



Fourier's empty plinth on Place Clichy, Paris, as it would have appeared from 1942 to 2007.

CCC Research-based Master Programme

ODE TO AN EMPTY PLINTH

Iconoclasm by Other Means. By Gene Ray

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8 June 2021 by [Gene Ray](#)

TEXT

Fourier es-tu toujours là.

André Breton, *Ode à Charles Fourier* (1947)

The new conception of labor is tantamount to the exploitation of nature, which, with naïve complacency, is contrasted with the exploitation of the proletariat. Compared to this positivistic view, Fourier's fantasies (*Phantastereien*), which have so often been ridiculed, prove surprisingly sound.

Walter Benjamin, "On the Philosophy of History" (1940)

Paris no longer exists.

Guy Debord, *In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni* (1978)

That winter of 1997, as the Friends of Acoma harvested the bronze foot of Juan de Oñate in so-called

New Mexico, a text was published in the journal *October* that brought to light another variation of iconoclasm, this one from 1969, in Paris. In a special issue of the journal dedicated to Guy Debord and the SI, T.J. Clark and Donald Nicholson-Smith published an impassioned essay titled “Why Art Can’t Kill the Situationist International.” In it, Clark and Nicholson-Smith, members of the English section of the SI in 1966 and 1967, defend the revolutionary group against distorting absorptions by the cultural industries of art and media studies. With scathing retorts, they disabuse the amnesia of Régis Debray and Peter Wollen, who were emboldened to pronounce on the SI and its “failures” once Debord’s ashes were “safely cast from the Pointe du Vert-Galant into the Seine.”¹

By Clark and Nicholson’s reckoning, the legacy of Debord and the SI lies in their having seen and faced up to the implications of that emerging mutation of capitalism which Debord theorized in *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967). Debord begins this book with a *détournement* of Marx. “The wealth of societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails,” Marx famously writes in the opening lines of *Capital*, “appears as an immense collection of commodities”; the commodity, therefore, is where his investigation of capitalism and its laws of motion begin.² Debord: “The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of *spectacles*.” (Debord’s italics)³ In what the SI had long called the relentless “colonization of everyday life,” more and more of what used to be “directly lived has become mere representation.”⁴ But the spectacle is not these representations themselves, “not a collection of images”: “rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.”⁵ The spectacle (in the singular, indicating an organized system) is the effect of this “immense accumulation of spectacles,” the transformation it works on social relations. “Separation” is the word Debord uses to summarize this effect.⁶ Separation – of people from their own experience, desires and capacities, from their own self-understanding and from others – is the logic of capital’s new regime of representation, the tendency toward which it aims, “the alpha and omega of the spectacle.”⁷

The spectacle marks the moment when the commodity’s colonization, well advanced, attains a “*total occupation of social life*.” (Debord’s italics)⁸ The shift, then, is from what Marx called “commodity fetishism,” in which definite social relations between people come to assume for them “the fantastic form of a relation between things,”⁹ to a kind of fetishism of the images of commodified life. “The spectacle” Debord writes, “is *capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image*.” (Debord’s italics)¹⁰ To the point, that is, that social domination now operates most effectively on the terrain of images, on the level of life’s representation, the control of which then reshapes life itself, as an extinction of passion and critical agency, the ideological superstructure merging or imbricating with the economic base in a new way.¹¹ In effect, this second order force field accomplishes an epistemic coup that tends to disarm critical capacity: whatever appears in the spectacular field of representation acquires reality, becomes both true and “good,” and whatever fails to appear, or is merely excluded, becomes of dubious reality, false, “bad.”¹² The power to represent the social force field in images is of course the power to manipulate that representation, to misrepresent social reality in a nearly unanswerable fashion.¹³ A politics of images, icons and fetishes becomes politics *tout court*, as the spectacle of antagonism rather than social antagonism itself; this displacing play or theater, in which only approved needs and desires acquire voice and visibility and in which systemic transformation is never at stake, produces the effect of “omnipresent affirmation” and “total justification for the conditions and aims of the existing system.”¹⁴ The spectacle becomes a new logic of social control:

By means of the spectacle the ruling order discourses endlessly upon itself in an uninterrupted monologue of self-praise.... The generalized cleavage (*scission généralisée*) of the spectacle is inseparable from the modern State, which, as the product of the social division of labor and the organ of class rule, is the general form of social division.¹⁵

In such conditions, a “revolutionary organization.... cannot *represent* the revolutionary class” or make the fatal mistake of trying to “combat alienation by means of alienated means of struggle.” (Debord’s italics)¹⁶ In both its organizational forms and its politics, it would have to resist, rather than give in to, the logic of spectacularization. The theoretical and practical elaboration of these points would lead the SI to their precarious position on the far margins of the Left, committed to the destruction of capitalism and its givens but also opposed to what they saw as the bureaucratic spectacle of the party-form. The history of the group nevertheless counts, Clark and Nicholson-Smith contend, as a rare strong wager in response to capital’s growing power to represent the world and everything in it. And their active presence in the midst of the occupation movement of May 1968 is,

for them, the proof of it.

Clark and Nicholson-Smith reject the crude and trivializing narrative, now well established, that sees “some form of epistemological (and practical) break in the SI’s history, taking place in the early 1960s, by which ‘art’ gave way to ‘politics’.”¹⁷ The SI, they argue, never renounced art and never lapsed into “the bone-hard philistinism” of some Leftist parties and groups¹⁸ – at least if by “art” one understands “those possibilities of representational and antirepresentational action thrown up by fifty years of modernist experiment at the borders of the category.”¹⁹ This art they held on to, as skill and inventive capacity, even as they rejected art as an institutional locus and source of privileged identities, as a field of affirmative distinction that helps to stabilize the whole system of spectacularized relations.

Such a critical “generalization” of art, they gambled, would liberate it from dependency on capital and at the same time could radically transform it into revolutionary practice:²⁰ this was the “truly utopian dimension”²¹ of the SI, Clark and Nicholson-Smith argue, the “realization” of art that they aimed for:

It was the “art” dimension, to put it crudely – the continued pressure put on the question of representational forms in politics and everyday life, and the refusal to foreclose on the issue of representation versus agency – that made their politics the deadly weapon it was for a while. And gave them the role they had in May 1968. This is the aspect of the 1960s that the official Left wants most of all to forget.²²

This utopian core of the SI, which proved itself in practice, remains a resistant excess that eludes the colonizing, enclosing, extracting process of spectacularization: “art” – art history, the art world – can’t kill it. Clark and Nicholson-Smith conclude:

Sooner or later the history of the SI is bound to serve in the construction of a new project of resistance. The sooner the better; there is no reason to think the moment will be long coming. What that project will be like is still guesswork. Certainly it will have to struggle to reconceive the tentacular unity of its enemy and articulate the grounds of a unity capable of contesting it. The word “totality” will not put it at panic stations. It will want to know the past. And inevitably, it will find itself retelling the stories of those moments of refusal and reorganization – the SI being only one of them – that the dreamwork of the Left at present excludes from consciousness.²³

The unfolding of this argument in a text that throws off sparks is given a visual demonstration in the six photographs that Clark and Nicholson-Smith published with the essay. Each one documents a moment in what can be called the dialectic of monumentality and iconoclasm. The captions that Clark and Nicholson-Smith supply give an indication of the corresponding image and moment:

Moscow, 1917. Toppled Alexander III.

Petrograd, 1918. Dedication of a statue of Henrich Heine (stage center: Lunacharsky).

Budapest, October 23, 1956. Toppled Stalin.

Vilnius, August 30, 1991. Toppled Lenin.

Moscow, KGB headquarters, August 22, 1991. Toppled Dzerzhinsky.

Paris, Place Clichy, March 10, 1969. Anarcho-Situationist “commandos” installing a replica of Charles Fourier’s statue on a plinth left empty since the removal of the original by the Nazis.

The action referred to in this last caption opens up some variations that illuminate both Situationist practice and the proposition All Monuments Must Fall.

On the tree-lined median of the Boulevard de Clichy, where it meets Rue Caulaincourt, a bronze monument to the utopian socialist Charles Fourier once stood. The work of anarchist sculptor Emile Derré, the statue was dedicated in 1899, the necessary funds having been raised by a group of *Fouriéristes*. The site, just a short walk from the Moulin-Rouge, was fitting, the old neighborhoods of Belleville at that time still home to the workers of Paris and Montmartre a magnet for artists and bohemians.²⁴ Fourier, after all, is known as an advocate for social enjoyment and sexual freedom, as

well as social justice.²⁵ In October 1941, after the fall of France in May and June of the year before, the Nazi-allied Vichy regime began melting down many hundreds of statues and shipping the bronze to munitions factories in Germany.²⁶ (Just as – it's impossible to suppress the echo – that regime later shipped out many thousands of Jews via Drancy to Auschwitz.²⁷) Fourier was recognized, no doubt, as an enemy to the fascist project; his statue on Place Clichy never had a chance. Within two months, it was gone. About its stone plinth, evidently neither Pétain nor the Nazis who took over direct control in 1942 could be bothered. Some destroyed statues were replaced after the war. Not Fourier's. Its plinth stood empty in its place until one day in the spring of 1969.



Emile Derré's bronze statue to Charles Fourier on its stone plinth, before its removal by the Vichy regime in December 1941.

At the Sorbonne in May 1968, the Conseil pour le maintien des occupations gathered together some 40 likeminded Situationists, anarchists and *enragés* of the student milieu. By the following spring, some former Council members had decided to make a replica of Fourier's statue in commemoration of 10 May, the so-called "night of the barricades." (For an idea of that night, readers can easily consult the well-known photographs of the Rue Gay-Lussac on the morning of 11 May. In its wake, as the story goes, wildcat strikes and occupations grew swiftly into a general strike involving some 10 million workers, sending De Gaulle to his secret conference with General Massu in Baden-Baden.²⁸) What Walter Benjamin wrote to evoke the Paris of the Second Empire can still throw reflected light on this eruption of imperial aftermath: "When Fourier looked for an example of *travail non salarié mais passionné*, he found none that was more obvious than the building of barricades."²⁹ The replica was made by Pierre Lepetit, a teacher at the École des Beaux Arts who, in May 1968, was there on the Council for Maintaining the Occupations, along with Debord, Michèle Bernstein, Alice Becker-Ho, Mustapha Khayati, Raoul Vaneigem, René Vienet, Christian Sebastiani and other members and associates of the SI. Smaller than the original, as can be seen in the few known photos, the plaster statue was finished with bronze-colored paint and installed in broad daylight by a crew in municipal blue overalls.³⁰ Conviviality followed "at the *terrasse* of a neighboring café."³¹



The installation of Lepetit's replica by "Anarcho-Situationists" on 10 May 1969. Reproduced in Clark and



The replica installed. Reproduced in the final issue of *Internationale Situationniste*, 1969



The replica installed, the second photo reproduced in *Internationale Situationniste*, 1969. The billboard

Nicholson-Smith's "Why Art Can't Kill the Situationist International," in the journal October, 1997.

advertises the 1968 film, *Krakatoa, East of Java*, a Hollywood product based on the 1883 eruption of the Indonesian volcano.

The action is described in three paragraphs probably written by Debord and published in the final issue of the SI journal *Internationale Situationniste*:

At 7pm on Monday 10 March 1969, the precise moment when a "general strike" — carefully limited to 24 hours by union bureaucrats — was scheduled to commence, the statue of Charles Fourier was returned to its plinth in the Place Clichy, which had remained empty since the removal of its original incarnation by the Nazis. A plaque on the statue's pedestal explained: "A tribute to Charles Fourier, from the barricaders of the rue Gay-Lussac." Never before has the technique of *détournement* reached such a domain.

The job of putting it in place was accomplished at one of the Place Clichy's busiest times in front of more than a hundred witnesses, many of whom crowded around it, but none of whom was particularly shocked, even upon reading the plaque (hardly anyone in France is ever shocked after May 1968). The statue, an exact replica of the original, was made of plaster but finished in bronze. On first glance, it looked like the real thing. Even so, it weighed over a hundred kilograms. The police were advised of its presence shortly after, and left a guard around it for the course of the next day. It was removed by the authorities at first light the day after that.

A commando of around twenty "unknowns," as *Le Monde* put it on 13 March, was enough to complete the operation, which lasted a quarter of an hour. According to one witness, quoted in *France-Soir* on the 13th, "eight young people of twenty years of age deposited the statue with the aid of wooden beams. Not a bad performance, considering the fact that it took no less than thirty guardians of the peace and a crane to lay the plinth bare again." And *L'Aurore*, telling the truth for once, remarked that the whole thing was notable because "the *enragés* aren't usually in the habit of paying tribute."³²

The meaning of the action seems clear enough. The French state, still under De Gaulle until his resignation on 28 April, was rather easily provoked into rehearsing the wartime iconoclasm of the Nazi-allied Vichy regime — stepping right up, as it were, to the place marked "fascist." It was a good and serious political joke, a fine ludic gesture performed before a hundred witnesses and for the larger public of all those who had participated in the recent insurrection. An enacted panegyric, it could be called, to a brief but extraordinary reach beyond domination, despite and in defiance of that reach's obvious defeat. The final image in the series that accompanies Clark and Nicholson-Smith's defense of the SI's memory, then, shows the monument as ruse or lure: a *détournement* to catch out the iconoclasm *from above* of the state and its reasons. Instructive as it is, this situation constructed around the negative presentation or performance of an iconoclastic reversal seems to have fallen into relative oblivion. Is that because of the visual poverty of the three surviving images?³³ Today, of course, they would "put it on YouTube," livestream it, gain traction by bouncing selfies through Facebook and a zillion other platforms of social media. Or would they? The SI, it seems to me, was a qualitative group. Its ideal, as they themselves patiently explained, was a membership that participated fully in the collective adventure. Full control over their own, non-delegated representation was for them non-negotiable. Their aim was not to gain and hold a place in the spectacle according to its logic of "all that appears is good." As their influence grew, they struggled with but never solved the problem of how to grow in size; this is what Clark and Nicholson-Smith refer to when they write of the SI's "refusal to foreclose on the issue of representation versus agency." So the Situationist-inspired 1969 action was never meant to add one more image to the accumulation of spectacles. It was, rather, a gift to those who would know how to laugh at it and to take heart — something akin, maybe, to Brecht and Eisler's anti-fascist humor.³⁴

More humor, or something stronger, would be needed to digest the further turns in the story of Fourier's plinth. In 1940, Benjamin had already set out some terms for a leftist return to Fourier, within a critique of orthodox conceptions of labor and labor discipline grounded in the domination of nature. Surrealist and Situationist appropriations of Fourier after 1945 had emphasized the free and passionate enjoyment of both social products and forces of production. Following the Situationist-

inspired 1969 action, Fourier's stone plinth on the Place Clichy attracted episodic artistic and political engagements, a few of them openly taking their inspiration from the Situationists.³⁵ In 1987, the "Friends of Charles Fourier," a group led by Simone de Beauvoir and René Scherer, proposed a new replacement statue to the utopian socialist, but this initiative stalled and eventually died in municipal red tape.³⁶ The cultural bureaucrats, already objects of disdain in Situationist discourse, would become targets for a new generation of activists in the austere era of precarity.



EMBRÈVEMENT No 3 by Collectif Aéroporté, a group of precarious cultural workers, illegally installed in April 2007, removed by court order after the failure of a campaign to legalize it. Photo: Collectif Aéroporté.

In 2000, against popular resistance, Jacques Chirac's government pushed through neoliberal "reforms" of unemployment insurance provisions and followed this up in 2003 with an attack on retirement benefits. Also in 2003, unemployment insurance protections for intermittent contract workers in the arts and cultural industries were cut back; the intermittents movement emerged in response. Collectif Aéroporté, a group of artists associated with the Coordination des Intermittents et Précaires, began a series of unauthorized installations in the city of Paris which they called *embrèvements* (the word refers to dovetail joining in woodworking and cabinetry, a once-common craft skill that is now rarely used or taught). The group's actions were accompanied by communiqués and documentation on their website.³⁷ Their third illegal intervention, in April 2007, was a robust five-meter tall construction of glass and metal installed on Fourier's plinth. A metal stairway enabled passersby to gain easy access to the top of the plinth, where glass walls would enclose them on three sides.³⁸ The intervention on Place Clichy, acknowledging the Situationists and the 1969 action, played with the absence formed by the empty plinth and gestured to a reclaiming, *from below*, of voice and agency: "We honor once again the base of Charles Fourier, 38 years after the Situationists. But here, no homage to the great man: the glass volume underlines the absence of sculpture."³⁹ As Kirrily Freeman observes, the Collectif is also "imbued with a strident anti-bureaucratic discourse that is critical of municipal and police responses to public and artistic interventions at the site."⁴⁰ The guerrilla installers intentionally bypassed all municipal authorities and processes, claiming and performing the right to decide themselves where, how and when to bring art into relation with public space: only a retrospective approval of their *fait accompli* would be accepted:

I disregard the opinion of the committees, I deprive the municipal secretaries of culture and the specialized consultants of their power of decision. I also neutralize the benevolence of the police with my comrades. This is the protocol. It is necessary that the institutional validation is taken backwards, it is necessary that a project can exist in spite of the

prohibitions, off the beaten track. The object has succeeded in its appearance. It has transformed itself in an unconventional way and has penetrated the field of art. Everything is reversed, and the City Council is panicking. Tout va bien.⁴¹

The City responded to this provocation by announcing a new public art commission, to be selected by Art dans la Ville. Collectif Aéroporté refused to participate, but a dossier was prepared and submitted on their behalf. In the end, the committee chose a truly insipid proposal to clad the plinth with colored plexiglass panels and place on its top a giant aluminum apple. (“Fourier’s apple – the pendant to that of Newton – which, in the Parisian restaurant Février, costs a hundred times more than in the province where it is grown.”⁴² The selection of this banality indicates what passes for an approvable “engagement” with Fourier under conditions of the spectacle.) Collectif Aéroporté launched a “call for support” to save their installation, but to no avail.⁴³ The municipality removed it and in 2011 installed the completed apple, a tomb of imagination that exemplifies the affirmative genre of “plop art.”



Official art in public space, 2011: pacification and closure from above, an aluminum apple punning on a remark by Fourier, in the safe, trivializing modes of affirmative contemporary art.

Writing in 2010, before the closure imposed by the giant apple, Kirrily Freeman had concluded that Fourier’s voided plinth had become “a highly politicised absence, and one that appeals to a series of memories that juxtapose emancipatory utopian projects (the Collectif Aéroporté, the Situationist International, Surrealism, Fourierism) with the repressive forces of the police and the state.”⁴⁴ Filling that void, she concluded, “may well lead to forgetting.”⁴⁵ Indeed, the sleeping pill of amnesia would seem to have been the point of the municipal process: this is one tactic for re-pacifying a public space that had become charged with remembrance and possibility. All Monuments Must Fall is certainly not a call for a liberal-colonial politics of recognition, in which one toppled monument is replaced by another. As a proposition for justice, this phrase negates the very logic of monumentality and opens the space for a contestation of memory that puts all social stakes back into play. Even micro-events of such an iconoclasm are worthy of the name “situation,” as Debord and the SI used it.

Notes

1. T.J. Clark and Donald Nicholson-Smith, “Why Art Can’t Kill the Situationist International,” *October* 79 (Winter 1997), p. 15. Clark is well-known as an eminent art historian and, to a smaller number, as a comrade of Retort. For a more recent statement of his political position, see Clark, “For a Left with No Future,” *New Left Review* 74 (March/April 2012): 53-75. Nicholson-Smith is a much-respected translator of Debord, Raoul Vaneigem and other

- Situationists, as well as writers of *roman noir*, such as Jean-Patrick Manchette, and related genres of affinity. ↵
2. Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), p. 125. ↵
 3. Guy Debord, *La Société du Spectacle* [1967] (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), p.15; *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995), p. 12. ↵
 4. "Tout ce qui était directement vécu s'est éloigné dans une représentation." Debord is establishing the tendency, the law of motion of the new form of capitalist modernity. As I read it, the "all" here is rhetorical. See also note 8, below. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.15; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 12. ↵
 5. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.16; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 12. ↵
 6. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.16; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 12. ↵
 7. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.25; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 20. ↵
 8. Debord's text is emphatic here: "Le spectacle est le moment où la marchandise est parvenue à l'occupation totale de la vie sociale." (Debord's italics) Cf. Nicholson-Smith: "The spectacle corresponds to the historical moment at which the commodity completes its colonization of social life." I would guess that the translator's choice for colonization might reflect a writerly discretion that looks ahead protectingly to the occupations of 1968. I read Debord's "total" in this sentence as a statement of the tendency, rather than a literal assertion of achieved totalization – much as Adorno wrote hyperbolically of "total administration." The spectacle on this view names a social totality but not a totalized one: the net tightens, as Adorno would put it, but short of full closure. Else, how to explain the SI or 1968? Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.39; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 29. ↵
 9. Marx, *Capital*, p. 165. ↵
 10. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.32; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 24. ↵
 11. *The Society of the Spectacle* helpfully updates, two decades on, the "culture industry" chapter from Horkheimer and Adorno's 1944 *Dialectic of Enlightenment* – with which it has strong affinities, whether or not Debord had read it. (The first French translation did not appear until 1974.) Obviously, Horkheimer and Adorno no longer shared, if they ever did, that passionate concern for revolutionary practice which, for Debord, was a key motive. ↵
 12. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.20; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 15. ↵
 13. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.26-27; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 19-20. ↵
 14. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.17; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 13. ↵
 15. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.16; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 19-20, translation modified. ↵
 16. Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*, p.118-120; *The Society of the Spectacle*, p. 88. ↵
 17. Clark and Nicholson-Smith, "Why Art Can't Kill the Situationist International," p. 29. ↵
 18. Clark and Nicholson-Smith, "Why Art Can't Kill the Situationist International," p. 20. ↵
 19. Clark and Nicholson-Smith, "Why Art Can't Kill the Situationist International," p. 29. ↵
 20. In chapter 8 of *The Society of the Spectacle*, Debord elaborates a Situationist version of a dialectical supersession or *Aufhebung* of art through a practice of directly decolonizing and revolutionizing everyday life. Also in 1967, the English section of the SI, including Clark and Nicholson-Smith, co-authored their own statement of this program in pamphlet form. The English Section of the Situationist International (Tim Clark, Christopher Gray, Charles Radcliffe and Donald Nicholson-Smith), *The Revolution of Modern Art and the Modern Art of Revolution* [1967]; reprinted (London: Chronos Publications, 1994). While the problem of artistic and political vanguards remains hotly disputed, I doubt the SI's goal of a revolutionary (or utopian) "realization" of art could ever avoid the form of an avant-garde project. I don't count that as an automatic disqualification of the aim or the try, either. I try to work through aspects of this problem in light of SI theory and practice in "Toward a Critical Art Theory," in Gerald Raunig and Gene Ray (eds.), *Art and Contemporary Critical Practice: Reinventing Institutional Critique* (London: MayFly Books, 2009). ↵
 21. Clark and Nicholson-Smith, "Why Art Can't Kill the Situationist International," p. 29. ↵
 22. Clark and Nicholson-Smith, "Why Art Can't Kill the Situationist International," p. 29-30. ↵
 23. Clark and Nicholson-Smith, "Why Art Can't Kill the Situationist International," p. 30-31. ↵
 24. On the history of this part of Paris and the role of the *Bellevillois* in the Commune of 1871, see David Harvey's 1979 essay on the Basilica of Sacré-Coeur. Harvey, "Monument and Myth," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, vol. 60., no. 3 (September 1979) 362-381; reprinted in Harvey, *Paris: Capital of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2005). ↵
 25. In the words of historian Kirrily Freeman, "Fourier was also an ardent advocate of sexual liberation, a defender of sexual freedom, and an avowed feminist." Freeman, "'Filling the Void': Absence, Memory and Politics in Place Clichy," *Modern and Contemporary France* 18(1): 58. Freeman's essay is a lucid discussion of Fourier's plinth as an absence generative of artistic and political reflection. My account here of the action of Collectif Aéroporté and the municipality's response largely follows her pathbreaking research. ↵
 26. On the liquidation of statues, see Kirrily Ann Freeman, *Bronzes to Bullets: Vichy and the Destruction of French Public Statuary, 1941-1944* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009). ↵
 27. See Michael R. Marrus and Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (New York: Schocken Books, 1983). ↵
 28. Jacques Massu is best remembered as the leader of French paratroops in the 1957 Battle of Algiers, about which he would later recall that "torture had been part of a certain ambiance." From Indochina to Suez to the 1958 Algiers putsch to the *Organisation armée secrète* (OAS, active 1961-62), Massu was an icon of the French colonial-imperialist far-right. In Baden-Baden, on 29 May 1968, he assured De Gaulle of the military's loyalty; in July, De Gaulle amnestied jailed OAS militants. For a brief and uncontroversial resumé of the French May 1968, see Richard Wolin's entry for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, online: <https://www.britannica.com/event/events-of-May-1968>. ↵
 29. The French phrase means "uncompensated but passionate work." The line is from Walter Benjamin, "The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire" [1938], trans. Harry Zohn, in *Selected Writings*, volume 4, 1938-1940, eds. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, and trans. Edmund Jephcott et al., (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2003), p. 5. ↵
 30. "Le retour de Charles Fourier," *Internationale Situationniste* 12 (September 1969), pp. 97-98; reprinted in *Internationale Situationniste*, Édition augmentée (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1997), pp. 665-666; and in English as "The Return of Charles Fourier," trans. Reuben Keehan, online: <https://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/fourier.html>. For scans of the original text in

French, as well as page spreads of the entire issue, see Internet Archive, online: <https://archive.org/details/pdfy-oZExaS7A3qyVL6xM/page/n95/mode/2up> . See also Freeman, "Filling the Void"; Andrew Hussey, *The Game of War: The Life and Death of Guy Debord* (London: Pamlico, 2002), p. 252; and Pierre Lotrou, "The Statue of Charles Fourier," trans. NOT BORED!, from Raoul Vaneigem and Gérard Bérreby, *Rien n'est fini, tout commence* (Paris: Éditions Allia, 2014); online: <http://www.notbored.org/fourier.pdf> . ↵

31. Hussey, *The Game of War*, p. 252. ↵
32. Situationist International, "The Return of Charles Fourier," trans. Reuben Keehan, online: <https://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/fourier.html> . ↵
33. There may be more, of course, held closer to the chest, near the heart. But searches of the online archives turn up no more than the three photographs reproduced here. ↵
34. See Anna Papaeti, "Humour and the Representation of Fascism in *Schweyk im zweiten Weltkrieg*: Adorno Contra Brecht and Hans Eisler," *New Theatre Quarterly* 30:4 (2014): 318-32. ↵
35. One of the more interesting interventions was that of "Germaine Reine des Putes," who in July 2004 "took up residence on the empty pedestal" in order "to honour the sex workers for whom the Boulevard Clichy is famous." Freeman, "Filling the Void," pp. 60-61. ↵
36. Freeman, "Filling the Void," p. 54. ↵
37. Collectif Aéroporté website, online: <http://aeroporte.unblog.fr/a-propos/> . ↵
38. See Collectif Aéroporté, "Images," online: <http://aeroporte.unblog.fr/photos/> . The hyperlink among the photos connects to a short video documentation of the installation, online: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1qbhu> . ↵
39. Collectif Aéroporté, "Communiqué," online: <http://aeroporte.unblog.fr/a-propos/> . ↵
40. Freeman, "Filling the Void," p. 53. ↵
41. Collectif Aéroporté, "Réponse," online: <http://aeroporte.unblog.fr/reponse-a-un-rapide-echange-telephonique-avec-paul-ardenne/> ; and cited in Freeman, "Filling the Void," p. 55. ↵
42. Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), *Convolute W*, p. 647. ↵
43. Collectif Aéroporté, "Appel à soutien," online: <http://aeroporte.unblog.fr/> . ↵
44. Freeman, "Filling the Void," p. 53. ↵
45. Freeman, "Filling the Void," p. 56. ↵

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