chantal-mouffe-25710>

[77] Indeed, Rosalyn Deutsche in her discussion of the potential importance of public art in democratic renewal, points at the same time to the contested nature of the public space - the way that it is open to conservative, liberal, republican and more radical articulations. See Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics*, Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1998.

[78] See Tina Chanter, *Art, Politics and Rancière: Broken Perceptions,* London: Bloomsbury, 2017.

[79] Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator,* trans., Gregory Elliot, London and New York: Verso, 2009, p. 56.

[80] See Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics,* trans., Steven Corcoran, New York: Continuum, 2010, p. 36.

[81] Ibid., p. 30.

[82] Ibid., p. 53.

[83] This distinction is also reiterated in an interview with Rancière: 'That said, between 'my' anarchism and the anarchist tradition there is an important difference of perspective. The anarchist tradition had a tendency to localise oppression in the State by identifying politics and the State, and opposed this to liberty incarnated in society in the social group of producers. Historical anarchism freely relied on the opposition between production and exchange and the parasitism of forms of the State. This vision is quite close to the Marxist opposition between economic and social reality and politics as appearance. And it fed on a certain organicist conception where the social cell as a living organism is opposed to political artifice. I am a long way from this naturalist vision. What I have tried to bring to light is an anarchy implicated in the very definition of politics and which precisely distinguishes it from all organicism. I have tried to show that in the very idea of political government there is a necessary reference to a competence which is no longer that of a specific category but that of all (*tous*). There is a break with the *arché* logic according to which the exercise of power is the exercise of competence proper to a specific category. Of course this primary 'anarchism'
at the heart of politics is constantly rediscovered by the practices of government, and democracy only exists through the activity of subjects who reactivate it, which creates a communal sphere different from the official public sphere.' See 'Democracy, anarchism and radical politics today: An interview with Jacques Rancière', Todd May, Benjamin Noys and Saul Newman, trans., John Lechte, *Anarchist Studies,* Vol. 36 (2) 2008: 172-185, p. 175.

[84] Jacques Rancière, *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy, trans.* Julie Rose, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999, p. 36.

[85] As Rancière argues women who claimed equal rights during the French Revolution retroactively constructed themselves as bearers of rights, rights which were guaranteed by the Declaration, but which were denied in reality: 'They acted as subjects that did not have the rights that they had and that had the rights that they had not.' *Dissensus*, p. 69.

[86] Ibid., p. 140.

[87] Geoffroy de Lagasnerie, *The Art of Revolt: Snowden, Assange, Manning,* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017, p. 51.

[88] Donatella di Cesare, *The Time of Revolt,* trans., David Broder, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022, p. 97.