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STRATEGIC SELF CARE: FOUCAULT'S FINAL WORK

AND THE PURSUIT OF PRACTICES OF FREEDOM

A Thesis in

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by

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ABSTRACT

Michel Foucault was one of the most important figures in twentieth century philosophy and one of the few whose work was important across the disciplines. This is why it is strange that his two final publications, *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*, have received little systematic treatment. My dissertation builds on Foucault's final two works to answer longstanding questions raised by his thought surrounding the relation of modern social and political institutions to the history of moral thought.

Foucault's final two works returned to antiquity in order the study primogenitors of the moral ideas that would shape and guide the development of certain prevalent contemporary social and political institutions. Unfortunately, Foucault died before he could carry his moral researches forward to their contact point with the birth of the contemporary social and political institutions that he studies in *Discipline and Punish* and *Sécurité, Territoire, Population*.

I follow up on his research by gathering together the nascent lines of thought that Foucault left in interviews, articles, and the Foucault Archive in France. I extend these thoughts on the morality of antiquity forward in time through an original examination of medieval Christian thought, specifically that surrounding coenobitical monasticism and pastoral life. Through this extension, I am able to tie together the moral line of thought that Foucault began in antiquity with his analyses of the disciplines and governmentality, which were both highly influenced by coenobitical monasticism and the pastoral.

These studies reveal the complex contemporary interlinking of many areas of politics (the government of others) and morality (the government of the self). The result of this complex and deep intertwining is that many of the problems facing social and governmental institutions cannot be solved without also addressing basic moral issues as well. For example, Christian morality, as laid out in the *Rule of St. Benedict* and *Pastoral Care* by Gregory the Great, emphasizes man's sinful nature through a focus on the Fall and the crucifixion. These texts conclude that, as a result of man's indelibly sinful and limited nature, man requires guidance by God or one of his lieutenants (priests, bishops, saints, etc.) in order to properly carry out a moral life. The effect of this insight on moral life is that self-governance becomes focused on obedience and submission to moral superiors as central values. In the dissertation, I draw on Foucault to show that many of the basic social institutions of the West inherit this understanding that people are generally incapable of their own self-governance without expert guidance. To begin to see this, one can look to the powerful need that people feel today to consult experts in order to carry out 'proper' career, family, fashion, financial, health, sexual, and political decisions.

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Chapter 1: Vectors of Transformation and Attack

Michel Foucault was one of the most important figures in twentieth century philosophy and one of the few whose work was important across the disciplines. This is why it is strange that his two final publications, *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*, have received little systematic treatment. This lack can be partially explained by the misunderstandings and difficulties caused by Foucault's divergence from other commonly held positions as well the fact that much of his work commenting on and expanding these two texts is unpublished and untranslated.

This text addresses this gap in the scholarship and develops the import of Foucault's last two works to answer long standing questions surrounding Foucault and post-structuralism generally. In this text, I aim to answer two related questions that have surrounded Foucault's thought in contemporary debate. The first question concerns the interrelation of Foucault's ideas. Namely, what is the relevance of Foucault's last two books and his other work from the eighties on antiquity to his analyses of contemporary forms of power and knowledge in the seventies?

I frame this question with the understanding that it is clear that Foucault intended his work from the eighties on the ancients to have some contemporary relevance. We can see this from the way that his work on the ancients develops out of his desire to answer questions about the present:

> In any case, it seemed to me that one could not very well analyze the formation and
> development of the experience of sexuality from the eighteenth century onward, without

doing a historical and critical study dealing with desire and the desiring subject. In other words, without undertaking a "genealogy."[1]

This quote is from Foucault's next major publication following *The History of Sexuality I* (1976)*, The Use of Pleasure* (1984), in which he is explaining to his readers why his last book found him in the analysis of present but the current book finds him working in the Classical age of Greece. We can see from this quote that his motivation to turn to the analysis of antiquity was motivated by the desire to give a genealogy of a modern problem (the desiring subject).

In an interview done at the time of the publication of *The Use of Pleasures,* Foucault acknowledges that it is his general procedure to study historical topics in order to shed light on some modern question:

I start with a problem as if it were posed in contemporary terms and try to make a genealogy of it. A genealogy means that I conduct the analysis beginning with a current question.[2]

In the quote, he makes it clear that his work on antiquity was motivated by questions about the present. But it is far less clear what questions about the present Foucault's genealogies of the ancients were to address and what the answers were.

When Foucault spoke specifically about the aims of his final books, as in the quote from *The Use of Pleasure*, he often tended to relate the aims of these texts back to questions about sexuality. For instance, he describes the project that took him to antiquity as an investigation of "how the experience of sexuality as desire had been

[1] Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) 5.

[2] Michel Foucault, "Concern for Truth," trans. John Johnston, Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (Semiotext(e): New York, 1996) 460.

constituted for the subject himself."[3] This should not be surprising given that the final

two books were volumes two and three in a history of sexuality. However, two things in

particular make me believe that his work on the ancients had wider relevance than

sexuality.

First, we can find evidence of this wider relevance beyond sexuality in an

interview:

> Q: Isn't it basically a question of a new genealogy of morals?
> MF: If not for the solemnity of the title and the imposing mark Nietzsche left on it, I would say yes.[4]

In this quote, Foucault gives a radically wider view of the implications of his work on

antiquity: he claims it is a work on morality (as self-government) generally, not just about

the forms of self-government that individuals exercised in relationship to sexuality.

Second, Foucault's studies of sexuality were not carried out because sex was interesting

in itself; Foucault could not be clearer on this point as he offers us his conclusion that

"sex is boring."[5] Instead, Foucault studies sex and sexuality because it lies at the

intersection of the studies of bio-power and disciplinary power he undertook in the

seventies:

> I think that sexuality was important for a whole host of reasons, and for these reasons in particular. On the one hand, sexuality, being an eminently corporeal mode of behavior, is a matter for individualizing disciplinary controls…But because it also has procreative effects, sexuality is also inscribed, takes effect, in broad biological processes that concern not the bodies of individuals but the element, the multiple unity of the population.[6]

[3] Michel Foucault, "An Aesthetics of Existence," trans. Alessandro Fontana, Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (Semiotext(e): New York, 1996) 450.

[4] Foucault, Aesthetics of Existence, 451.

[5] Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of a Work in Progress," Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983) 229.

[6] Michel Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003) 251.

This quote states that Foucault undertook the study of sexuality as part of a larger study on contemporary power and knowledge relations and serves to clarify the issues surrounding the relevance of his final works. In this quote, Foucault develops his interests in a general study of morality and sexuality as not being mutually exclusive enterprises; sexuality is an important facet of the broader field of moral and political controls.

I wish to develop the import of Foucault's final works in relation to these lines of questioning because it is only in this context that many of the insights of his final work can be seen. Foucault's final two works proposed to return to antiquity in order to develop a genealogy of morality that would allow him to reconceptualize his previous work through situating it in this new genealogy of morality. Unfortunately, Foucault died before that genealogy could be completed and the planned works on medieval Christianity, designed to connect his work on antiquity with his work on the present, were completed, leaving the status and relevance of his work unclear.

Interestingly, this project to reconceptualize Foucault's work on contemporary society makes my relation to Foucault quite similar to the relationship he viewed himself as having with Nietzsche:

> I am simply a Nietzschean, and I try as far as possible, on a certain number of issues, to see with the help of Nietzsche's texts—but also with anti-Nietzschean theses (which are nevertheless Nietzschean!)—what can be done in this or that domain. I attempt nothing else, but I try to do that well.[7]

My relationship mirrors Foucault's Nietzschean/anti-Nietzschean stance in that on one hand, my theses are Foucaultian insofar as they are drawn from his later work.

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[7] Michel Foucault, "The Return of Morality," trans. John Johnston, <u>Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984</u>, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (Semiotext(e): New York, 1996) 471.

Moreover, I aim to employ the Foucaultian theses in a way roughly consistent with the intention he had of making their relevance to the contemporary moral and political situation felt. On the other hand, my theses are anti-Foucaultian in at least two important ways. First, they are anti-Foucaultian in that Foucault himself had a hard time 'staying put;' his interests and work changed quite frequently and by carrying out his work in the fashion I do, it can be argued that I am working in a way that was contrary to his habits. For, or so the argument would go, Foucault would never have done what he had intended to do at his death in 1984; he would have changed his mind and undertaken other studies. This can be argued from his abandonment of his researches into bio-power, perhaps his most important work, before releasing a major manuscript on the topic. It can also be drawn from the complete transformation of the history of sexuality series between volumes one and two and his revelation that it was in large part boredom that motivated the change:

> I planned my work in advance, telling myself that now the time had come when I could write them without difficulty simply by spinning out what was in my head, confirming what was there with the work of empirical research. But I almost died of boredom writing these books; they were too much like their precedents.[8]

The second, and more serious way, that my theses are anti-Foucaultian results from the way that my will take up and transformation of his earlier texts in light of the priorities produced in the later works. Although it would be premature at this point to detail the exact nature of these transformations (I will discuss them in detail later), this work will develop in some tension with the goals and methods of some of Foucault's earlier works, most notably *Discipline and Punish.*

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[8] Foucault, <u>Aesthetics of Existence</u>, 450.

The second question I wish to pursue through this study builds off of the answer I will give to the first question; namely, given that certain genealogical lineages can be developed between Foucault's studies of ancient morality and his earlier work on contemporary domination, what basis do these lineages give for an attack on and transformation of modern domination? Put otherwise, what possibilities does the work from the final years of Foucault's life offer to attack contemporary domination and to develop new and less dominating power and knowledge relations? The answer to this question will serve two primary purposes.

First, it will answer those critics of Foucault that insist that because he offers no normative basis for the transformation of social relations that resultantly he offers no basis for transformation at all. These thinkers (Nancy Hartsock, Jürgen Habermas, Michael Walzer, Steven Lukes, Charles Taylor, Fredric Jameson, Clifford Geertz, Nancy Fraser, etc.) understand that transformation must have a normative basis. In answering this second question, I will take up this assumption and show why, not only does one not need a normative basis for social transformation, but that for the transformation of the power relations Foucault describes not only does one not need a normative philosophy, one *would not want* a normative philosophy of transformation.

Second, developing a possible form of attack and transformation out of his work on ancient morality will provide another resource for the many thinkers in the wide variety of fields that already use elements of Foucault to develop strategies of attack and transformation. I believe that Foucault's later work, though unfinished and therefore somewhat difficult and laborious to work with, offers the greatest potential of any of Foucault's work for fostering transformative vectors of analysis. It is my hope that by

tracking the possibilities for transformation that emerge out of his later work (as opposed to his work from the seventies that is usually drawn on for forms of attack and transformation), I will be offering a relatively under explored and powerful set of ideas and tools.

In undertaking this study, I draw on two apparently disparate areas of Foucault's work; his work on moralities of self-care in antiquity and his genealogies of contemporary power and knowledge relations. Although these two areas of his study appear to be disparate temporally, about 1300 years separate them, and seem divergent in regards to their themes, I find that ancient moralities of self-care and modern relations of domination both share a strong common relation to the Christian pastoral and monastery. The pastoral and monastery are important points of interchange between antiquity and the present that will have to be explored in order to develop in specific detail the lineages that connect ancient morality to modern domination.

Although the monastery and pastoral form an important part of the lineage that would connect his last work on antiquity to the present, Foucault does not explore them in depth in any of his major publications.[9] However, in his lecture course *Sécurité, Territoire, Population* Foucault does explore the relation of the pastoral and the monastery to bio-relations of security and gives us decent indication on what his thoughts were concerning these medieval entities. I will use this lecture course, which is widely unused in English speaking countries, due to the fact it has only recently been published

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[9] Although an unpublished volume for the history of sexuality on Christianity purportedly exists, there is no plan yet to make the manuscript available at a library, let alone publish it.

and has not yet been translated from the French, to develop the connection between

antiquity and the present.

Method

In the previous section I discussed what questions I would pursue and what

elements of Foucault's thought that it would involve. To further detail this project, it will

now be necessary to specify the grid of analysis that will animate this study and bring

Foucault's texts together in such a way as to answer these questions. The grid of analysis

I deploy is drawn from Foucault, although it was not necessary, even given that I am

working on his texts, to use a Foucaultian grid of analysis. But in order to explain why I

chose this grid, it will first be necessary to detail the grid itself.

Foucault applies a grid of analysis to morality that divides the study into two

primary parts: a moral code, and an ethics.[10]   What is captured by the 'moral code' is

almost self explanatory; it is the set of rules, dictates, and principles that action must be

referred to in order to be moral.   For example, the Ten Commandments are perhaps the

most well known moral code in the west. Typically, the code is the privileged element of

analysis in moral philosophy; this can be seen in both Kantian and utilitarian moralities in

their focus on developing the laws that should guide moral action.

The second primary element of Foucault's grid for the analysis of morality is the

element that he, contra recent moral traditions, focuses on and emphasizes. This element

of emphasis is ethics, which he defines as referring "to the real behavior of individuals in

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[10] Michel Foucault, <u>The History of Sexuality Volume II: The Use of Pleasure</u>, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) 25-26.

relation to the rules and values that are recommended to them."[11] This emphasis is

important and revealing of the focus of this grid of analysis. For Foucault, the moral

code is not something that suggests unambiguously what it means, no matter what level

of detail it is transcribed in. Codes can always be understood in different ways; for

instance, the Christian commandment against killing has not always, or even typically,

been construed to include killing in war—although sometimes it has been.   In further

demonstration of this point, Foucault shows that it has been the case that even moralities

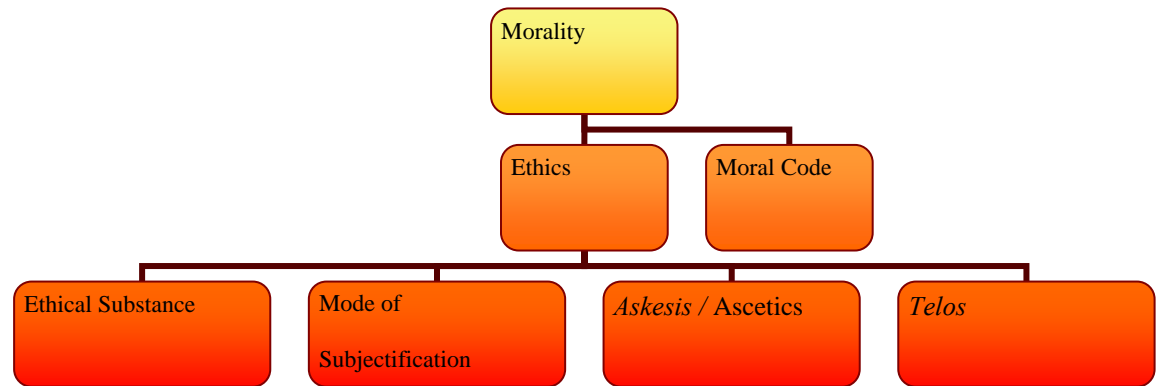with similar codes have been practiced in quite different fashions:

> The code elements [of Roman self-care and Christianity] that concern the economy of
> pleasures, conjugal fidelity, and relations between men may well remain analogous, but
> they will derive from a profoundly altered ethics and from a different way of constituting
> oneself as the ethical subject of one's sexual behavior.[12]

In other words, his grid for the analysis of morality prioritizes self-formation and creation

as a terribly important part of defining the moral code in its actual multiplicity of

functions.

As a result of the importance Foucault grants ethics, his moral analyzer breaks

ethics down into four further subsets in order to more specifically analyze the contents of

morality. These subsets of ethics are the ethical substance, the mode of subjectification,

askesis (translated as ascetics), and *telos*. The figure below describes graphically how

morality is comprised of two primary parts and the four further parts ethics is broken

down into.

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[11] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 25.

[12] Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality Volume III: The Care of the Self, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1988) 25-26.

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I will use these four subsets of ethics to draw many distinctions and conclusions so it will be necessary to further describe them here.

1. Foucault writes that the ethical substance describes "the way in which the individual has to constitute this or that part of himself as the prime material of his moral conduct."[13] When a determination is made about the ethical substance, the character of what is to be rendered moral (the individual or even a community) is clarified. What the individual or community consists of in its character, in the stuff that it has to work with in order to render itself moral is similar to what we might commonly refer to as 'moral fiber.' For instance, the pagan problem with *aphrodisia* (sexuality) concerned a problem with a self that, though good, was also prone a loss of rational control. In distinction, Christians have a different (though related) notion of this problem that derives in part from their different deployment of the ethical substance. The Christian ethical substance revolves around the wicked nature of the flesh and the sinful character of the human soul.

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[13] Foucault, <u>Use of Pleasure</u>, 26.

Even though Christians and Romans typically followed similar laws on the *aphrodisia,* they applied them differently partially due to their different understanding of their ethical substance.

2. The mode of subjectification describes the "way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obliged to put it into practice."[14] This ethical relation has to do with the character of those relations that bind, or make one subject to a morality. The guiding question of the mode subjectification could be, given that the law is X and my substance is Y, how am I subject to the code? How does this constitute my relationality to the code? For instance, one might be subject to God's law because one is prone to a kind of sin and self-deception that lead one away from the good. Or one might be subject to a very similarly phrased code because, as one who wants to lead in the *polis*, one needs to show the self-mastery that strictly obeying an austere law demonstrates. The analysis of the mode of subjection seeks to determine how individuals constitute their obligation to the moral code and morality itself.

3. A third part of ethics is that of ethical work or *askesis* (ascetics[15]), i.e. the "work that one performs on oneself, not only in order to bring one's conduct into compliance with a given rule, but to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one's behavior."[16] *Askesis* is that set of practices (for instance, praying, fasting, exercising, writing, meditating, etc.) that allow the individual or the group to transform

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[14] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 27.

[15] Notice that 'ascetics' in my usage does not have its typical connotations of self-sacrifice and self-renunciation. Here I am just using the term ascetics in the way that Foucault does, to translate the Greek word *askesis*.

[16] Foucault, Care of the Self, 27.

and train themselves into moral compliance. This form of moral work is different than the work that one does in consciously deliberating over and thinking through possible actions and forms of comportment. Ascetics is a form of work that one does in order to alter one who one is so that one's relations to oneself and the world are altered. This ethical work does have an effect on deliberation and moral decision making in that it can alter how one reasons, what possibilities one can conceive of, and which of those options seem valid or invalid. In short, ascetics describes the set of practices whereby individuals transform themselves into something different.

4. The *telos* is the fourth and final subdivision of ethics by Foucault. The importance of *telos* is that "an action is not only moral in itself, in its singularity; it is also moral in its circumstantial integration and by virtue of the place it occupies in a pattern of conduct."[17] This statement describes the importance of every moral action in relation to an overall aim for moral conduct. For, the individual or group has not only to work to make an action moral in reference to the action in its singularity but also in regards to its overall moral end. For instance, Alcibiades, as he appears in the dialogue *Alcibiades*, is working to master himself in order to become the leader of the city. For Alcibiades, undertaking an action is not just a question of constituting an action that is acceptable under the moral code, but it is a question of performing the action that will take him farthest towards power. Ultimately, *telos* describes not only the end of a morality (which it is typically taken to mean) but also the way that the individual takes up that end and practices a life to achieve it.

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[17] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 28.

While it was not necessary to use Foucault's grid of interpretation for morality, I do so for five reasons.

First, his deployment of morality contains a different emphasis than many conceptions of morality. In this grid for the interpretation of morality, he emphasizes the ethical practices of morality. He primarily focuses on how the code is taken up and practiced by the individuals that adopt it and not what the moral code allows or forbids. This is different than 'applied ethics' because applied ethics (e.g. business ethics and health care ethics, etc.) typically seeks to develop a moral code appropriate to particular 'applied' situations. For instance, in perhaps *the* textbook for business ethics, *Ethical Theory and Business* by Beauchamp and Bowie, they stage the text as a debate between competing moral codes in order to foster debate among the readers about which moral code is the best code for particular business situations.[18] Foucault's focus on ethical practice is almost entirely different than this.

Foucault's focus on ethical practice highlights the work of *askesis,* of self-transformation, that is necessary in any given morality. This transformation does not primarily have to do with selecting which moral code is right for the oneself; it is instead a concentration on how one must alter oneself to properly embody the ethical substance, subject oneself to the moral code, and alter one's life so that it aims at the *telos* of the morality in conformity with the moral code. This is not to say that the code is unanalyzed or not given a place in his analyzer of morality; the grid does give it a space for analysis and he does spend time examining Greek, Roman, and Christian moral codes. However,

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[18] Ethical Theory and Business, ed. Tom L. Beauchamp and Norman E Bowie, 7th ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2004).

his deployment of morality focuses primarily on ethics and how individuals constitute themselves as moral beings through practices of self-formation and transformation.

This conception of morality is important for this project because it will allow me to highlight and contrast those different relations wherein individuals are constituted according to different rules. Of particular importance to me is the way that disciplinary and bio-power borrow strongly from the monasteries' and pastoral's ethical practices for the constitution of individuals and populations, even if they do not always adopt their moral code. In addition, the formation of contemporary practices and discourses of critical transformation will almost necessarily have to differ in terms of practices of subjectivization (subject creation) from disciplinary and bio-power; Foucault's grid for the analysis of morality gives the place and structure for such an analysis.

Second, I deploy this grid for the analysis of morality rather than a grid for political analysis drawn from some other philosophy (Liberalism, Marxism, Psychoanalysis, etc.) because I believe many political philosophies are ill suited to my task in their conception of the individual. It is particularly important for this project that the individual (self, body, subject, etc.) is not conceived of as being a subject of law. The subject of law is a subject who possesses a nature that, for whatever reasons, is bound, repressed, perverted, restrained, etc., by the laws of the state and/or the ideologies that surround her. Liberalism in its conception of rights and universal reason, Marxism in its humanism, and Psychoanalysis in the repression of the unconscious/Id all put forward subjects as repressed subjects of law. I do not wish to conceive of a subject as having an essence or nature and furthermore, I do not want to conceive of the effect of power and knowledge on the individual to be solely negative (repressive, perverting, restraining,

etc.) Moreover, the discourses surrounding the subject of law tend to espouse the idea that the subject is an ever present element of humanity, while part of what I hope to show with this project is that some powers and knowledges give rise to subjects, while others do not.

Moral philosophy and a moral framework are better suited to deal with the conceptions of the individual I will use because: 1) in many moral frameworks an individual only becomes a subject through non-necessary but recommended processes of ethical work and training, meaning that the subject is not a necessary feature of humanity and has to be formed through training and; 2) some moralities, in their desire to produce a positive form of comportment have moved beyond the negative notion of power that characterizes the repressed subject of law. We can see this in the philosophy of Aquinas for instance, in which one is only human insofar as one performs the ethical work required to fill a specific and singular norm (the perfect form of a humanity)—otherwise one risks being merely an animal. These moralities, and Foucault's conception of morality that he used to analyze them, are able to conceive of a positive notion of power, which does not just say 'no' to individuals and their desires, but tries to inform them according to a model of what they should be (not just what they cannot or should not be). For these reasons, Foucault's analyzer of morality is more appropriate to the study of a normative, positive deployment of power like disciplinary and bio-power than most all 'political' philosophies and, resultantly, provides a better suited vocabulary and framework for the formulation of a mode of critical transformation that seeks to move out of those forms of power.

Third, a moral conception of the individual is deeply attuned to values and valuation in a way that a political conception of the subject of law typically is not. Individuals and populations that seek to form themselves according to different values than those that characterize disciplinary and bio-power will have to do more than look to free their essence; they will have the hard tasks of ridding themselves of the 'natures' that have been trained into them and working to reshape themselves, according to different values. Foucault's moral framework is deeply attuned to the questions of value and value creation due to its focus on ethical work and is quite useful in serving to analyze relations of valuation today and to open possibilities for a tomorrow guided by different values.

Fourth, although it is possible for an attack on contemporary domination to take many forms, most counterattacks will likely have to engage in processes of critical self-reflection if they are to be effective. Disciplinary and bio-power are terribly effective in training individuals until their nature is the nature is that aimed at in the exercises. Without critical reflection and just acting on their own 'natural' desires, bodies and populations will be all too likely just to act out those desires and actions that were trained into them by those very powers that they are seeking to resist. A discourse on disciplinary and bio-power produced through this grid will give bodies and populations tools which they can use to critically reflect on their strategies of counterattack and produce new behaviors outside of the domination of normalizing powers through identifying the values and ascetics of those forms of power.

Finally, another benefit of this grid of analysis is that it examines what forms of complicity are required by individuals in order to sustain those forms of moral power and knowledge that they inhabit. In looking to see what forms of ethical work individuals are

required to perform in order to sustain particular moralities, we will not only explicitly

reveal what is demanded of individuals by particular moralities but what those moralities

require in order to continue. Through mapping these required forms of ethical work we

will therefore not only be seeing what effect particular moralities have on individuals, we

will also be detailing, point by point, those relations that the individual could attack in

order to transform the forms of power and knowledge that they are embedded in. In

short, this grid of analysis suits perfectly the two aims of this paper; to study what

insights Foucault's later work can shed on his earlier analyses of present domination and

to produce one form of critical transformation that can answer to critics claims and offer

a contribution to the work of theorists of change.

Overview and Conclusion

Before I move into the second chapter and the project that I have defined here, I

would like to give a brief overview of it. I do this in order that the reader will better be

able to understand the significance of the individual chapters in regards to the *telos* of this

text.

The second chapter, *Aesthetic Pleasures*, considers the work of Foucault in *The

Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self* on Greek and Roman morality over the six

hundred year period from 400 B.C.E. to 200 C.E. In the third chapter, *Discipline in

God's Army,* I develop the relation of Foucault's work on ancient moralities to his work

on the monastery. As a result of having written his work on the monastery before his

work on ancient morality, I will have to modify somewhat his earlier insights on the

monastery in light of his later work and I will have to reshape them using the grid of analysis I laid out in this chapter.

In the fourth chapter, *Disciplines Reborn*, I explore disciplinary power as part of a lineage that extends from the monastery to ancient morality. This chapter reveals that disciplinary relations are influenced by a system of monastic government that explicitly holds that humans are not capable of the proper determination of the good and must renounce their ability to self-govern. The monks renounced their self-government and turned to God for his guidance, who provided them with a series of monastic technologies that pinned them one against the other in order to achieve a comportment and being that none of them are naturally capable of alone. The result is that when the disciplines are born from the monastery they inherit, develop, and transform techniques that are aimed to disempower the role of the individual in the development of their own self-governance. Disciplinary techniques not only remove the individual from a creative or decisive role in their own becoming (ethics), they place the individual bodies into relations in which many of the most important possibilities regarding their formation as subjects have been decided in advance by a series of experts. The effect of these disciplinary relations is that they dominate the formation of bodies and result in normalization.

The fifth chapter, *Pastoral Swarming*, retreats backwards in time to discuss Foucault's work on the Christian pastoral. As was true for the monastery, some of Foucault's insights on the pastoral will need to be revised in terms of his later work and, moreover, it will need to be reformed in order to speak to the concerns of the moral

analyzer I am using. This analysis of the pastoral will allow us to connect the lineage of ancient morality, through its influence on the pastoral, to bio-power.

The sixth chapter, *The Morality of Life*, focuses on bio-power and its relation to both to the pastoral and disciplinary power. In this chapter, I aim to explore the influences of the pastoral and the colonization of the disciplines on bio-power. The pastoral aimed to care for Christian souls by undertaking a series of measures and services that could influence and guide Christian souls towards good conduct and salvation. Like the monastery, the pastoral was underwritten by the conviction that humans are fallen and naturally predisposed to evil. As a result, the pastoral was aimed as a corrective and as a resource to guide souls towards the proper forms of behavior through ministering, confession, etc. However, the methods the pastoral deployed for shepherding its flock to salvation were quite different than those employed by the monastery. Bio-power adopts, modifies, and greatly enhances the efficacy of these measures and, like the pastoral, disempowers processes of self-government. More specifically, bio-power operates on the idea that the population will not properly constitute its own species-life without proper conditioning, surveillance, and guidance. To this end, bio-power employs its own measures and the might of the disciplines to regularize the population. The result is that the population, like the disciplinary body, is normalized and dominated in terms of its own becoming.

The seventh chapter, *A Foucaultian Afterlife,* develops one possible morality with the resources to attack and critically transform contemporary domination. This chapter will draw on all of the previous six chapters as a guide in order to develop this possible form of attack and critical transformation. I will use Foucault's grid for the analysis of

morality to detail how a possible morality may constitute itself today in order to produce

a transformation in the domination of today in order to answer critics and develop tools

for theorists of critical change.

Chapter 2: Aesthetic Pleasures

My goal in this chapter is to redeploy Foucault's genealogies of self-care in ancient Greece and Rome around two valences. The first valence traces the role that lineages of ancient Greco-Roman self-care play in the development of domination in the west today. In particular, I want to draw on Foucault's work in *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the* Self to establish lineages of self-care that I will relate to the Christian pastoral and monastery as well as to disciplinary and bio-relations. The second valence is concerned with what will be useful from antiquity in modifying and inspiring contemporary attacks and transformations of the dominations revealed by the first valence. I believe that contemporary forms of critical transformation can benefit from a knowledge of ethical antiquity because developing alternatives to normalization will likely require developing robust practices of non-normative self-formation—which the moralities of antiquity were especially skilled at. Furthermore, counterattacks to domination and normalization, like the ethics of antiquity, will likely not derive their sense of subjection to morality from homogenous conformity to laws and norms but from a self-relation that holds the individual's freedom and difference in high esteem.

This chapter will require less critical and creative restructuring of Foucault's insights than the rest of the chapters because the grid of analysis that I am employing and that I described last chapter is the one that Foucault used in his own analyses of antiquity. In this chapter, I take my self mainly to be summarizing Foucault's analysis of antiquity in *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self* with a few notable differences. First, I

will be drawing conclusions from these texts that Foucault himself did not explicitly

make but that I believe were strongly implied in the text. Even in this I do not consider

myself to be strongly departing from Foucault but making explicit that which was

implicit. Second, I will be selectively presenting ideas from his texts, guided by what

will be useful to me in my later analyses of the monastery, the pastoral, disciplines, and

bio-relations. In other words, I am in no way attempting to lay out ancient culture or

ancient morality programmatically; I am merely examining some elements in Foucault's

texts relevant to contemporary power relations and to the critical formation of alternative

networks of power and knowledge. In sum, this chapter will mainly be focused on

selectively summarizing and interpreting Foucault's texts, whereas the rest of the

chapters will be geared towards the reappraisal of Foucault's insights based on the grid of

analysis and insights developed here.

   Schematically, this chapter will have two parts. The first part looks at

Foucault's work on Greek morality, primarily sourced from *The Use of Pleasure* and the

second part looks to his work on Roman morality, focusing on *The Care of the Self.*

I. Self-Mastery and the Use of Pleasure in the Greeks of Antiquity

  This section begins with a consideration of Foucault's account of self-care among

the Greeks. This discussion will be explicitly structured by the five points of the moral

grid I laid out earlier: the moral code, the ethical substance, the mode of subjection, the

ascetics, and the *telos.*

1. *Moral Code:* For the most part, Foucault argues that what was forbidden and allowed by the moral codes of self care in Greece remains remarkably stable through both the Imperial era and in the early pastoral. In other words, the moral codes of the Greeks, Romans, and pre-13th century Christians appear to allow and prohibit the same actions:

> Their [the Greek, Roman, and Christian codes'] stability is also rather remarkable; the notable proliferation of codifications (concerning permitted or forbidden places, partners, and acts) occurred rather late in Christianity.[19]

Even when the Christian moral code begins to multiply in the 13th century as the result of the changing landscape of confession, contrition, forgiveness, and other forces it is not so much a refusal of the ancient code as it is its alteration and multiplication—so one could argue that the moral code of the west remains fairly stable from the 4th century B.C.E. to at least the 13th century and perhaps beyond.

From this perspective, in which the code is relatively unchanging for about 1800 years, what is interesting to note about the moral code was the way in which it was ethically practiced because the changes in code cannot explain the forms that these different moralities took up. As a result, in this section on the moral code I will focus on the ethical regard that the Greeks gave their moral code in practices of self care instead of focusing on the actual laws themselves.

Foucault argues that the Greeks regarded their moral code as defining loose principles of action. Following the moral code was less about following the dictates of the law in some standard way and more about drawing from the wisdom of the code to craft a unique form of conduct that was free and represented oneself honorably. In other words, Foucault understands the Greeks to relate to the moral code, not as defining a

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[19] Foucault, <u>Use of Pleasure</u>, 32.

normal or homogenous way of life for the individual (as people tend to today), but rather

as providing broad guiding principles through which the individual would have to craft

their own conduct:

> In the use of pleasures, while it was necessary to respect the laws and customs of the land to keep from offending the gods, and to heed the will of nature, the morals to which one conformed were far removed from anything that might form a clearly defined code. It was much more a question of a variable adjustment in which one had to take different factors into account: the element of want and natural necessity; that of opportuneness, which was temporal and circumstantial; that of the status of the individual himself.[20]

Foucault understands the moral code in Greek morality to be a matter of individual

stylization; for the individual to decide how, when, and where the law was to apply.

Greek morality may have had certain norms, Foucault identifies that conduct was

required that did not offend the Gods and also honored customs, but these norms did not

add up to normalization in that these norms still left open a broad range of behaviors that

it was the individual's duty to stylize:

> …this is a way of life whose moral value did not depend on either one's being in conformity with a code of behavior, or an effort of purification, but on certain formal principles in the use of pleasures, in the way one distributed them, in the limits one observed, in the hierarchy one respected.[21]

According to Foucault, the individual drew upon the moral code as providing certain

principles and it was up to the individual's moral work to selectively 'distribute' those

laws in one's life. The individual was left to emphasize certain laws more strongly than

others, to place stronger limits on oneself in certain areas of life than in others. This

reflected a kind of variability in the hierarchy that "one respected" and reflected how one

could choose to interpret and apply certain facets of the code above other facets.

However, to say more about these code elements than that they were observed as

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[20] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 54.
[21] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 89.

principles that needed to be differentially interpreted and applied will require us to move into a discussion of the ethics. These ethics will reveal how the Greeks enacted their stylizing and aesthetic relationship with the law.

2. *Ethical Substance:* Ethical substance refers to that part of the self that is subject to ethical work in any morality. This 'substance' varies greatly from morality to morality and could, for example, be a soul, instincts, an ego, a habitus, a mind, etc. The ethical substance defines what it is that the individual has to work with and transform in order to produce moral conduct. In relation to the code, a description of the ethical substance will define what it is that the code is to apply to so that greater specificity can be given about how morality was practiced in regards to the code.

The ethical substance of the Greek moralities of self-care was charted by Foucault in reference to the way that it was problematized along two major axes: the axes of excess and of activity/passivity. In order to define what composed the ethical substance of Greek self care, I will first discuss the Problematization of the ethical substance in terms of excess and then of activity/passivity.

Excess constituted an axis around which the ethical substance was problematized by the Greeks because they felt themselves to be prone to a loss of rational self-mastery when confronted by excessive desires, acts, and pleasures. Foucault states that "The ethical question raised was not: which desires? which acts? which pleasures? but rather: with what force is one transported "by the pleasures and desires"?"[22] In other words,

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[22] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 43.

there was a fear that the ethical substance was prone to be transported by the pleasures and desires to commit acts that were unreasonable or that were so compulsive that they could not be controlled as they should. For instance, a strong pleasure could lead to a powerful desire to experience that pleasure again. Such a strong desire for pleasure could then *lead* the individual (against the better advice of their reason) to the act that would provide that pleasure again. The individual, having experienced the pleasure again, would just begin again to desire to do the act that would bring the pleasure, restarting the cycle. For the Greeks, Foucault argues that it was less important which desires, acts, or pleasures were experienced than the control that the individual exerted over the force with which they were "transported" by them.

This excess could enslave one if it took away from the individual's ability to control their actions. An irrational and uncontrollable desire/act/pleasure cycle could bind the individual to its repetition and reduce the individual to a powerless slave. As a result, the moderation (*sōphrosynē*) of the desire, act, pleasure cycle was an important goal and was characterized as a kind of freedom, a freedom from the slavery of the excessive desires and pleasures of the ethical substance.[23] Further, it was more than just a freedom from enslavement; it was a positive, active freedom that one exercised over oneself as the rational master of one's soul.

Second, the distinction between freedom and slavery played out in self care in another way. Greek society was a slave society in which wealth, power, prestige, and honor were dependent on the individual's being free; for, if an individual was enslaved,

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[23] Foucault, <u>Use of Pleasure</u>, 78.

the individual would likely be poor, dominated, and without fame. Thus, it was of utmost

importance to be free, for material gain, happiness, and one's future in posterity all

flowed from that freedom. Foucault, in speaking on sexuality, shows that freedom and

slavery was a category in Greek morality that was not only tied to the literal social

standing of the individual as a slave or as a freeman but also had much to do with the

individual's status as active or passive in particular relationships:

> The consequence of this was that on the one hand the "active" and dominant role was
> always assigned positive values, but on the other hand it was necessary to attribute to one
> of the [sexual] partners in the sexual act the passive, dominated and inferior position.[24]

In terms of sexuality, the active partner was the penetrating partner while the partner

penetrated was cast as the passive object of pleasure. According to the analysis Foucault

makes, it is the penetrating, active partner whose role was given the most positive value.

The 'slave' or slavish one in this situation is the passive, receptive partner because, as a

passive object, the individual is like a slave in that they were being used to fulfill

another's wishes and pleasures. What is key about this passive partner is the way that

they were assumed to have subordinated their own rational, commanding part of the soul

to the command of another's soul as slaves do. The active, penetrating role was thought

to command the situation in a way commensurate with their status as a free and powerful

male.

In sexuality as well as without, one had to be concerned that one had not

abdicated one's role commanding oneself and that one had not become enslaved to

another or one's desires and pleasures. Socrates and Alcibiades, for instance, conclude

that excellence, as a particular way of knowing, is required for someone who is free.

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[24] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 220.

Such a form of knowing is required because without that form of knowing one is

compelled by their ignorance to make bad choices in way similar to slaves that are

compelled to make choices by their masters:

> Socrates: Then badness is appropriate for a slave.
> Alcibiades: It appears so.
> Socrates: And excellence appropriate for one who is free.
> Alcibiades: Yes.
> Socrates: Mustn't one, my companion, flee slavishness?
> Alcibiades: Most of all, Socrates.[25]

This concern with activity and passivity that is linked to freedom and slavery is a broad

moral concern that crosses issues and animates Greek morality.

As a result, this struggle for mastery between moderation/activity/freedom and

excess/passivity/slavery, the ethical substance was characterized by an agonistic

grappling with itself to order to maintain proper control and command. Although the

schemas of self were different in different thinkers, for instance the goal was to establish

the right order between vegetative, locomotive, and rational parts of the soul for Aristotle

and between the desirous, spirited, and rational parts of the soul for Plato (at least in the

Republic), the quest was still to maintain mastery over one's soul through developing the

proper hierarchy in the soul through an agonistic struggle of the parts.[26]

3. The forms of subjectification: The Greeks took up self-care "as a principle of

stylization of conduct for those who wished to give their existence the most graceful and

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[25] Plato, Alcibiades, trans. David M. Johnson (Focus: Newburyport, 2003) 135c.

[26] I draw these three parts of the soul from Plato's *Republic*, one could argue that in other dialogues the self appears differently divided in Plato, for instance in the *Phaedo*. However it still seems to me that it holds that proper use of the self is still achieved through an agonistic process of coming to mastery oneself no matter which of these dialogue one examines.

accomplished form possible."[27] In other words, this morality was for those free, wealthy,

powerful, young, and male citizens that wanted to pursue an exceptional life and high

position. It was not a call open to all people or even to all privileged males; it was a call

for those few who were well born *and* wished to pursue the highest levels of excellence

in their own lives. Those who fit the criteria of this call chose the morality of self care

and self-mastery in order develop a domination over their tendencies to slavishness and

to ensure their freedom to act rationally and in a manner free from compulsion by desires,

acts, or pleasures.

The few who successfully answered the call to master themselves showed this

success by living forms of life that others did not have the strength, clarity, and/or

patience to pursue. In other words, by living forms of life that others were too enslaved

to their bad habits and desires to be able to accomplish. These motivated individuals took

up the task of mastering themselves and freeing themselves from slavery by crafting their

own unique valuation and practice of the moral code. Those who successfully cared for

themselves created and refined themselves like a fine sculpture—shaping, adding, and

removing in order to give their lives a singular and remarkable form of beauty:

> Now, the requirement of austerity [of ridding oneself of excessive desires, acts, and
> pleasures] that was implied by the constitution of this self-disciplined subject was not
> present in the form of a universal law, which each and every individual would have to
> obey, but rather as a principle of stylization of conduct for those who wished to give their
> existence the most graceful and accomplished form possible.[28]

The elite males who undertook this stylization of the self did so not only to gain the

reward of the true and complete freedom in the soul that resulted from self-mastery, they

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[27] Foucault, <u>Use of Pleasure</u>, 250-251.

[28] Foucault, <u>Use of Pleasure</u>, 250-251.

also subjected themselves to this morality in order to gain access to social benefits as well.

Foucault argues that the self-mastery that the individual demonstrated in taking control over and stylizing themselves was to qualify him for other positions of control as well, particularly in politics and in the household. For, stylization demonstrated a control over the circulation of the desires and pleasures in the soul that qualified the individual to take up tasks that would give rise to even stronger desires and pleasures. Foucault sites a text by Isocrates on the relation of power and self-mastery to illustrate this point:

> Thus, the prince's moderation, tested in the most hazardous of situations, and ensured by the continuous exercise of reason, serves as the basis of a sort of compact between the ruler and the ruled: the latter can obey him, seeing that he is that master of himself. One can demand the subjects' obedience, since it is warranted by the prince's virtue. The prince is indeed capable of moderating power the power he exercises over others by means of the mastery he establishes over himself.[29]

Foucault relates here that the exercise of power is legitimated in Greek society through its rational and controlled exercise by a moderate and self-mastered individual. The purpose of this self-mastery can be summarized in two primary points: 1) to free themselves from slavery and command themselves as free men in order to craft a beautiful existence and 2) to demonstrate the self-control required to command a household and/or other men in the city. Resultantly, the mode of subjection was that of a choice that certain qualified individuals could make in order to undergo a process of stylized self-mastery that, if successful, would result in beauty, fame, power, and fortune.

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[29] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 174.

     4. Ascetics: The aspect of this morality that I would now like to turn to are the exercises through which the Greeks practiced their self-care. Foucault calls these exercises ascetics (*askesis)* which he understands in its general sense as a transformational practice.[30] Typically ascetics, especially with Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, have come to be associated with Christian practices of self-transformation via self-deprivation (of food, water, sex, warmth, etc.) However, the Christians are not the only practitioners of ascetics and their forms of ascetics do not encompass the totality of possible practices. For instance, the Greeks used wrestling, the gymnasium, lovers, music, and education as ascetic practices.

     In this more general sense of ascetics, Foucault comments that what seemed most central to Greek ascetic practices was the *agon*:

> The metaphor of the match, of athletic competition and battle, did not serve merely to designate the nature of the relationship one had with desires and pleasures, with their force that was always liable to turn seditious or rebellious; it also related to the preparation that enabled one to withstand such a confrontation.[31]

Agonistic practices were chosen for ascetics because of the way in which self-mastery was conceived as a struggle of the self with itself. A parallel was seen between those contests wherein one contests with and overcomes others and ethical work wherein the self attempts to defeat and master its slavish parts with the reasonable commanding part of its soul. Agonistic ascetics could be good training for the kind of determination, strength, and cunning that one would need to establish the proper hierarchy of command within oneself. For instance, wrestling teaches iron will and resistance to suffering and pain, the glory and rewards of victory, and it develops cunning even in moments of

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[30] Foucault, <u>Use of Pleasure</u>, 72-77.
[31] Foucault, <u>Use of Pleasure</u>, 72.

extreme pain and fatigue. These same skills and resources that were used in wrestling could also be used to actively gain control of slavish excesses and passivities within oneself and to subdue and rule others. In this case, agonistic ascetic practices prepared individuals to deal with the battles that they would face in conquering themselves and others. Agonistic exercises were practices for life that would allow the self to develop and create the attributes it would need to succeed in its self-mastery. For instance, a practitioner of self-care in fighting an excessive desire might become weary, tired, and wish to give into the excess and be ruled by it; just as a wrestler may wish to give into a skilled and determined opponent. But the cunning, determination, and the ability to act and think appropriately under extreme stress that the individual developed in wrestling might help that individual carry the day against the excessive desires, acts, and pleasures that he experiences.

As a result of the way that ascetics has come to be almost solely associated with Christian practices today, I would like to draw a few points of clarification and separate Greek ascetics from Christian ascetics. Greek ascetic practices were not practices primarily designed to help one in the fight against evil and temptation. There was nothing inherently evil or bad about most desires, the acts that satisfied them, or the pleasures associated with them for the Greeks. As was pointed out in the last section, it is not a matter of which desires, acts, or pleasure but with the force one is "transported" with them. Noble Greek males experienced many forms of *aphrodisia*, food, luxury, physicality, and other pleasures without feeling that they had done something evil. For the Greeks, what tended to be bad about various pleasurable acts was not that they were pleasurable, but that pleasure brought with it a risk that it could lead to excess or

inappropriate passivity/submission if one had not mastered oneself. In other words,

desires, acts, and pleasures tended not to be immoral in themselves, but the usage and

practice of them often could be. The moral code was therefore taken not to present total

interdiction against most behaviors but to present a warning about which desires, acts,

and pleasures typically could transport the soul with the most dangerous and

uncontrollable kinds of force. Thus, moral failure tended to be a failure of ethics, an

individual's failure to properly master his use of himself, and not a failure to conform to a

singular notion of right and wrong actions. Greek ascetics were particularly important in

this context as practices whereby the self came to learned to control itself so that it could

rule and enjoy pleasures without becoming enslaved by them.

5. *Telos:* The teleology of this morality Foucault describes as "a means of

developing—for the smallest minority of the population, made up of free, adult males—

an aesthetics of existence, the purposeful art of freedom perceived as a power game."[32]

Divining exactly how an "aesthetics of existence" ties together with a "power game" is at

the crux of understanding the *telos* of this morality. First, I would like to discuss what

exactly Foucault meant by an aesthetics of existence and then connect that with an

understanding of morality as a power game.

In calling the Greek care of the self an *aesthetics* of existence, I understand

Foucault to be emphasizing that the Greeks exercised an artist's freedom in producing

their own self-mastery. Greek self care took up life itself, *bios*, as an artistic creation. Of

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[32] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 253.

course there were conventions, laws, and established techniques to this art as there are in most any art or morality. But within these social conventions Greeks were expected to demonstrate their own mastery of the self through the production of a beautiful self who meets the demands of the moral law in a unique way. These Greeks were able to exercise a moral stylization that is quite different than what is had today in a society governed by norms. The Greeks acted on a code that they regarded as principles (not norms) whose application could only be decided by the individual in relation to the peculiarities of his own life and the character of their mastery of the ethical substance.

As a result of this aesthetics of existence, the Greeks did not appear to have a moral subject, if by moral subject one means the constitution of a universal relation to ethics and the moral code based on a universal form of selfhood. One can see this in Christianity, for instance, in which individuals are grouped together as humans, united in their universal falleness and their need to renounce their will and submit to God's unchanging will. For instance, in Augustine and Aquinas (in addition to many other Christian thinkers) there is a universal relation to the moral law based on an understanding of all humanity as fallen and essentially lacking in connection with God— all people must avoid certain actions and act in the same way in regards to them because of their universally like and fallen ethical substance. Foucault writes to this point stating that the Greeks simply did not search for something like a subject:

> I don't think one should reconstitute an experience of the subject where it hasn't been formulated. I'm much closer to things than that. And, since no Greek ever found a definition of the subject, never looked for one, I would simply say that there is no subject. Which doesn't mean that the Greeks didn't strive to define the conditions of an

experience, but it wasn't an experience of the subject; rather it was of the individual, insofar as he sought to constitute himself through self-mastery.[33]

The Greeks did not lack a subject because they failed in their attempts to formulate one, but because their emphasis on stylization did not produce any interest in elaborating a general moral subject. Foucault describes the Greeks as searching for an honorable and beautiful individuality through their moral practices, the last thing they were looking to accomplish was to become like the many, the enslaved, and the forgettable—the *hoi polloi*. Slavishly submitting to a universal moral code in a singularly determined fashion because they all believed themselves to be the same (equally low) did not seem to be in their range of interests; at least in moral practice, the Greeks did not appear to be interested in developing their own submission and totalizing homogeneity but took great pains to develop beauty and self-mastery.

In conclusion, an exceptionally well mastered self was morally qualified to achieve the highest levels of success and fame. Through mastering the self by bringing a unique form and admirable control to the desire-act-pleasure cycle, the individual would not only be free and without slavish excesses and passivities but would have crafted his freedom in a worthwhile and memorable form. The individual who was able to render his mastery complete and beautiful was qualified to lead others in that his freedom from slavish constraints allowed him to act in a clear headed and rational fashion. In addition, not only was this individual unlikely to be abusive or ineffective with his power, he was also likely to wield it to a beautiful and memorable end.

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[33] Foucault, The Return of Morality, 473.

II. Roman practice of the Care of the Self

The Romans inherited the Greek morality of self-mastery, but modified it in ways that would be important to Christianity and western culture generally. For the purposes of drawing a lineage from the morality of self-mastery in antiquity to our practices of domination today, it will be important to chart the transformation of self care from Greece to Rome along five axes that roughly correspond to the fivefold grid of analysis of morality that I am employing. These five inter-related axes are the universalization of the code (moral code), the medicalization of the self (ethical substance), the universalization of the care of the self (mode of subjectification), the growing importance of self-knowledge in the care of the self (ascetics), and the transformation of the ends of self-mastery (*telos)*.

1. *The Universalization of the Code (Moral Code):*

> Now, in these modifications of pre-existing themes one can see the development of an art of existence dominated by self-preoccupation. This art of the self no longer focuses so much on the excesses that one can indulge in and that need to be mastered in order to exercise one's domination over others. It gives increasing emphasis to the frailty of the individual faced with the manifold ills that sexuality can give rise to. It also underscores the need to subject that activity to a universal form by which one is bound, a form grounded in both nature and reason, valid for all human beings.[34]

Here Foucault states that the moral codes of the different forms of Roman self-care (the Epicureans, Stoics, Cynics, etc.) were taken to be much more universally applicable than the moral codes of Greek self-care. The growing universal applicability of the Roman moral codes were deeply tied to the medicalization of the ethical substance that I will be discussing in the next section. To some degree it is necessary to talk about these two

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[34] Foucault, Care of the Self, 238.

elements of morality together to understand them well; for the time being (I will discuss

this more thoroughly in the next section), suffice to say that the Roman practitioners of

self-care generally found themselves to be more frail, sick, and susceptible to moral

failure than did the Greeks, and their lives were more thoroughly penetrated by medical

discourse and worries attempting to address their increased frailty and weakness.

The connection between the increased frailty of the individual and the tendency to

phrase codes as universal recommendations begins with the Roman sense that most all

individuals were plagued by the same common faults and physical weaknesses. With the

Romans, certain codes that would have made no sense to apply universally in Greece

(because many individuals were too healthy to require them) came to have universal

application and necessity in Rome. Foucault's Romans developed moral codes that

would not just potentially apply to all people but did apply to a majority or even to all

people because moral weakness ran much deeper and more widely. For instance,

Socrates describes himself as a Gadfly sent by the Gods to bite and spur the Athenians on

when they were not doing their duty.[35] This pronouncement shows that in a wide

audience of Athenian practitioners of self-care (in the senate), Socrates appealed to them

as strong and only in need of occasional encouragement; revealing, in an implied fashion,

the state of Greek moral and physical health. Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations* were

written in a much more universal and expansive tone than Plato's dialogues: "Waste no

more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one."[36]   Similarly, many of

Aurelius', Seneca's, Dio Chrysostom's, and Epictetus' works address themselves equally

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[35] Plato, "Apology," trans. G.M.A. Grube, <u>Five Dialogues</u> (Hackett: Indianapolis, 1981) 30e.
[36] Marcus Aurelius, <u>Mediations</u>, trans., Maxwell Staniforth (Penguin: New York, 1986) 157.

universally to suggest remedies to ills that plague all men. For instance, in a well known

line from the *Encheiridion,* Epictetus writes about common human faults and what must

be done by all to remedy them:

> What upsets people is not things themselves but their judgments about the things. […]
> So when we are thwarted or upset or distressed, let us never blame someone else but
> rather ourselves, that is, our own judgments.[37]

The address of these Imperial authors differs in scope (they are addressed to faults that all

men are assumed to have) and in the codes they recommend (they are addressed as

prescriptions to all men, assumed to be sick to some degree).

Second, this shift towards the universalization of weakness was not just a shift on

the part of those diagnosing the ills and developing moral codes as remedies, it was also a

shift in the application of these codes. Nature, God, Reason, or any of the other varied

names the Romans attributed to the divine came to play a universalizing role in that the

divine began to demand, through the force of natural reason, that all individuals follow

the code in the singular way prescribed by reason:

> Sexual ethics requires, still and always, that the individual conform to a certain art of
> living which defines the aesthetic and ethical criteria of existence. But this art refers
> more and more to universal principles of nature or reason, which everyone must observe
> in the same way, whatever their social status.[38]

The other sections will deal with the specific features of the ethical application of the

code, here it is my purpose just to point out that an increasingly standardized form of

ethically observing the code was present in Rome.

Lest we should go to far however, let us remember that this universalization was

in tension with stylization and not a dominating feature of Imperial self care:

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[37] Epictetus, The Handbook (The Encheiridion), trans. Nicholas P. White (Hackett: Indianapolis, 1983) 13.
[38] Foucault, Care of the Self, 67.

> Sexual pleasure as an ethical substance continues to be governed by relations of force—the force against which one must struggle and over which the subject is expected to establish his domination. But in this game of violence, excess, rebellion, and combat, the accent is placed more and more readily on the weakness of the individual, on his fragility, on his need to flee, to escape, to protect and shelter himself. Sexual ethics requires, still and always, that the individual conform to a certain art of living which defines the aesthetic and ethical criteria of existence. But this art refers more and more to universal principles of nature or reason, which everyone must observe in the same way, whatever their social status.[39]

The Romans still sought the stylization of their selfhood and while one must say that the Romans clearly took the care of the self in a direction that the Christians would push farther to develop an ethical subject characterized by the Fall and normalizing moral institutions, this morality was still far from Christianity in that universalization of the code was a trend and not completely actualized.

2. *Ethical Substance:* I will begin by focusing on the medicalization of the ethical substance. Over the hundreds of years that self care was practiced in antiquity, the intense focus on self mastery had had an unanticipated effect; a kind of weakening of the body and soul due to an attitude akin to what we might call hypochondria today. The hypochondria came on through a rather simple process: over the hundreds of years of concern and reflection placed on self-care, individuals worried so intensely about losing their mastery over themselves that they ended up intensifying and inventing new sources of worry, i.e. new excesses. For instance, Foucault demonstrates a new level of concern about sexuality in Galen that was not present in this same fashion earlier:

> …sexual acts are susceptible of being affected, in their unfolding and their satisfactory conclusion, by an abundance of diverse factors: there is the temperament of the individuals; there is the climate, the time of day; there is the food that one has ingested,

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[39] Foucault, Care of the Self, 67.

> its quality and amount. The acts are so fragile that the least deviation, the least malaise, risks perturbing them.[40]

This fragility is not entirely new but it is different in its depth and in its proliferation. It is quite possibly the result of the combined effect of the experts of self-care (the doctors and philosophers) and the people caring for themselves all searching so intently to further refine and define self-care. These professionals and seekers of self-care ended up not only better defining the existing threats the Greeks had outlined but they were also successful in creating new weaknesses in a process of creative elaboration and expansion. One might be tempted to say that new weaknesses of the self were *discovered* instead of 'creatively elaborated'; however, there is no evidence of a 'Real Self' or even of a subjectivity being discovered. Instead, it seems more likely that in a culture of intensive searching for illness, excess, and slavish passivity that these searchers ended up transforming their bodies and souls through recreating their own ethical substance in a mood akin to hypochondria.[41]

Simply put, the Romans had a different kind of body and soul than the Greeks did; they were more medicalized and prone to failure than were the Greeks:

> …on the basis of this rapprochement (practical and theoretical) between medicine and ethics, there is the inducement to acknowledge oneself as being ill or threatened by illness. The practice of the self [in the Roman era] implies that one should form the image of oneself not simply as an imperfect, ignorant individual who requires correction, training, and instruction, but as one who suffers from certain ills and who needs to have them treated, either by oneself or by someone who has the necessary competence. Everyone must discover that he is in a state of need, that he needs to receive medication and assistance.[42]

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[40] Foucault, Care of the Self,116.

[41] Foucault, Care of the Self, 239.

[42] Foucault, Care of the Self, 57.

In the quote, Foucault brings out an interesting associated phenomena the medicalization of the self: the necessity to consult experts of self care in order to care for oneself properly. The necessity of consultation was, as Foucault indicates in the above quote, not just in special or extraordinary times; the self was always in peril and thus always required expert attention. One cannot but help compare this situation to the Greeks who did not feel this constant need for consulting with doctors and philosophers to direct them in their most mundane activities and to certain Christians, such as Augustine, who felt that it would be *impossible* to be moral without the intervention of the moral expert, God.[43] The Romans' situation, in terms of their reliance on the moral expertise of others in order to live well lies somewhere in between the Greeks and Christians: they neither felt capable of carrying out a day to day moral practice without regular expert intervention, nor did they feel the path was impossible without it. Instead, they felt the level of threat that their frailty placed them under was best dealt with in consultation with experts if it was available, but these experts were not saviors or super-human, just well versed in a discourse that an individual who had to concern himself with other work could not fully master with his limited time.

     3. *Ascetics:* The fourth important axis of change between Greek and Roman forms of self-care was a change in the *askesis* that was undertaken. Self-knowledge became more important to practices of *askesis* in Rome than then they had been in Greece. It was not central to Greek practices, for instance, to catalogue all the pleasures

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[43] Augustine, <u>Confessions</u>, trans. F.J. Sheed (Hackett: Indianapolis, 1993) 151.

one wanted, the desires one harbored, and the acts that one wished to carry out. The

central concern was to avoid enslavement to a cycle of desires, acts, and pleasures that

would disrupt one's self-mastery and steal one's freedom; as long as one's pleasures,

acts, and desires did not enslave one, it was not especially important to monitor those

desires, acts, and pleasures that one represented to oneself, apparently harmlessly. For

instance, even in the *Alcibiades* where Socrates urges Alcibiades towards self-knowledge,

this self-knowledge was not a knowledge of the entirety of Alcibiades' desires, pleasures,

or the acts that he wished to carry out. Instead, Socrates urged Alcibiades to learn what

he knows and what he does not know so that he will be able to act freely and moderately

and avoid slavish enslavement to his excessive pride and ignorance.[44] This self-

knowledge is linked to his action and the knowledge that informs his action; it is by no

means a total monitoring of all the individual's representations to itself.

Although a need for self-knowledge was present in the Greeks and especially

expressed in the work of Plato, it was altered and more pronounced among the Romans.

The medicalization of the self enabled a kind of heightened self-concern that worked

combinatorially in the development of more thorough techniques of self-knowledge.[45]

The medicalized Roman self began to intensify its relations of self examination because

its' less healthy, more mistake prone self needed more careful monitoring. Foucault

summarized the connection of worry and more careful monitoring stating,

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[44] Plato, Alcibiades, 135a-e.

[45] Michel Foucault. Le Gouvernement de soi et des autres: le courage de la vérité, rec. 1984, from the archive at IMEC.

"Problematization and apprehension go hand in hand."[46]   After all, a weaker, more fault-prone self requires more careful monitoring in order to insure its health and goodness, just as a patient that was badly poisoned would require more careful monitoring than someone in bed with a cold.

Foucault describes this thorough self-examination that was exercised in Roman self-care:

> To keep constant watch over one's representations, or to verify their marks the way one authenticates a currency, is not to inquire (as will be done later in Christianity) concerning the deep origin of the idea that presents itself; it is not to try and decipher a meaning hidden beneath visible representation; it is to assess the relationship between oneself and that which is represented, so as to accept in the relation to the self only that which can depend on the subject's free and rational choice.[47]

This self-knowledge was in some respects like the form of self-knowledge that the Greeks recruited. This self-knowledge was not primarily focused on whether the desires, acts, or pleasures that the mind represented to itself were good desires, acts, or pleasures in themselves; the emphasis was still on mastery over the desire, act, pleasure cycle and not the elimination of particular acts, desires, and pleasures (although one does see some of this in both Greece and Rome). However, what is different is the level at which this examination is to take place. The Romans were not just concerned with action and what informs it. The Romans began to examine their representations as totally as possible, regardless of their actualization, in order to better analyze and diagnose the state of the soul. Foucault cites the common metaphor of a moneychanger and the night watchman to describe this type of self-examination:

> More than an exercise done at regular intervals, it is a constant attitude that one must take towards oneself. To characterize this attitude, Epictetus employs metaphors that will have a long career in

[46] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 239.
[47] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 64.

Christian spirituality, but they will take on quite different values in it. He asks that one adopt, vis-à-vis one self, the role and posture of a "night watchman" who checks the entries at the gate of cities or houses; or further, he suggests that one exercise on oneself the functions of a "tester of coinage," an "assayer," one of those moneychangers who won't accept any coin without having made sure of its worth.[48]

This tight regulation over how one represents things to oneself is a gauge and regulator of the state of the soul. For instance, Book Four of the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius is almost entirely focused on criteria for the rejection, modification, or acceptance of representations; he discusses how one could and should represent to oneself the vices of others, rank, death, wealth, fame, and more.[49]

What makes a representation about rank, wealth, fame, etc. acceptable to Marcus Aurelius is not its accurate correspondence with 'reality' as we find in many modern philosophies, but in its moral acceptability and aesthetic value:

There are obvious objections to the Cynic Monimus' statement that 'things are determined by the view taken of them'; but the value of his aphorism is equally obvious, if we admit the substance of it so far as it contains a truth.[50]

This thought on representation reflects the aesthetic movement of this morality in that the proper relation of Nature to the self derives from the style in which the Reason is reflected in the individual's life. The push to regulate, like a moneychanger, all of the representations of the soul in regards to its proper stylistic relation to Reason reveals the thrust to assert a deeper and more thorough control over the state of the soul.

Such a transformation speaks volumes about the increasing care and worry that the Romans enacted in their own self-care. They sought a greater level of control over themselves and took to combating enslavement on the level of representations. They

[48] Foucault, Care of the Self, 63.
[49] Aurelius, Meditations, 63-76.
[50] Aurelius, Meditations, 50.

drove off their multiplying vices through this intensified ascetic practice of self-knowledge and correction.

This change in ascetics may lead one to think of the Christian practice of the self-examination in that both moralities examine, quite totally, all of the representations of the soul. But the Roman practice was still quite different from the Christian practice, most importantly in the regard that individuals took of their own representations. The Romans, like the Greeks, still had confidence in their ability to make good determinations about what form their morality should take. The Roman recruitment of information, although reflecting a deepening sense of weakness and medicalization, still gave trusted information that could be put to use in making good and rational decisions. The Romans did not suspect, as generally did the Christians, that a deceptive evil may be lurking behind their representations that deceived them about their nature and made them untrustworthy. Instead, the Romans were trustful of their representations in sense that they believed them to be accurate indicators of the state of the soul. To return to the example of the moneychanger, the moneychanger did not check and see if the self was deceiving itself about what coins it was seeing but checked to make sure that the type of currency circulating was the currency it wished. In contrast to the metaphorical Roman moneychanger, the Christian moneychanger demanded the examination of the interior of the coin (representation) so they could come to see if their eyes and fingers were lying to them. In other words, the Romans were not yet fallen souls, only souls prone to mistake and error. The Romans seemed to have generally thought themselves adequate to their own self-care and self-examination, even if they had to take more care than the Greeks in seeking it. The Romans were not suspicious that an evil lurked in depths of their souls,

waiting to deceive them about the truth of their representations. They believed in their

ability to recognize their representations for what they were as long as they diligently

checked them.

   4. *Mode of Subjection:* The Roman care of the self differed from Greek self-care

in terms of its mode of subjectification in at least two ways. The first difference was

marked by what Foucault calls a "crisis" in the Roman mode of subjectification that set

them apart from an easy adoption of the Greek form of subjectification:

> We need rather to think in terms of a crisis of the subject, or rather a crisis of
> subjectification—that is, in terms of a difficulty in the manner in which the individual
> could form himself as the ethical subject of his actions, and efforts to find in devotion to
> self that which could enable him to submit to rules and give a purpose to his existence.[51]

Two changing elements of Greco-Roman life seem particularly important in leading to

this crisis: the changes in the household and in political life, both of which are concerned

with the exercise mastery over others. Foucault shows that household marriage relations

had become much more reciprocal than they had been in Greece; no longer was the male

the unqualified ruler of the household, in the Imperial era he was also expected to observe

relations of reciprocal affection and dependence with his wife.[52] Thus, marriage had

become about more than the functioning of the household under a male rule and became

a relationship that gave both partners reciprocal duties. What is important about this shift

is the way that it begins to displace the role of the free male as a master and enters him

into, not equal, but reciprocal relationships. Although the detachment of the free adult

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[51] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 95.
[52] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 80.

male from his role as master of others is far from over (even today), the reciprocity of the marriage and household relationships reveal that the role was in flux.

Similarly, in the political sphere the role of the privileged free male also began to detach itself from mastery of others. As a result of the complexity and the enormity of the Roman system, many citizens found themselves in positions in which they served as something like relays, emissaries, liaisons, etc. For many in the Roman Empire, their political position was not one that could be understood simply as the mastering of others. Instead, many found that their positions entailed varied and differing forms of relationships with those they dealt with: for instance, communication, regulation, ambassadorial duties, etc. In Roman government, as in marriage, reciprocal relationalities replaced relations of mastery and domination.

The crisis of subjectification occurred when Roman self-care could no longer assume its mode of subjectification to be that of the young male practicing morality to learn to master himself in order to master and rule others. The reasons to submit to the moral code and carry out an ethics of self-care would have to change in response to these new relations because the end of mastery of others was now in crisis. This crisis was met with a turn to the increasing importance of mastering oneself as an end in itself. For the most part, the explanation of how this new end was characterized will occur in the section on *telos*. For now though, I want to conclude this section by examining the effects on the mode of subjectification of this shift to self-mastery without the further goal of the mastery of others.

In Greece, in order to be subjected to training in self-care one had to be both born into a position to rule others and one had to desire to rule others and oneself. In Rome,

very few people were placed in positions in which they would be able to rule others in the way that the Greeks did; the household and many political posts had changed so that the relations were more reciprocal. Roman self-care changed with this alteration, no longer was self-mastery focused on its eventual end in mastering others, but in mastering oneself. This change in *telos* made more people qualified to undertake this morality. Many more people could respond to a call to master themselves than could people respond to the call to lead society. "[W]hatever their social status" people from lower classes and even slaves participated in the Imperial practice of self-care.[53] One only need to look to the honored position of Epictetus, a slave, in Roman self-care to see both how divorced self care came to be from the mastery of others and just how inclusive the call of this self care was—it reached even to those considered the lowest and least moral by many of the Greeks.

5. *Telos:* I have presented, along the lines drawn in Foucault's work, the shifts in the morality of self-care between its Greek and Imperial expressions. In particular, I detailed shifts in the code, in the increased medicalization of the body, in the more universal practice and appeal of the morality of self-care, and in the transformation of forms self-examination. Alongside these shifts, the ends (*telos)* of Roman self-care also shifted. I have already described some of the shifts in *telos* in the section on the mode of subjectivation of Roman self-care; namely, that the ends of self-care moved away from a focus on mastery of self *and* others to a focus primarily on the mastery of the self. I

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[53] Foucault, Care of the Self, 67.

would now like to finish discussing this shift in *telos* in the context of the other shifts in

Roman self-care I have already described.

For Foucault, the aim and sense of Greek self-care was to be found in the relation

of the individual to others in that Greek self-care ultimately lead to not only a mastery of

the self but of others as well. Foucault argues that the *telos* of Roman self-care was

deprived of this form of directedness towards others in that Roman social relations tended

less towards domination at home and in politics and more towards reciprocal relations.

As domination of others was not possible for many Romans in the Greek fashion, even

for powerful and wealthy Romans, the ends of their self-care could not now lie in that

domination that was not possible for them. This occlusion of the former ends of self-care

occurred alongside the opening of new ends. Namely, self-care moved towards the aim

of giving the individual full enjoyment of the self without desire or disturbance:

> This relation is often conceived in terms of the juridical model of possession: one
> "belongs to himself," one is "his own master"…But apart from this rather political and
> judicial form, the relation to the self is also defined as a concrete relationship enabling
> one to delight in oneself, as in a thing one both possesses and has before one's eyes.[54]

As with the Greeks, self care still had the immediate aim of self-mastery but its rewards

were now to be found primarily in the delight that it gives and not in the domination that

it allowed of others:

> Lastly, the end result of this elaboration is still and always defined by the rule of the
> individual over himself. But this rule broadens into an experience in which the relation to
> self takes the form not only of a domination but also of an enjoyment with desire and
> without disturbance.[55]

This true self-possession is to be distinguished by the false possession of the self by

forces other than its reasonable soul. For instance, acting out of the transportive force of

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[54] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 65.
[55] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 68.

pleasures, desires, and acts without rational examination of them would be considered an irrational and uncontrolled compulsion, an enslavement of the rational self to the forces that would dominate it. This may seem an odd division to modern minds that are accustomed not only to seeing emotions, passions, and instincts as being as truly and essentially a part of the self as reason is. But for the Romans', the true self was the reasonable self and the other parts were there for usage, ordering, and, in short, domination by the reasonable self. Self-mastery was the fortification and construction a dominating rational self that would rule the other parts of the soul.

It was this freeing of the rational self from the other parts of the self by placing it in firm mastery of those other parts that was thought to bring great pleasure to the one who had achieved it. Such a strict mastery would be undisturbed by compulsions, desires, and unwanted movements in the soul, it would be at peace with itself, free to contemplate its own beauty and admirably rational functioning.

III. Conclusion:

This chapter has briefly traced Foucault's final two books, *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self,* for two reasons. The first reason I selectively traced these two texts was in order to establish the historical trajectories that his final work composed. The second goal was to concretize the grid of moral analysis given in the first chapter through examination of the insights that Foucault achieved through it. These trajectories and grid of analysis will carry this text onto the monastery and disciplines and eventually to the pastoral and bio-power. In addition, I will call on many of these lineages to serve as critical inspiration for transformative morality in the final chapter.

Chapter 3: Discipline in God's Army

In this chapter, I will extend the lineage that I have drawn from Greek and Roman moralities of self care to the monastery. In the next chapter, I will further connect this lineage to contemporary disciplinary relations in order to produce a different picture of a contemporary form of domination.[56] The discussion of monastic relations occupies an important point in my overall analysis because 1) the monastery is an important genealogical link between antiquity and modern disciplinary relations and, 2) beyond serving as a link to connect insights about antiquity to the present, the analysis of the monastery also contributes its own useful insights about the present. However, before I begin the analysis of monastic relations I would like to further contextualize the lineage I am drawing, first in relationship to Foucault's work and then in relationship to my own aims in this project.

Although the analysis of monastic relations that I present here is not to be explicitly found in Foucault, it draws on Foucault in two important ways. First, Foucault says at several points in *Discipline and Punish* that disciplinary relations draw inspiration and form from monastic relations:

> Perhaps it was these procedures of community life and salvation that were the first nucleus of methods intended to produce individually characterized, but collectively useful aptitudes. In its mystical or ascetic form, exercise was a way of ordering earthly time for the conquest of salvation. It was gradually, in the history of the West, to change direction while preserving certain of its characteristics; it served to economize the time of life, to accumulate it in a useful form and to exercise power over men through the mediation of time arranged in this way. Exercise, having become an element in political technology of the body and of duration, does not culminate in a beyond, but tends towards a subjection that has never reached its limit.[57]

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[56] Michel Foucault, <u>Discipline and Punish,</u> trans. Alan Sheridan (Vintage Books: New York, 1995), 137.

[57] Foucault, <u>Discipline and Punish,</u> 162.

In this chapter I will develop this claim of Foucault's that the disciplines find their point of crystallization and their matrix in the monastery. However, it is almost certain that I will be developing this claim in a way that Foucault had not anticipated when he wrote *Discipline and Punish* because at this point in his work there is no serious indication that he was considering the lineage of the disciplines in antiquity. In the mid-eighties when Foucault was nearing completion of the second and third volumes of the history of sexuality, it is clear that he intended his work on antiquity to speak to the formation of Christian morality:

> If I have undertaken such a long study, it's so that I can try to uncover how what we call Christian morality was embedded in European morality, and not since the beginnings of the Christian world, but since the morality of Antiquity.[58]

This chapter on the monastery is the tying together of these two interests of Foucault in the pre-history of the disciplines in the monastery and the pre-history of the Christianity in the moralities of self care in antiquity.

Foucault has not published much concentrated work on the monastery, although he mentions it often in his writings post-*Discipline and Punish*. Foucault does focus on the pastoral generally, of which the monastery is a part, in the lecture course he gave at *Collège de France* in 1977-1978, called *Sécurité, Territoire, Population.* I will draw on this work to guide me in this chapter, especially because he approached this study of the pastoral as part of his inquiry into disciplinary and bio-relations—the forms of modern power I am seeking to reanalyze here. However, his 1978 lecture course is not as helpful as it might be because Foucault had not yet begun his study of Greco-Roman morality meaning that may later themes were not present and his work is not focused on the

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[58] Foucault, <u>Return of Morality,</u> 473.

monastery but on the pastoral as a whole. The result of this is that his thought from the lecture at the *Collège de France* will not often be appearing directly here (his focus is usually too general and is unrelated to pagan self care) but it will be a strong and guiding influence on my analysis.

The practical effect of my limited and strategic approach to the monastery through Foucault is that I limit the discussion in two ways. First, I will only be discussing western monasticism (and not eastern monasticism) because it is that form of monasticism that surrounded and provided the context for the rise of disciplinary relations in England, the United States, France, and the Netherlands.

Second, I will only be looking towards those forms of western monasticism that were the most influential on disciplinary relations. Thus, I find no need to analyze monastic relations outside of their relevance to the disciplines and pagan self care—no matter if this analysis sets aside elements of the monastery that are particularly important to other analyses and, instead, focuses on elements that are unimportant to these other modes of analysis. For instance, on one hand, the transformations that the monasteries have undergone since the 18th century are of great interest in the literature but are of little interest to me because the disciplines had gained their own momentum by this time and were no longer focused on the monastery. On the other hand, my interest in the way physical movement in the monastery was regulated by a system of locks, surveillance, and the coordination of individuals' location with a schedule is of lesser interest to the literature, but is of central importance to me.

Given these limits, it is easier than one might suppose to choose primary texts to supplement Foucault's work in *Sécurité, Territoire, Population* with information specific

to the monastery: the *Rule of St. Benedict* and the *Rule of St. Augustine*, and, to a lesser

extent, the *Rule of St. Basil* are the obvious choices. However, recognize that I do not

understand my work to make a historical claim about the validity of Foucault's thought;

rather, I am just using these historical sources to flesh out and offer one interpretation of

Foucault's thought.

These three texts are the most influential texts in western monasticism and also

are the most influential on disciplinary relations. The *Rule of St. Basil* (composed 358-

364 A.D.) is really less a document on monastic life than it is a treatise on Christian

living and doctrine. However, its influence was tremendous on monastic life in that it

inaugurated many of the traditions that later rules would modify, refuse, accept, or break

from, including the *Rule of St. Benedict*.

The *Rule of St. Benedict* (composed about 535-545 A.D.) is undoubtedly the most

influential work in western monasticism. La Corte and McMillan write of this rule in

their history of western monasticism:

> It is Benedict's Rule which dominates the western monasticism throughout its growth and
> series of reforms; what monasticism was, and is, in the West is essentially what St.
> Benedict portrayed in his Rule.[59]

Much of the dominance of the Benedictine Rule stems from the efforts of

Charlemagne and his son, Louis the Pious, to standardize monastic practice in the West.

In the ninth century, Charlemagne decreed that all monastic orders must follow

Benedict's Rule and, during his and his son's reign, serious progress was made towards

the execution of this decree. The use of Benedict's Rule was ubiquitous in that even the

later reformers of monasticism (the Cluniacs, the Cistercians, and the Carthusians) all still

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[59] Daniel Marcel La Corte, "Introduction," from <u>Regular Life: Monastic Canonical, and Mendicant Rules</u>, ed. Daniel Marcel La Corte (Medieval Institute Publications: Kalamazoo, 2004) 5.

retained the rule of St. Benedict. This is further evidence that the problem the reformers sought to solve was not in the *Rule* but in its interpretation. The result of ubiquity and endurance of St. Benedict's text was that it still was the most influential document in monasticism at the time of the birth of disciplinary relations in the 15th-17th centuries**.**

The *Rule of St. Augustine* is not only important as one of the primary influences on Benedict's Rule; it was also the rule adopted by the canonical orders in the 11th century. In addition, it is important because it served as the rule for many of the mendicant orders, most notably the Dominicans, when the mendicants began to form in the 13th and 14th centuries.

With the discussion framed in this way (primarily focused on the *Rule of St. Benedict* and with secondary focus on the rules of Augustine and Basil), the analysis will proceed along the five axes of moral analysis that I have been operating with—moral law, ethical substance, mode of subjection, ascetics, and *telos*. However, this structure will appear less schematically than it has in the last chapters (I will not be demarcating the sections with separate headings).

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At this point, I would like to turn to the analysis of the monastery as a development in the lineage of the morality of self care and modern domination, beginning with an analysis of the ethical substance. Elaborating the monastic account of the ethical substance is made somewhat difficult by the fact that none of the monastic rules I am examining here (that of Basil, Benedict, and Augustine) present a systematic theory of the ethical substance, although it is implied to various degrees. That should not be surprising however, as the readers of the rules, being monks, would already have a clear

understanding of the state of their ethical substance. Benedict, for instance, assumes his

readers have such familiarity with Catholic doctrine and the *Bible* that he gives no

citation information in his quotes—he assumes the readers will know where the passages

he cites come from and already be familiar with church doctrine. To examine the

monastic ethical substance, we will have to look outside of the rules at two defining

teachings on the ethical substance, the Fall and the crucifixion, that will reveal what

Foucault felt to be at the core of the Christian ethical substance:

> Those [Christian] moral systems will define other modalities of the relation to the self: a characterization of the ethical substance based on finitude, the Fall, and evil.[60]

The reader is no doubt familiar with the story of the Fall, so I will not bother to

recount the story of Adam and Eve in its totality but, rather, just begin an analysis that is

appropriate to the discussion of the monastic ethical substance. The implications of the

Fall were accounted for and explained in different ways in the early Church. Justin

Martyr, for instance, emphasizes that although the serpent played a role in humanity's

fall, man was already evil in nature before encountering the serpent:

> God ordained that, if man kept this, he would partake of immortal existence. However, if he transgressed it, his lot would be just the opposite. *Having been made in this manner*, man soon went towards transgression. And so he naturally became subject to corruption.[61]

Justin Martyr here emphasizes that the eating of the forbidden fruit reveals what was

already always present in the human soul, an innate concentration of evil. Tertullian,

unlike Justin Martyr, holds that man was originally good and the shining image of God,

but Satan corrupted man and injected evil into his heart and soul:

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[60] Foucault, Care of the Self, 239.

[61] Justin Martyr, "Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew," from Ante-Nicene Fathers Volume I, ed. Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (T&T CLARK: Edinburgh, 1994) 243.

> In the beginning, the corrupting and God-opposing angel overthrew the virtue of man—the work and image of God, the possessor of the Earth. So Satan has *entirely changed man's nature* into his own state of wicked enmity against his Maker. For it was created, like his own, for sinlessness…[62]

For my purposes, it hardly matters if the monks understood humanity's ethical substance to be transgressive, corruptible, and evil before or after the influence of Satan. What is central is that the ethical substance of humanity after expulsion from the Garden of Eden, i.e. the ethical substance that the monks had to work with, was not naturally good or guided towards its own health. Instead of seeking the good, the human ethical substance naturally tended seek its own destruction, no matter how irrational or blind such a decision may have been.

The crucifixion demonstrates the evil and confusion of humanity in another way, through the murder of Jesus. In the account of the crucifixion, humanity was given Jesus as a moral leader and, not only did they not heed his message, they killed him through a process of public and horrendous torture. This killing confirms the view of humanity given in the Fall: namely, that even in the face of God and in full receipt of his wisdom, humanity could still be motivated by its evil nature to choose an incredibly foolhardy and evil path. In addition, although the death of Jesus reaffirms the vision of humanity given in the Fall, it is also the story of humanity's redemption from the Fall. The crucifixion relates that Jesus accepted the evil of man and loved him anyway, winning man's forgiveness and salvation from his Father. Salvation in death thus became humanity's means of redeeming itself after its fall to evil and the murder of their God.

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[62] Tertullian, "Elucidations," from <u>Ante-Nicene Fathers Volume I,</u> ed. Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (T&T CLARK: Edinburgh, 1994) 197.

This essential evil of the monastic ethical substance is different from the Roman and Greek ethical substance. In the Roman and the Greek forms of self care that Foucault discusses, evil was impossible; either one was enslaved to forces exterior to the rational self and to that extent one's soul reflected a non-human state or one was mistaken. We can see this in how Epictetus thought that one had to take up one's rational nature and work at one's soul through a process of moral work to become fully human and escape slavery to the lower parts of the soul. We can also see this in Aristotle's warning that a failure of moral work could result from the fact that one is animal-like and not fully human, "…there are three kinds of things to be avoided that have to do with one's character: vice, lack of self-restraint, and an animal-like state."[63] In other words, insofar as one had cared for themselves and set up a proper hierarchy in the soul, one was good; insofar as one had not cared for oneself properly, one was either animal-like or mistaken. Evil seemed to be impossible for those Greeks and Romans Foucault examines—they simply lacked the capacity for it. Although this analysis would seem to free the Greco-Roman lineages of complicity in the moral shifts that produced the doctrine of the Fall, Greco-Roman self care did, in fact, contain movements that helped to make such a notion possible.

Foremost, one must notice how the medicalized Imperial ethical substance is relatively morally weaker and less capable of its self-government than the Greek ethical substance. The Romans imbued their ethical substance with medical and philosophical analysis that created weaknesses and a reliance on experts for moral guidance that was not present for the Greeks. However, this was not a movement from a healthy Greece to

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[63] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, trans. Joe Sachs (Focus: Newburyport, 2002) 118.

a Fallen and evil Rome but rather a decline in health and moral heartiness that still left Roman self care free of evil. As a result, we can see a parallel between the shifts that took place between Greece and Rome and Rome and the monastery; there is a movement of increasing weakness and frailty of the ethical substance and a growing need of expert guidance.

However, an important point must be about this trending to medicalization and then evil; it was not the case that the Greeks, Romans, and monks shared the same ethical substance that merely became more burdened with fault and less able to self-govern over time. Rather, this movement, in combination with countless others, transformed the ethical substances. The transformations may have been enabled by previous shifts but they are neither caused by nor merely equivalent to earlier shifts; the transformation of the ethical substance to evil was, in many senses, remarkable and unprecedented. This is to say that there is no agency of causation or progress that transcends these shifts and gives them meaning or necessity and there is no natural or given ethical substance that is taken up and shaped in different ways. The ethical substance is formed through these moralities; it does not pre-exist them and as a result, the ethical substances reflect that difference and in no way refer to an inherent disposition or material. For instance, the jump from sickness to evil is a break; the ethical substance becomes not only more sickly and less capable of self-governance but transforms into something that is fundamentally immoral and incapable of self-transformation; so while a trend can be observed, these ethical substances still must be recognized as fundamentally different entities.

This shift in the ethical substance results in radical changes in the rest of the morality as Foucault notes in this interview:

> And this is where Christianity, by presenting salvation as occurring beyond life, in a way upsets or at least disturbs the balance of the care of the self …Among the Greeks and Romans, however, given that one takes care of oneself in one's own life and that the reputation one leaves behind is the only afterlife one can expect, the care of the self can be centered entirely on oneself, on what one does, on the place one occupies among others. It…is different from the desire for death one finds among the Christians, who expect salvation from death.[64]

In the above quote Foucault focuses on how salvation after death is required for the Christian ethical substance to be transformed and redeemed, while the Greeks and Romans did not feel the burden of the Fall and sought, in their freedom from that burden, to live exemplary and good lives. What I wish to focus on next is the *telos* of the monastery in salvation in order to more thoroughly realize the changes in monastic morality.

As Foucault commented on in the above quote, the most obvious of the differences in *telos* between Christianity and pagan self care is the shift to a focus on the afterlife and salvation. Specifically in terms of the monastery, it is clear that for the Augustinian and Benedictine monks it was impossible to transform into something fundamentally good and pure without God's hand in the afterlife. No matter how hard these monks worked, the evil of their ethical substances would still lie inside, indelible to any human practice and only curable by the grace of God in the afterlife, as a reward for their efforts in life. Comparatively, the (morally) good state of life that was available to the Romans was not available to the monks; they had to wait until death and the transformation of their soul to achieve self-mastery and goodness. For, in death God would use His infinite powers on the worthy to transform them into their perfect forms and bring them into everlasting communion with Him:

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[64] Foucault, "Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom," trans. Phillis Aranov and Dan McGrawth Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (Semiotext(e): New York, 1996) 439.

> We are forbidden to do our own will for "Leave your own will and desires," and "We beg
> the Lord in prayer that His will may be done in us." Thus we learn not to do our own will
> for Scripture warns us: "There are ways that seem right to men, but they lead, in the end,
> to the depths of hell." We must fear what was said of the careless, "They have been
> corrupted and made abominable in their desires."[65]

This description of the ultimately fruitless nature of man trying, with his dirtied hands, to

bring complete purity to his stained soul should not be interpreted as declaration of the

futility of all moral action; on the contrary, the monks were to care for themselves and

improve themselves but this work, no matter how sincere or diligent, could not erase the

evil that lies in the heart of the soul.

The difficulty in monastic progress towards the good during life lies in the

cenobites problematic capacity for the good. Self-mastery was technically impossible, as

all of the parts of the self were shot through with evil and no part of the self was pure

enough to lead on its own. The solution to the problem of impurity was found in the need

to renounce all Godless, prideful, and arrogant attempts at mastering self-government and

beg, in humility, for God to act through them and bring them to the proper forms of self-

mastery:

> Listen, my son, and with your heart hear the principles of your Master. Readily accept
> and faithfully follow the advice of a loving father, so that through the labor of obedience
> you may return to Him from whom you have withdrawn because of laziness of
> obedience. My words are meant for you, whoever you are, who laying aside your own
> will, take up the all-powerful and righteous arms of obedience to fight under the true
> King, the Lord Jesus Christ.[66]

In order to achieve the end of salvation, the monks were to lay aside their own Fallen and

corrupt attempts at self-mastery and turn themselves over to God in the most complete

obedience and humility possible in order to provide the proper form of self-mastery. The

military analogy that the quote uses to illustrate this point reinforces the thought that

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[65] Saint Benedict, <u>The Rule of Saint Benedict,</u> trans. Anthony Meisel and M.L. del Mastro (Image Books:
Garden City, 1975) 57-58.
[66] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 43.

proper living is achieved through total submission and obedience to God as a military soldier totally submits to his superiors. In order to achieve salvation, the monk had to lay aside his reasonable self as being no longer fit to command and willfully become a servant, a channel obedient to God's will. The monastic self therefore aimed to renounce itself as a self-sufficient rational commanding subject and instead take a posture of obedient submission in which the paradoxical goal was to free itself from sin and evil through slavery. This movement of self-mastery was paradoxical in the sense that one could only ever master oneself if one renounced oneself and became the servant of another. Monastic doctrine is Orwellian in this respect; it makes the equation that 'freedom is slavery.' In other words, the better one governs one self, the less one governs oneself; self-government in the monastery became a project whose completion is to be found in its reduction to ideal point of total obedience.   This moment was a tremendously important moment in the history of self care that was to have a profound impact on disciplinary relations; the disciplines would eventually draw from the monastery and Christian culture generally that individuals are incapable of self-governance and in order to live a good life, the individuals needed their will to be strictly subordinated to the will of another more rational being.

By renouncing themselves and turning themselves over to God, the monks aimed to make whatever hardscrabble progress they could towards the good in those moments when they subdued their rebellious souls and remained obedient. They worked at this task in the hope that their efforts, however fruitless they ultimately were in removing the stain of the Fall, would be rewarded by God in the afterlife. This reward was the care for

their souls that they themselves could never manage—a complete transformation and

redemption:

> For the necessity of dying is a deficiency brought upon human nature by sin. But Christ, by merit of His passion, repaired the deficiencies of nature which sin had brought upon nature. For, as the Apostle says: "Not as the offense, so also the gift. For if by the offence many died, much more the grace of God, and the gift, by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ, has abandoned unto many" (Rom. 5:15). From this one gathers that the merit of Christ is more effective for removing death than the sin of Adam for introducing it. Therefore, those who will rise by the merit of Christ, freed from death, will suffer death no more.[67]

From the definition of the monastic *telos* in salvation and the state of the ethical

substance that works alongside it, we can see that the aims of the monastic code, its

ascetic practices, and its mode of subjection will be quite different, in many respects,

from pagan self care. To begin to work out these changes, I would like to begin with an

examination of the monastic moral code.

The moral code of the monasteries was found in two primary places: in the *Rule*

and in the *Bible.* I would like to begin with the consideration of the *Rule* and then discuss

its relationship to the *Bible.* Let us begin with the status of the *Rule* as a set of rules

(*rēgula*) instead of laws (*lēx*). In contrast with the term *lēx, rēgula* contains less of

limiting, negative, restrictive connotations and indicates an action more of ruling or

guiding. *Rēgula* implies a positive sense of leading, of providing standards and guiding

the way; in fact, *rēgula* is related to the word *rēgulus* which refers to a leader, perhaps a

prince or a chieftain, further giving a sense of the way in which this word contains not

only a limiting sense but also a leading or guiding sense. The choice of the word rule

(*rēgula)* instead of law (*lēx*) is significant because the monastic rules intend to function as

a norm and are different from the negative and limiting effects associated with the law.

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[67] Saint Thomas Aquinas, <u>Summa Contra Gentiles</u>, trans. Charles J. O'Neil (Notre Dame Press: Notre Dame, 1975) 308.

It might be easiest to grasp this differentiation in function between the rule and the law, if one grasps how the rules act as 'second-order' directives. What I mean by 'second-order' is that these documents are written as a way of living and giving form to God's laws as defined in the *Bible*. In that distance between the *Bible* and the rules lies a clue to the way in which the rules exceed their status as law and sit instead as *rēgula*; they sit atop the *Bible*, as it were, and seek to define one way, a monastic way, that God's teachings could be properly practiced and interpreted. This function of the rules to set a standard for the practice and interpretation of God's law reveals the way the rules function not primarily as set of negative and limiting laws but as an ethics that seeks to give a specific positive practice, i.e. a normative practice, to the *Bible*. The rules contain not only a system of moral codes but also a normative ethics. These rules defined a standardized form of life and subjectivity that resulted in a normalizing practice of morality within the monastery.

Although this movement towards a *rēgula* was not necessitated by the shifts initiated in the lineage of self care that extends from Greece to Rome, this status of the moral law as *rēgula* certainly follows certain trends in the lineage of self-care in antiquity. More specifically, between the Greeks and Romans, a shift occurred towards the interpretation of the code as applying to all individuals in the same way and requiring the same measures to fulfill the code. The Romans had taken some steps towards normativity with their almost universal diagnosis of certain ills and the prescription of universal remedies mandated by Nature, and monasticism continued and enhanced that normative trend:

> …in the perfect monastic life…the monk is entirely regulated, from morning to night and from night to morning, and the only thing that is left undetermined is what one cannot say and one cannot do.[68]

Foucault here describes monasticism as embracing a positive normative form of power that is remarkable in its elaborate controls that eliminate the need for negative laws. Negative uses of power, "undetermined is what one cannot say and one cannot do," are not required by these forms of power because they define what one *should* do and so it is not necessary to define what one must not do because anything other than the norm is unacceptable.

One can see how a turn to a normative form of power would make sense in a moral economy in which the individual was thought to be incapable of their own proper self-government. The norms specified, for the individuals, how they were to behave so that the direction of their own conduct was not left in their own hands but was instead specified by a rule that reflected God's Will. A normalizing regime is dominating and this was not lost on cenobites; they sought their own domination in order that they might one day be saved:

> Therefore brothers, if we wish to reach the highest peak of humility and soon arrive at the heavenly heights, we must, by our good deeds, set up a ladder like Jacob's, upon which he saw angels climbing up and down. Without doubt, we should understand that climbing as showing us that we go up by humbling ourselves and down by praising ourselves…The first step of humility is taken when a man obeys all of God's commandments—never ignoring them, and fearing God in his heart. He must constantly remember that those who scorn Him will be cast into Hell. He must continually guard himself against all sins of body and spirit, and deny himself the fleshly lusts. [69]

A normalizing code, backed up with an efficient ascetic regimen that saw to it that the norms were obeyed, could insure, as near as humanly possible, that one remained in fear of God and in obedience of His Will.

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[68] Michel Foucault, Sécurité, Territoire, Population, (Gallimard: Paris, 2004) 48.

[69] Benedict, The Rule, 57.

Before moving on to describe how this normalizing code was put into practice by a technology of *askesis*, I must first urge caution in how one understands the relation of the normalization produced in the monastery to its larger social context. Although monastic relations are normalizing, monastic relations do not result in domination in the same way that disciplinary relations do. Obviously, once one joins a monastery governed by the *Rule of St. Benedict*, the Rule is quite clear on what one will be doing with almost every moment of one's day; it is purposefully controlling and insofar as one remains in the monastery, it is dominating. But, unlike disciplinary relations, monastic life was just one possibility for constructing a subjectivity among a whole host of different non-normalizing and normalizing possibilities. Individuals could approach life and morality from any number of other possible and perfectly acceptable avenues; monastic relations did not dominate the possibilities for life or moral life in the west as disciplinary relations one day would:

> ...is to say that it [power] has, thanks to the play of technologies of discipline on the one hand and technologies of regulation on the other, succeeded in covering the whole surface that lies between the organic and the biological, between body and population. We are, then, in a power that has taken control of both the body and life or that has, if you like, taken control of life in general…[70]

In the context of society as a whole, monastic relations did not constitute a form of domination even if within the monastery it was absolutely controlling because it existed, side by side, with other valid options for the construction of a self in the pre-disciplinary west.

Now I would like to turn to monastic *askesis* in order to detail how this normalizing monastic law was practiced by the cenobites. In order to contextualize this

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[70] Foucault, <u>Society Must Be Defended,</u> 253.

discussion of *askesis,* we need to turn back to the discussion of the ethical substance and *telos* of the monastery and recall that the purpose of the monastery was to bring a Fallen ethical substance into obedience of God's Will so that the individuals might be saved in the afterlife. The normative moral code detailed by the rules made sense in this context as a way of providing specific content to God's Will; the rules were an interpretation of God's Word that sought the singularly best way (i.e. the surest way to salvation) to put His Word into practice. Benedict is not shy about the fact that he considers the cenobitical life to be the best kind of life, "let us with God's help establish a rule for Cenobites who are the best kind of monks."[71] The ascetics that I am about to discuss aimed at the substitution of God's will for that of the individual. In other words, these practices of *askesis* aim at self-renunciation, at reducing the role of the will of the individual in their own actions.

As a result, monastic ascetics were not attuned to the pleasures and desires of the cenobites but sought to substitute the actions God willed, whether it pleased the monks or not. In a calculus that did not consider the pleasures of the brothers, the ascetics were formulated as a tool to bring the monks to substitute God's Will in the place of their own:

> They [monks] do not live as they please, nor as their desires and will dictate, but they live under the direction and judgment of an abbot in a monastery. Undoubtedly, they find their inspiration in the Lord's saying: "I come not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me."[72]

As the quote attests, the monastery deployed a set of relations that coerced and trained the monks to act out the singular vision of the good demanded by God, even if, perhaps especially if, the individual did not desire it.

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[71] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 47.

[72] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 55.

Three specific ascetic elements that the monastery deployed in order to bring the brothers into a Godly order were: 1) the ranking of the brothers in the monastery, with special consideration of the role of the abbot at the head of the hierarchy, 2) the usage of space (location) as an ascetic technique, and 3) the controls over time (activity) that the abbot administered.

First, let us begin our consideration of ranking in the monastery with the abbot and consider how the *Rule of St. Benedict* defined his role. The abbot "is Christ's representative" in the monastery; he is called abbot (*abba* translates to father) because he holds a similar, though lesser, place as Christ does in the lives of the monks.[73] The abbot's place is as a leader in the monastery, as a general of souls, who is to shepherd his flock of monks into salvation through his diligent care for them, "The pastor is not fundamentally or primarily a judge, he is essentially a doctor who has to take charge of each soul and the sickness of each soul."[74] Foucault notes, in the preceding quote, that the pastor is not primarily someone who is removed from the daily lives of his flock and merely judges them to be in violation of the law or not. The pastor is a doctor, someone who sees to it that his flock meets a certain positively conceived definition of (spiritual) health.

The pastoral work that the abbot performs in the service of his brothers' souls places his own soul in a precarious situation.   This situation is precarious for two reasons. First, the abbot is human and his greater power offers greater chance for him to fall from the Way and to become lost in evil. Moreover, although the abbot is subject to

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[73] Benedict, The Rule, 48.
[74] Foucault, Sécurité, Territoire, Population, 178.

greater temptation, he has less time to attend to himself because is busy caring for others. Thus, the abbot must be especially vigilant and effective in regulating the state of his own soul so that he does not become lost to evil: "We do not intend that he allow vices to grow. He must weed them out with prudence and charity…"[75]

Second, the abbot has not only to answer for his own sins and faults but he must also answer to God for those sins of his brothers as well. For, as a caretaker of souls and Christ's representative, the abbot is responsible for doing everything in his power to correct his sheep's failings: "He must prepare himself to account for the souls in his care; for on Judgment Day he will have to account for all his monks' souls, as well as his own, no matter how many."[76] As a result of the abbot's need to care for others and still maintain his own self care through in a difficult situation, the abbot must be an exceptional person.

The position of the abbot as a leader of souls could be seen as problematic in that the abbot is fallen and evil as all people are; how can there be such a thing as an 'exceptional' person? By what virtue does he lead others? Augustine and Aquinas both answer this question in a similar way. Namely, that evil is a lack of goodness and that insofar as people are evil they are just missing some amount of goodness. All of this is just to say that people are partially good and although all of their actions lack some level of goodness (i.e. are evil) those actions still contain some amount of goodness. The abbot leads, not because he is perfect, the abbot leads merely because he has comparatively more goodness. In other words, the abbot has more thoroughly turned away from his

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[75] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 100.
[76] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 50.

own desires and pleasures and towards the Will of God as a source of the good. For example, Augustine writes in the *Confessions* that his own qualifications and successes as a pastor that came from his own self-renunciation and turn to God: "For whatever good I utter to men, You have heard from me before I utter it; and whatever good You hear from me, You have first spoken to me."[77] The abbot thus lies at the head of a hierarchy in the monastery because of his relative goodness and it is from this position that he organizes a ranking in the monastery.

The ranking is characterized by a hierarchy with the abbot at the top and descends in terms of moral progress and seniority. This ranking that the abbot establishes in his community is influenced by the military; the larger Benedictine monasteries are organized into units with leaders, based on the model of the Roman military. The ranking and sectioning of the men is done to achieve a militaristic effect in the monastery—to achieve the mobilization of God's army, complete with officers and a command structure. It is not to be overlooked either that the obedience implied by the military model was also welcome in the monastic setting; the values of obedience, deference, and rank were well observed in monastery. The *Rule* makes this military model evident not only in that the Benedictine monastery repeatedly refers to itself as an army, "First are the Cenobites [such as the Benedictines], those who live in a monastery waging their war under a rule and an abbot…," but also because the military organization of the monastery was done in groups of 10, lead by a decurion like units in the Roman military.
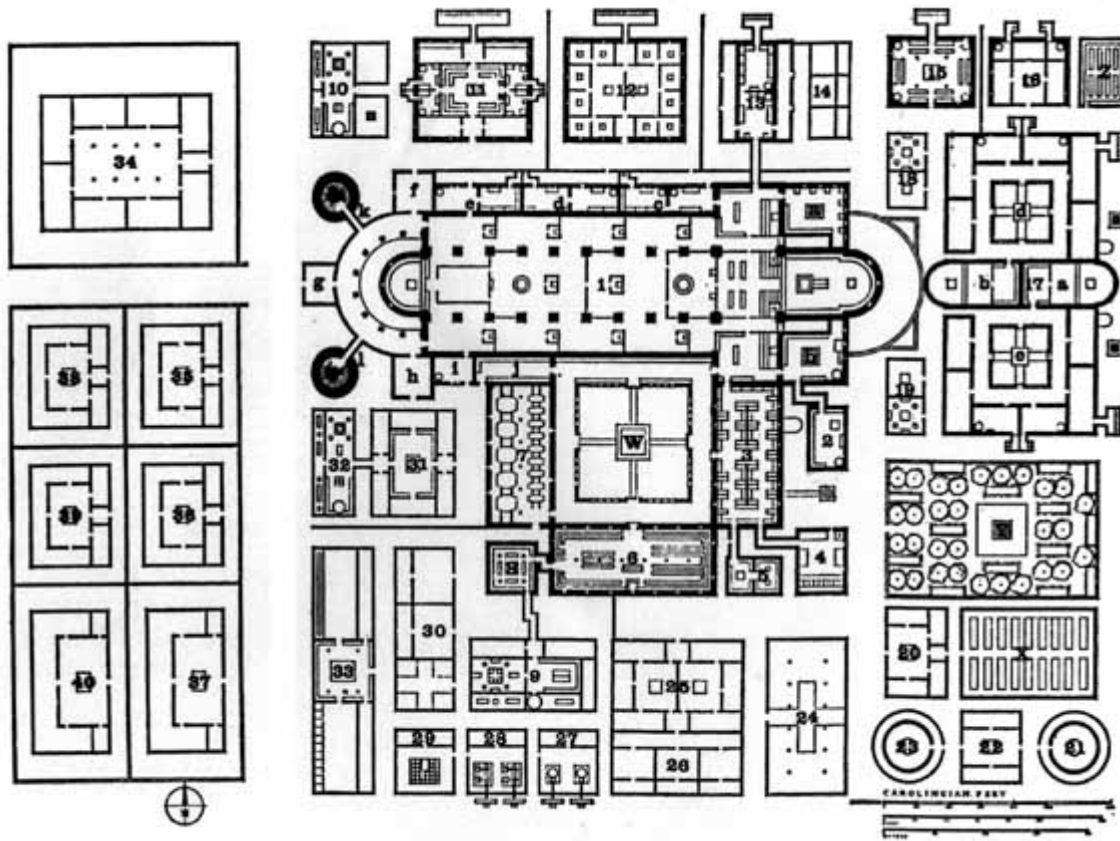
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[77] Augustine, Confessions, 173.

The abbot ensured the compliance of his flock to the norms of the rule with the strict, effective, and well defined relations of ranking and obedience that are the result of the order that is established in the monastery:

> The Christian pastoral, it, had, I believe, organized something totally different and that is foreign, it seems to me, to the Greek practice, and what it had organized, it is what one could call the authority of pure obedience…[78]

This authority of "pure obedience" was given and practiced in the monastery through the relations of ranked subordination whose Earthly head was the abbot but whose ultimate commander was God. As Foucault points out in the quote, this form of obedience was something quite foreign to the Greeks who sought freedom through their own self-command. The turn to obedience as the Earthly end of morality could only have appeared to be a morality turned upside down for these Greeks who fled slavery and submission.

Paramount among the techniques that allowed the abbot and his lieutenants, typically called 'deans,' to impose the order of the Rule through the ranks was the very arrangement of space in the monastery itself. Following are the plans of the Benedictine Monastery at St. Gall, perhaps the most famous and influential example of monastic, especially Benedictine, architecture in the west:

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[78] Foucault, Sécurité, Territoire, Population,177.

KEY TO PLAN OF ST GALL

1. The church
a) Ground-floor scriptorium with library above
b) Ground-floor sacristy with wardrobe above
c) Lodging for visiting monks
d) Lodging for master of external school
e) Porter's lodge
f) Vestibule for entrance to the hostelry for important visitors and to the external school
g) Vestibule for entrance to the monastery for all visitors
h) Vestibule for entrance to the hospice for the poor and to the commons
i) Lodging for the master of the hospice for the poor
j) Monks' parlor
k) Saint Michael's tower
l) Saint Gabriel's tower
2. Annex for preparing sacred bread and oil
3. Monks' dorter with warming room below
4. Monks' latrine
5. Monks' bath and laundry
6. Ground-floor monks' refectory with clothing stores above

17. Novices' convent and infirmary
18. Infirmary kitchen and bath
19. Novices' kitchen and bath
20. Gardiner's house
21. Poultry yard
22. House for keepers of chickens and geese
23. Goose yard
24. Granary
25. Workshops and artisans' lodgings
26. Annex for artisans' lodgings
27. Mill
28. Mortars
29. Court for drying fruit and grain
30. House for turners and coopers with threshing stage for grain for the brewery
31. Hospice for pilgrims and the poor
32. Kitchen, bakery, and brewery for pilgrims and the poor
33. Cow stalls and stable with lodging for cowmen and stable boys
34. House for the emperor's suite (identification uncertain)

7. Monks' cellar with food stores above
8. Monks' kitchen
9. Monks' bakery and brewery
10. Kitchen, cellar, bakery, and brewery for important visitors
11. Hostelry for important visitors
12. External school
13. Abbot's house
14. Abbot's kitchen, cellar, and bath
15. Location for bleeding and purgation
16. Doctors' house

35. Sheepfold and shepherd's lodging
36. Goat stalls and lodging for goatherds
37. Stable for dairy cows and lodging for dairymen
38. House for farm workers and servants attached to the emperor's suite (uncertain, cf. no. 34)
39. Pigsty and lodging for swineherds
40. Stable for mares and colts and lodging for stable boys
X. Monks' garden
Y. Cemetery and orchard
Z. Medicinal garden[79]

As is perhaps not clear from the plans, the exterior of the monastery is bordered by a wall that is intended to separate the order of the rest of the world from that of the monastery. In fact, the monastery is to contain its own well, livestock, stables, granary, bakery, and sources of medicine so as to be as cloistered as possible: "The monastery should be planned, if possible, with all the necessities—water, mill, garden, shops—within the walls. Thus monks will not need to wander about the outside, for this is not good for their souls."[80] Through the wall and the self-sufficiency of the monastery, all distractions, disruptions to order, and sinful contagions from the outside are minimized, including visits outside the monastery and talk of the outside world in the monastery: "No one shall recount his adventures outside the monastery because this is most harmful. Violators will be subject to regular punishment."[81] These walls permitted an environment to be established inside the monastery that was characterized by the specific forms of obedience required for salvation, while simultaneously blocking all interruptions of that order from the outside through the seclusion and cloistering that the walls offered.

[79] Pierre Riche, Daily Life in the World of Charlemagne, trans. Jo Ann McNamara (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 1988) 36.
[80] Benedict, The Rule, 102.
[81] Benedict, The Rule, 103.

Within the walls, a further set of checks and controls on evil exists to regulate the actions that occurred within the monastery. The architecture of the monastery not only isolates the monastery from the rest of the world but also allows for the control of the movement of brothers within the walls. This control on the movement of the brothers was established through several means. First, one control on the movement of the brother was established through points within the monastery that can only be crossed if one has the proper keys. For instance, the cellarer keeps the food and other utensils under lock except in the case in which he entrusts a particular item to someone's care; in that case, both he and the abbot receive written notice of this disbursement so that no mistake or theft is possible.[82] This system of lock and key prevents the brothers from being tempted to steal any valuables or consume extra food, thus not only blocking them physically from access but also removing the temptation to disrupt the order of the monastery. In addition to the cellarer, the monastery was also designed to have a porter who regulates the flow of people, ideas, and goods in and out of the monastery. The porter is to be "wise" and "old," presumably meaning a conservative and stogy old man who will not permit smuggling and pleasure trips on his watch.[83]

But the more prevalent tool for the control of movement within the monastery is to assign all the brothers an exact place that they are supposed to be at any given moment in time: "Idleness is an enemy of the soul. Therefore, the brothers should be occupied according to schedule in either manual labor or holy reading."[84] The schedule that every brother is to follow is quite detailed and forms a precise time table that specifies where

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[82] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 74.
[83] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 102.
[84] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 86.

each brother is to be located throughout the day, "For all things ought to be done at the designated hours."[85] All the brothers are assigned specific work tasks, study times, seven times daily for gathering to pray as a community, and a specific place and time in which they are to sleep. The control over the placement and activity of the brothers is to be precise and total: "Anyone who leaves the monastery, goes anywhere, or does anything, however small, without the abbot's permission will be similarly punished."[86] This precise placement and control of activity makes monitoring easier because the monks are only ever supposed to be where they were ordered to be. The abbot or his deans only need check that single space for a singular type of activity in order to determine if the monk is remaining in submission. If the monk is anywhere else or doing anything else, then he is at fault.

To make sure that the brothers remain in their assigned spots at their assigned tasks, another technique was employed: silence and surveillance. The brothers were to remain in silence without small talk or gossiping and, in this way, the brothers could be positioned within sight of each other, in order to monitor and aid each other, but without fear of the brothers leading each other into sin through gossip or evil collusions. [87] For instance, the silence helped prevent plotting for extra food or drink, conspiring ways to reduce the work load, planning to jump the wall, sharing tales that promote or glorify sin, etc. Moreover, the silence also encouraged prayer and contemplation of God, thereby removing a possible evil and replacing it with a good. This line of sight and proximity established in the monastery also exerted a pressure towards compliance of the *Rule's*

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[85] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 85.
[86] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 103.
[87] Benedict, <u>The Rule,</u> 56.

dictates insofar as a monk could not break the *Rule* or the wishes of the abbot without the his companions likely noticing and either disciplining him or reporting him.

The end result of this spacing of individuals is that: 1) movement is prevented, via lock and key, to those areas that have the most potential to lead to sin (to the food, drink, utensils, and outside world), 2) the brothers are assigned a particular place to be at all times of the day and are forbidden to be elsewhere without express permission of the abbot, in part, to facilitate their surveillance, 3) the brothers are pinned in place and forced to carry out an action by the gaze of the other brothers who observe them but are forbidden to talk, and 4) this space was ranked and assigned to certain deans or authorities to police its order. We must keep in mind that in the final account, space was enclosed, partitioned, and ranked in the monastery not to subject one monk to the rule of another, but to provide relationships that would produce a series of mutual forces on the brothers that would lead to their full conversion to God:

> "We have questioned the Lord, brothers, and have heard of the conditions for living in
> His Kingdom; but we shall live there only if we fulfill these conditions. Therefore we
> must prepare ourselves, in body and soul, to fight under the commandments of holy
> obedience."[88]

The monastery and its' space is intended to provide a place in which the self would be brought into the greatest possible obedience of God. The monastery placed the brothers' desires, acts, and pleasures into a spatio-temporal vice, to prevent distributions of monks that would promote sin and encourage those distributions that would train obedience to God's will. Positioned properly in space, these monks were trained to take up a righteous place in God's order, which was not only to assume a location in monastic space but also to assume the proper space in the metaphysical order of Creation as well. The brothers,

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[88] Benedict, The Rule, 45.

always in the right place at the right time and under the pastoral gaze of others, were trained to act for the good in a way that no man likely could have if left to his own flawed judgment. This holy spacing placed the brothers in a series of programmed and regular locations that allowed them to integrate into the larger order of God's army in the most useful and pleasing way to God. The monastic arrangement of space reveals a directionality that neither takes its cues from earthly life nor ultimately aspires to anything within it; instead, this metaphysical spatiality finds itself integrated into the fiefdom of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and culminates in the beyond that only He can provide.

In relation to the control of space afforded by the monastery, the time of the monastery is, if anything, only more strictly regimented. Like the control of space, the control over time and activity exerted by the monastery was aimed towards the progress of the brothers towards salvation, as the conclusion to the Augustinian *Regulations for a Monastery* relates:

> When you heed these observances
> with fidelity and piety,
> in the name of Christ,
> you will make progress
> and we shall experience no little joy
> over your salvation. Amen.[89]

The control over time in the monastery was quite precise. The monks had a detailed time table that specified exactly which activities they were to be carrying out (and where) at all times of the day, on the different days of the week, and in the different seasons of the year. For example, the prayers of the week were arranged in a specific order both in

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[89] Augustine, Confessions, 79.

regards to the day of the week and the seven services of the day so that specific topics may be regularly addressed and the whole Psalter may be weekly sung:

> Four psalms are to be chanted every day at Vespers, starting with Psalm 109 and ending with Psalm 147, leaving out the psalms set aside for the other Hours (117, 127, and 133 to 142). Since there will be three too few, Psalms 138, 143, and 144 should be divided, while Psalm 116, which is short, should be combined with Psalm 115.[90]

This example from the *Rule of St. Benedict* relates just how closely and intensely time and activity were regulated; not only was the whole Psalter to be sung, but it was to be sung in such a way that it was evenly and precisely divided between the days of the week and the different hours of the day in which it was sung. Time and the activities it required were strictly regimented in order to incur the greatest possible control over activity and they were also regularized to develop, through habituation, an almost total conformity to the demands of the time table.

We should not make the mistake of thinking that the control of time was limited to a control over physical activity. This control was also extended to the movement of the soul as well; after all, the *telos* of the monastery is not to be found in an Earth-bound order of the flesh, but in the reordering of the soul towards salvation. To this end, the regularity of the time table was an enormous asset in that it allowed the soul to conform itself to the rhythm and behaviors demanded by the time table. In addition, Benedict prescribes a table with progressively ranked steps for the brothers to undertake in order to bring a true humility to the soul that would allow for total obedience. This table describes a work on the soul that was to happen through conformity to the time table but also was to take place in the services and times of silence during work. *The Rule of St.*

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[90] Benedict, The Rule, 68.

Benedict specifies twelve distinct consecutive steps that the soul must take towards

becoming humble with the hope that:

> When a monk has climbed all twelve steps, he will find that perfect love of God which casts out fear, by means of which everything he had observed anxiously before will now appear simple and natural. He will no longer act out of the fear of Hell, but for the love of Christ, out of good habits and with a pleasure derived of virtue. The Lord, through the Holy Spirit, will show this to His servant, cleansed of sin and vice.[91]

Echoed in this quote and throughout the *Rule of St. Benedict* is that the purpose of the

detail and specificity of the control over the activity of the brothers is to be found in the

idea that all activity (even non-activity, as in sloth) effects one's soul. No matter where

or when, all activity has an effect on the soul and will either hasten one's ascent into

heaven or speed one's descent into hell. With this thought in mind, the monastery seeks

to fill each moment of the brothers' lives with as positive of an action as it is possible to

carry out. Every second has its effect and the time table seeks to maximize the

possibilities of each moment, cleansing the brothers of "sin and vice" and leading to

salvation. Thus, the table tends to be as thorough and detailed as it might be; the more

specific it is, the less activity it leaves to be decided by souls that are weak and prone to

sin and the more it directs the monk towards God's will and his own salvation. In

Discipline and Punish, Foucault comments on this monastic drive to regulation, "In any

case, 'detail' had long been a category of theology and asceticism: every detail is

important since, in the sight of God, no immensity is greater than a detail…"[92]

The control exerted by the monastery over the activity, space, and the becoming

of the brothers reflects a sort of domination that was not present in Greco-Roman moral

practice. Like the Greeks and Romans, the brothers still sought to care for themselves

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[91] Benedict, The Rule, 61.

[92] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 140.

but the monks were caught in a position in which they had found themselves unable to

care for themselves properly—all the tools of the self that the ancients used were tainted

in their hands through the Fall:

> And this is where Christianity, by presenting salvation as occurring beyond life, in a way upsets or at least disturbs the balance of the care of the self. Although, let me say it again. To seek one's salvation definitely means to take care of oneself. But the condition for attaining salvation is precisely renunciation.[93]

Due to the natural evil of the monastic ethical substance and their inability to rely on

themselves in the way that the Romans and Greeks were able to, self care turned into a

paradoxical practice of seeking to master the self through renouncing the self; the will of

the monk became focused on its own negation. For the monks, self-mastery could only

be achieved when the self turned itself over to God, which was the goal and the purpose

of monastic domination. The ranking, time tables, and the control over space sought to

provide a form of ordered training that would bring the monk to renounce themselves and

replace their own unreasonable self-command with the domination of the Will of God. It

was a form of subjectivation that was purposely deaf to the will of the subject; it was an

order that found salvation in the enslavement of the sinful will to the dictates of a perfect

supernatural Other. And, because all men were Fallen and found their *telos* in salvation,

the order prescribed the same plan for salvation to all men; this normalizing code and

form of *askesis* brought the brothers all from the same state (Fallen) to the same state

(saved) through a series of exercises meant to create a subjectivity based on the Truth of

God's Word.

　　　This monastic *askesis* contains its similarities to Greco-Roman self-care but it is

also useful to examine the differences in these forms of self-care as well. For instance,

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[93] Foucault, <u>Ethics of the Concern for Self,</u> 439.

the agonistic Greek ascetics aimed to reinforce the mastery of the self, not only over itself, but over others as well. Although Greek ascetics did voice concern over particular individual's qualifications to lead themselves and others, *vis.* Alcibiades, they did not voice concern about the potential of humanity as a whole to provide individuals who had a sufficiently good ethical substance to be able set proper values and lead others by means of them. Perhaps as a result of this, the Greeks did not have normalizing practices of self-care because it seemed to them that individuals were able to make independent and valid decisions about the direction of their self-care without being subject to a normalizing apparatus.

Roman *askesis* takes up an interesting position between monastic and Greek *askesis.* The Roman ethical substance was more prone to illness and moral fault than the Greek ethical substance but was also more and differently ethically capable than the monastic ethical substance—they were medicalized, not Fallen.   Alongside their medicalized ethical substance, the Romans relied more heavily on experts in their ascetics than the Greeks did in order to achieve self-mastery. The Roman practitioner of self care had to begin their practices of *askesis* under a master because they needed the help of another to establish a level of self-mastery from which they could begin to guide their own self care more thoroughly. Importantly, the Romans still directed their *askesis* towards the development of self-government, unlike the Christians, who rejected self-government in favor of self-renunciation and obedience to a metaphysical agent.

The understanding of these differences in the ethical substance, *telos*, moral code and *askesis* of the monastery allow the discussion to move to its final stage, the analysis of the monastic mode of subjection. I will first discuss the Greek and Roman mode of

subjection to establish a basis of comparison and then move to a discussion of monastic subjectivation.

The mode of subjection in Greek self-care, the way in which the individual was related to their morality, was typically that of an elite youth seeking the training necessary to eventually take part in the leadership of Greece. As such, the mode of subjection in Greek self care revealed itself to be both a matter of qualification (a certain status and wealth) as well as a matter of choice, in that the youth would have to have the desire to take up a leadership role in the city. Furthermore, the mode of subjection was further stylized in specific reference to the youth's position, aspirations, and the character with which he aimed to fulfill his moral goals.

The Roman mode of subjection had altered from the Greek model; Roman self care was open to people of all classes because it was no longer seen as being only an instrument for training future rulers. Roman self-care was aimed at the pleasure that self-mastery could bring as well as the beneficial effect it had on others and the world. This goal of pleasure and self-contentment was a goal that was open to much more of the population than just the elite who aimed to rule. Many more people were able to pursue a relationship with this morality than was possible in Greece and this was not lost on the Romans; they produced many descriptions of the benefits of practicing self-care for all peoples. In this turn in the mode of subjection, from self care for a select few (Greece) to avocation of the benefits of self care for all (Rome), an important move was made.

Insofar as all humanity was ill to the Romans and that self care was a possibility for all to undertake, self care began to appear as a *need* and not as an option for certain individuals; self care was a demand placed by Nature on one that one fulfill one's

capacity to self-rule and care for oneself, ridding oneself of illness. The mode of subjection of Roman self care thus tended to be more universal, not just in that self care was recommended universally but in that individuals tended to need to take up self care for similar reasons. Like the Greeks though, Roman self-care still emphasized a stylization of conduct. Although the individuals all may be helpless without a master to help them out of their initial illness and begin their self-mastery, they could use the rationality and mastery they developed to begin to determine the way in which they would continue to aesthetically elaborate their selfhood.

The monastery, as it is by now evident, has little place for aesthetics or difference. All humanity is Fallen and, insofar as it is Fallen and incapable of caring for itself, it must all turn to do what God commands in order to be saved. All humanity needs to be saved and thus all humanity needs to ask Jesus Christ to lead them to salvation as a shepherd leads his flock. The mode of subjection is thus strictly universal for the monks, their need to practice self care out of Falleness and the general form in which they are obligated to it, through obedience to God, is a global phenomenon. This universal mode of subjection is reflected in the like treatment the brothers get: the initiates must give up all that they own and take on a standard dress, take the same pledge, eat the same food, live the same schedule, and live in the same quarters. All the brothers comply with the moral code in the normal required form. A stylistic relationship with the moral law is deliberately made impossible by the rule which defines evil as the result of this stylization, i.e. acting out of the direction of one's own will, and precisely designs all activities that the monks are to practice in order to counter any rise of the will. Any

attempt by evil souls to act independently and aesthetically outside of God's will would be disastrous because it would undoubtedly be motivated by some measure of evil.

In sum, monastic self-care represents a trend, on almost all fronts, towards an institution-wide normalization of moral and ethical practice. All of the monks were to study the same moral law in the *Bible* and all were to practice that law in the precise manner defined by the Rule and their abbot. All of the brothers legitimately practice morality in this same way because their ethical substances all are Fallen and all are aiming towards the same *telos*, salvation. All monks effectively have the same starting point and same destination, making their journeys, if they stay on the straight and narrow, remarkably similar. In the end, this results in a normalization that is reflected in the ideal monk who practices life as defined by the time table. Make no mistake, monasticism is still a practice of freedom as was Greek and Roman self-care but the freedom culminates in a metaphysical beyond and not in life. While on Earth, the monks sought a normalized form of self-renunciation and relations that compelled enslavement in order to be found worthy to be saved and free. This freedom, however, is not a freedom from slavery, to command the style of one's life as it was for the Greeks; instead, this freedom takes the form of a freedom from sin that is paradoxically to be found in exact conformity to God's will. Freedom finds an Orwellian form in the monastery in that freedom is slavery and slavery is freedom.

It is important to qualify the normalizing action of the monastery by again noting that the monks possessed the possibility to follow other forms of life, to follow Christ in alternative forms, or even by pursuing a relatively unreligious life, making this particular normalizing form of regimen one option among many. What we are to be presented with

in the next chapter is a picture of a society in which a normalizing form of power, based on monastic power, has proliferated and swarmed the relationships of power and knowledge to such an extent that individuals in the west have little option but to be subjected, at some time or another, to disciplinary normalization. The next chapter will be a re-examination of disciplinary power, from the perspective of the lineage of self care that has been developed through the monastery and Greco-Roman self care.

Chapter 4: Disciplines Reborn

Most people would acknowledge that pagan self care and the Christian monastery both perform moral functions. Hence, for most, it would not seem unusual or questionable that I would apply a grid for the analysis of morality to them. But when it comes to applying this same grid to the disciplines, the issue is less clear because the relationship of the disciplines to morality is not as clear. Before beginning the analysis of the disciplines, I would like to begin by considering the relation of the disciplines to morality in Foucault's work and discuss the costs and benefits of applying a grid for the analysis of morality to them.

On the question of disciplines and morality, it is clear that Foucault intended to approach the disciplines in *Discipline and Punish* as part of a larger study of morality. More specifically, Foucault approached the disciplines, at least in part, as "moral technologies." This approach was part of "reactivating the project of a genealogy of morals:"

> My second reason for wanting to study the prison was the idea of reactivating the project of a "genealogy of morals," one which worked by tracing the lines of transformation of what one might call "moral technologies."[1]

In this quote, Foucault lets it be known that he is following the transformation of moral technologies through their figuration in disciplinary relations. And while Foucault makes it clear that he does hold the disciplines to have moral relevance, he says much more than this in giving some indications of what sort of moral relevance he holds the disciplines to have for him. It is key in this quote that his focus on the disciplines is a genealogical

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[1] Michel Foucault, "Impossible Prison," trans. Colin Gordon, <u>Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984</u>, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (Semiotext(e): New York, 1996) 276.

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focus on moral 'technologies' (as opposed to an archaeological focus on moral

discourse), meaning that Foucault is especially keyed into the particular real world events

and techniques that make the operation of morality possible.   This focus on the particular

techniques that define how a morality operates is quite similar to what I have been

following as ethics; they both focus on the particular real world means through which

subjectivation occurs and is maintained. It is this subtext of the transformation of

monastic moral technology in *Discipline and Punish* that I will be drawing on and

articulating along the five axes of the grid (the moral code, the ethical substance, mode of

subjection, *askesis*, and the *telos)*.

The application of the grid promises to be profitable not only because there is a

moral subtext in *Discipline and Punish* that it can be applied to but also because this

subtext directly addresses the monastery:

> And however one takes monastic life as the model of disciplinary saturation, it had in
> effect been its point of departure and matrix in that what the monk did was regulated in
> its entirety in the perfect monastic life, from morning to night and night to morning…[2]

From this quote, it is clear that Foucault thought that the monastery served as the "point

of departure" for those moral technologies that he studied in *Discipline and Punish.* The

lines of transformation of moral techniques that Foucault is detailing in *Discipline and*

Punish are the techniques of western monasticism.

A second concern with the application of a grid for the analysis of morality has to

do with the costs and benefits involved in applying this grid of the analysis of morality to

the disciplines. Even given that Foucault recognized the moral effects and history of the

disciplines, one must note that there will be a shift in the values that govern the analysis

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[2] Michel Foucault. Sécurité, Territoire, Population, (Gallimard: Paris, 2004) 48. All translations from this text are my own. An English translation has yet to be published.

of the disciplines if the disciplines are approached through the grid I have been

employing; this difference is bound to alter both the form and the results of a study of the

disciplines.

Let us begin by briefly considering what is valorized and achieved by formulating

the analysis as Foucault did and then consider what is at stake in a shift to a different

mode of analysis in the study of the disciplines. *Discipline and Punish* is structured, in

part, to decenter the importance of the subject by showing how power relations can

operate intentionally but non-subjectively. Foucault's analysis shows how disciplinary

relations constitute a process of subjectivation that creates not only the particular abilities

of an individual but also the subjectivity of the individual as well. His analysis indicates

that subjects are not the independent and rational commanders of power that many think

them to be but rather the products of powers and knowledges. In fact, in order to

maintain the priority of the discipline over the individual as the author of subjectivity, he

refers to individuals as 'bodies,' which indicates the way that the individual serves as raw

material to be shaped and formed through a process of disciplinary *askesis* that eventually

renders them subjects. Overall, in *Discipline and Punish*, his emphasis is decidedly not

on the ability of individuals to resist disciplinary relations, or even to create their own

forms of comportment; it is focused on the domination of disciplinary techniques in the

subjectivation of the individual.

In contrast, a grid of moral analysis that focuses on ethics and emphasizes the role

of the individual in their own self-formation and creation would work to present a

different set of priorities than Foucault's analysis did. An ethical emphasis would draw

attention to the relationship and the forms of necessary complicity that exist between the

individual and the disciplinary formation of a subject. Ethical analysis highlights and makes explicit those steps wherein an individual, in acknowledgement of themselves as a particular kind of ethical substance, takes the steps necessary to become a recognized and legitimate member of a community. This form of ethical analysis strongly details those points of necessary complicity that would be important points to draw on in process of attack and critical transformation. It also has its advantages in that it highlights how the disciplines draw from and modify previous moralities. However, with the focus on ethics and the individual, this grid of analysis decenters Foucault's concern to deprioritize the subject. Although I believe Foucault's analysis captures something correct and essential about modern subjectivity in its domination by disciplinary relations, it is not false to detail the necessary forms of ethical complicity required by the individual in order to become a subject. In reanalyzing disciplinary relations through this grid of analysis, the under-explored ethical complicities of disciplinary power receive their focus and through this focus, an important relationship for the formulation of attacks and practices of critical transformation is also detailed.

Although I weaken this original emphasis of Foucault's in order to impose those emphases of his later work, this is not in itself problematic because it seems that the appropriate answer to his critique of modern power relations should not only be their repetition and defense. Developing new insights into the function of modern domination and formulating the means of circumventing, altering, destroying, or operating outside of the priority of disciplinary relations are an adequate and even necessary response to his text. Therefore, while the terms of my re-analysis are in tension with some of the aims of

Discipline and Punish, I believe it is an important response and transformation of that analysis.

Now that I have discussed the issues revolving around the applicability and stakes involved in employment of Foucault's grid for the analysis of morality to disciplinary relations, I will to move to the analysis itself.

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I will begin the discussion of disciplinary relations by considering the ethical substance that is found in disciplinary relations. A good introduction to the ethical substance can be found in the opening of the third part of *Discipline and Punish,* "Discipline." The text opens with a set of historical distinctions between different processes of recruiting soldiers in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. In the sixteenth century, before the use of disciplinary relations in recruiting soldiers, Foucault writes that a soldier is someone who is "recognized from afar", someone who is found and not someone who is made.[3] For these recruiters, a soldier cannot be trained unless he already possesses the disposition of a soldier by nature. In the sixteenth century, one is either naturally a soldier or not, it is the duty of the recruiter to recognize soldiers like it is the job of gold miner to recognize gold; they both examine their materials to see if they are or are not what they are looking for—no alchemy exists for the production of gold or soldiers from other materials in the sixteenth century. By the eighteenth century, the view of the individual had changed and a new form of disciplinary alchemy arose that allowed soldierly lead to be turned into golden military material. These new recruiters saw individuals as malleable, formable substances that, with work, were capable of being

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[3] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 135.

transformed from their soft, weak, non-soldierly disposition to the hard form of the proud

soldier. With the addition of disciplinary techniques, a soldier became something that

could be "made; out of a formless clay, an inapt body, the machine required can be

constructed…"[4]

There is an obvious difference in the regard and appraisal of the ethical substance

in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries; it reflects a substantial change in the

understanding of the malleability of an individual's nature. In the eighteenth century, it

was not a matter of recognizing what was there but not previously noted, it was a matter

of proper disciplinary training and exercise to shape the individual into whatever forms

were desired. This later process of recruiting reflected a confidence that the substance of

an individual could be made into something quite different than what it already was.

This view of the ethical substance was involved in many of the changes that the

disciplines were to make in prisons, schools, mental hospitals, workshops, government,

and the home.   Although these areas are different on many fronts, they all share a central

commitment to the idea that almost any individual is flexible enough to take on whatever

form and nature is desired, given the proper training and attention. Moreover, it should

be noted that it is not just institutions that are committed to the malleability of the ethical

substance, individuals are also deeply committed to this notion. In fact, this view of the

ethical substance has almost become a religion of its own in west; especially in the

United States in which many children are taught that if they work hard enough (at their

askesis) then they can become whatever they want. It is not my intention to discuss the

truth of this claim in regards to whether or not all individuals have access to the resources

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[4] Foucault, <u>Discipline and Punish,</u> 135.

and opportunities that would enable to them to become what it is they want to be (clearly they do not); rather, it is important to note that this regard of ethical substance as endlessly shapeable is echoed and valued by a wide variety of institutions and individuals today.

However, it is interesting to note the divergence in the way that this malleability is valued. Where the disciplinary institutions value this flexibility because it benefits them by allowing individuals to be shaped according to the needs of the particular discipline, individuals tend to emphasize the freedom, given by this flexibility, to become whatever it is they can imagine becoming. The difference can be summarized by the observation that, in the hands of the disciplines, the flexibility of the ethical substance is regarded as a tool of domination and, for the individual, this flexibility is regarded as a source of freedom and, occasionally, resistance. In fact, several popular discourses of resistance, e.g. the civil rights movement, feminism, the GLBT movement, base many of their appeals on the argument that some individuals unjustly lack access to the techniques and resources that would allow them to perform the forms of *askesis* to shape their ethical substance as they desire. This disconnect between the disciplinary employment and the individuals' employment of the malleability of the ethical substance will offer possibilities for the transformation of disciplinary relations that will be called upon in the final chapter.

In many of its manifestations, this discourse of the ethical substance is quite different than the one found in the monastery and Greco-Roman self-care. In the monastery, the dominant notion was that humanity's substance is perhaps possible to *ameliorate* with diligence, effort, and the right reinforcement, but it is not *radically*

transformable through any means that humanity has in its power; only God can take man's essential evil and transform it into what it was not—goodness. Even though this view of the ethical substance separates the disciplines and the monastery by a considerable latitude, one can see a continuity in that they both emphasized the malleability of humanity; it was just the case that the malleability was of different degrees and worked towards different ends.

A wider margin separates the disciplinary view of the ethical substance from that present in Greco-Roman self-care. Of primary importance is the fact that the neither the Greeks nor the Romans had a theory of the subject. Foucault relates that they neither searched for nor possessed such a thing.[5] The result is that they did not have a theory of the subject that could pronounce the character of the ethical substance of the individual universally as in the Disciplines and the Monastery. For the Greeks and Romans the determination of the ethical substance depended on 1) the situation that the individuals found themselves in, 2) what was expected of the individuals, and 3) what resources they had, as individuals, to respond to their own goals in light of their situation and demands placed upon them. To us, who are fond of such generalizations and totalizations of the 'human race,' we might generalize their ethical substance as being one that opens itself up to multiple possibilities for moral stylization, which is just to make the generalization about the specific way that one can not generalize about the Greek and Roman ethical substances—a kind of universal decree about the impossibility of such a decree.

Although Greco-Roman morality and the disciplines are separated by the characterization of the disciplinary ethical substance as subjectivity, one can see a

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[5] Foucault, <u>Return of Morality,</u> 473.

similarity that the ancients shared with the disciplines that the monastery did not.

Namely, we can see a kind of likeness in that the pagan ethical substance had a flexibility

that would allow for different stylizations to be imparted to it. This separates the ancients

from the cenobites in that the monks had a relatively inflexible ethical substance that, in

this sense, places the ancients nearer to the present in that the disciplines had a view of

the ethical substance that was radically malleable.

The disciplinary view of the ethical substance as inherently and radically

malleable is coupled with a normative moral code that sought to define the proper forms

that should be imposed upon the substance. In the last chapter, we discussed the

difference between norms and the law; with this distinction already made, we can move

directly to discuss the details of how a normative moral code operated in the disciplines

in reference to the ethical substance. In particular, I want to specify how norms operate

on two levels in the disciplines: one level operates at a level local to the discipline and the

second level is a species-wide level that spans multiple disciplines.

On the first level of the operation of the norm, each particular discipline has

norms that are specific to the sort of discipline it is (school, factory, prison, hospital, etc.)

These norms are not considered to be essential or required for individuals to learn except

insofar as they participate in that particular discipline. For instance, a military barracks

might have strict regulations about firearms, while sports teams might have strict codes

regarding diet and exercise. It is not necessary for someone in the military to learn about

athletic norms, just as it is not necessary for an individual in athletics to learn military

protocol. Early in the history of the disciplines, the norms that each discipline employed

drew their force and authority primarily from the *telos* of the discipline itself; this means

that in as much as the particular norm is necessary to the discipline, it is enforced and upheld within that discipline. Even today we can find many examples of such codes regarding training: the form of training that many businesses give to individuals is not seen to be necessary or good in itself, such training is only good insofar as it aids the discipline (with profit, lower insurance premiums, etc.)

However, another class of norms appeared in the disciplines with the confluence of disciplinary and bio-relations.[6] These norms were regarded as possessing more urgency and necessity than merely providing guidelines for certain types of contingent disciplinary functions. This second class of norms claimed to derive from knowledge about the essential nature of the human ethical substance and had a prescriptive force that derived from claims to be serving and aiding this nature. Although the full explanation of this will have to wait until the sixth chapter on bio-power, the claim by many bio-agencies that the ethical substance has an essence was made compatible with the disciplinary view that it was malleable by claiming that the essence was so weak that the ethical substance was almost limitlessly malleable. In this way, both the assertion of a human nature and an almost limitless malleability were made to be compatible.

This understanding of human nature as weak, rather than making that nature irrelevant, made it all the more important to protect through the vigilant adherence to norms designed to support it and carry it out. Claiming to speak on behalf of humanity's fragile nature, these norms prescribed standards that all disciplines were expected to

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[6] In chapter six, I will be exploring bio-power and its relations to the disciplines in detail. This second form of norm that circulates in the disciplines results from the colonization of the disciplines by bio-relations. The full explanation of how and why this second class of norms were integrated into disciplinary functions will occur in chapter six.

follow in combination with their own proprietary disciplinary norms. For instance, race,

sex, sexuality, and class norms were and are all operative in the disciplines in the form of

racism, sexism, homophobia, and classism.

Much of Foucault's criticism of the human sciences stems from their complicity

in the process of transforming culturally and temporally specific ideals into the natural

and normal essence of humanity. Foucault argues that the nature of the human sciences

'discoveries' are little more than moral prejudice 'scientifically' transformed into

objective fact; here he speaks directly about the transformation of moral prejudices about

sexuality into the truth of the human sexes by social and medical scientists:

> And the mere fact that one claimed to be speaking about it from the rarefied and neutral viewpoint of a science is in itself significant. This was in fact a science made up of evasions…It was by the same token a science subordinated in the main to the imperatives of a morality whose divisions it reiterated under the guise of the medical norm. Claiming to speak the truth, it stirred up people's fears; to the least oscillations of sexuality, it ascribed an imaginary dynasty of evils destined to be passed on for generations; it declared the furtive customs of the timid, and the most solitary of petty manias, dangerous for the whole society; strange pleasures, it warned, would eventually result in nothing short of death: that of individuals, generations, the species itself. …it claimed to ensure the physical vigor and moral cleanliness of the social body; it promised to eliminate defective individuals, degenerate and bastardized populations. In the name of a biological and historical urgency, it justified the racisms of the state, which at that time were on the horizon. It grounded them in "truth."[7]

The modern human sciences reject this story of course; rather than acknowledge the

contingency of norms, they look instead to the body as if it were generative spring of

these norms. Sexuality, the unconscious, genetics, hormones, skull structure, gender, and

race are all cited as objective and empirical causes for this second class of norms.

Foucault's texts abound with examples of the push towards the universalization

and naturalization of norms by the human sciences. *The History of Madness* discusses

the intertwined history of psychology and the formation of mental health norms. *The*

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[7] Foucault, Sexuality Volume I, 53-54.

Birth of the Clinic is concerned with the normalization of human physiology and health in the development of the clinical medicine. *The Order of Things* covers, among other things, the normalization of the humanity as the object 'Man.' *The History of Sexuality Volume I* discusses the invention and normalization of sex and sexuality in the growth and solidification of the medical, social, and administrative sciences.

Although further description of the origin of these norms will have to wait for the discussion of bio-power, we can recognize now that these norms had a circular origin in the sense that these moral codes that claimed to be drawn from the body were self-fulfilling pieces of research. If a scientist, government official, or moral leader influenced the disciplinary machinery enough that the disciplines altered their training in order to reflect this new insight into the 'natural' order of the ethical substance, the individuals in those disciplines would undergo the training that would shape them into this norm. The result of this process is that any norm that is adopted by the disciplines does not have to be normal at the moment it is declared, for it soon would be; the disciplines are powerful institutions for the shaping of humanity that will almost certainly see any norm made normal. In fact, all one needs in order to make a trait become a species-wide quality is for the disciplines to begin training it. If it is the case that the social sciences are not correct in finding a norm to be normal, they will soon be vindicated by later studies that detect an ever stronger presence of that norm as the disciplines gear up training.

With respect to the view that the disciplines teach norms that are human nature, the individual is subject to the disciplines out of a sense of the need to become themselves, as if contained within the disciplines lay the means to fully inherit one's own

birthright of natural and instinctive humanity. This mode of subjection is a subjection

wrought both by the fears of deviating from humanity's inherent norm and through the

promised rewards of discovering and developing their rightful essence. And, as further

incentive to subject oneself diligently to the normative disciplinary code, if one does not

properly and regularly fulfill disciplinary norms, one becomes an unfit individual and

subject to be forced into specialized forms of training which might even mean

imprisonment or death.

The mode of subjection is experienced on two levels. On one level, the level just

described, the mode of subjection is a compulsory mode that every individual

experiences insofar as they are human. This species-wide requirement is done to insure

one's happiness as a human being and to stave off the punishments that derive from

failure to normalize. On another level, there is a necessary subjection to the particular

norms of a given discipline. This mode of subjection is demanded only insofar as one is

a member of a particular discipline and does not carry with it the same fears of deviance

or degeneresence. At this level, there is no necessity to practice and follow these norms

except insofar as one is associated with a particular discipline.

The analysis of the disciplinary ethical substance, moral law, and mode of

subjection, as well as the previous examination of monastic ascetics, have now paved the

way for a discussion of disciplinary ascetics. What will be required to grasp the

functioning of disciplinary forms of *askesis* will be an even finer eye for detail because

the disciplines continuously search for ever higher levels of specificity and control.

Disciplinary ascetics work as a sort of quantum study that searches for ever smaller

particles into which actions can be broken in order to get a hold of bodies with a greater

precision. Discipline divides and subdivides actions in order to define norms that guide

the behavior and development of the individual with greater exactitude which, in turn,

grants greater resolution in the control of the individual. In many ways, the discipline

picks up, transforms, and intensifies many of the operations present in monastic *askesis*:

> But the disciplines altered these [monastic] methods of temporal regulation from which
> they derived. One began to count in quarter hours, in minutes, in seconds…But an
> attempt is also made to assure the quality of the time used: constant supervision, the
> pressure of supervisors, the elimination of anything that might disturb or distract; it is a
> question of constituting a totally useful time…[8]

From the examination of the minute and specific controls practiced on individuals will

come an understanding of the ascetic technologies of disciplinary relations.

The first feature of disciplinary *askesis* that I will analyze is what Foucault calls

the art of distributions, a kind of disciplinary analytics of space. The art of distributions

is comprised of several techniques that make it possible to use space in order to exert

leverage on the subjectivation of individuals. The first technique in this analytics of

space is the enclosure of space—an old technique borrowed from the monastery.

Enclosure is generally a way to cordon off a specific space in order to create a set of ideal

relations within the newly defined space. Unlike town walls or the fences on a farm,

which are enclosures that are primarily designed to keep others out, disciplinary walls are

used both to retain and to exclude. For instance, the army base, the prison, the baseball

field, and the school house all have a demarcated space that is used both to retain bodies

and organize their behavior within that enclosure and to keep intruders from disrupting

the economy of order within the walls. Foucault states that the enclosure minimizes

"thefts, interruptions of work, disturbances and 'cabals'" and maximizes the proper forms

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[8] Foucault, <u>Discipline and Punish,</u> 150.

of behavior.[9] This break between the enclosure and other spaces allows for a fully

manageable and idealized space to be set up in differentiation from the relatively

unorganized outside non-disciplinary space.

In the disciplines, the enclosed space tends to be further partitioned into sectors

and sub-sectors for each individual and piece of equipment. [10] Foucault summarizes the

effects of partitioning stating that "Its aim was to establish presences and absences, to

know where and how to locate individuals, to set up useful communications, to interrupt

others, to be able at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual, to assess it,

to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits."[11] I want to draw out and detail three

effects of the partitioning of the enclosure: 1) the isolation of unwanted influences, 2) the

way it aids the ease with which individuals and materials are located and accounted for

and, 3) the precision that it permits in punishment and reward by more exactly correlating

them with performance.

First, by placing individuals in specific spaces the disciplines could gain control

over which individuals, ideas, or materials the individual is exposed to. The individual

can be removed from offending or corrupting influences by rescheduling spatial

assignments. And likewise, to ensure the proper influences upon the individual, the

spatial assignments need only to assign positive influences to the individual's space. The

disciplinary technologies here exceed any of the monastic rules examined in the last

chapter in terms of the specificity of the placement of individuals. Whereas in the

monastery an individual might be sent to the garden or to the stables, in the disciplines it

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[9] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 142.

[10] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 143.

[11] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 143.

is not unusual to assign an individual to a space roughly the size of their physical body. For instance, schools have desks, hospitals have beds assigned to patients, factories have a precise spot on the assembly line where the worker is to be, etc.

Second, when individuals are given an exact space in which they are to operate it is much easier to make sure that individuals are pursuing the forms of training or activity that is assigned to them. This regulation of space makes it easier to locate an individual because they are relegated to a small, or at least definite, area of the enclosure. When one knows exactly where an individual should be in the enclosure, it is easy to make sure that the individual is present and at their proper task. If the individual can legitimately be anywhere in the enclosure it is quite easy for them to hide or be pursuing forms of behavior and training that lie outside of standard parameters because a supervisor has no idea where they are or should be. If the individual is relegated to a specific spot then the supervisor need only look to that singular spot to find the individual; if the individual lies elsewhere then they are at fault.

Finally, punishment and reward become much more precise tools when one can keep precise records and observations of individuals due to their regular and exact placement. When individuals are assigned to a specific task in a particular place, one can track their productivity in regular and reliable way. Much in the way baseball players' statistics are recorded for their positions, so are workers, mental patients, and school children's progress are coordinated by means of the partitioning of space and surveillance; the spaces are monitored for their output and correlated with who was present in them in a particular place and time. Rewards can be accurately distributed to the correct individuals in an exact amount. This record keeping allows punishments to be

applied exactly and with precision in terms of the degree and kind of punishment. This accuracy in reward and punishment provides further incentive to individuals to apply or learn the appropriate normative forms of self-government so that they can avoid the inevitable punishment for their deviances and accrue the rewards for exceptional comportment.

In addition to the spatial technologies of enclosure and partitioning, the disciplines, like the monasteries, also deployed a ranking of spaces and individuals, "Discipline is an art of rank, a technique for the transformations of arrangements."[12] Individuals and spaces are ranked vertically, designating certain spaces for people of certain ranks. For instance, some locations may be specified for those of higher rank because they offer good vantage points for the surveillance of lower ranking spaces. This ranking of space integrates well with disciplinary systems of reward and punishment as well; individuals that exceed expectations may find themselves with luxuries to reward their hard work: corner offices, larger spaces, upscale bathrooms, a managerial lunchroom, etc. Individuals that disappoint may find themselves without conveniences, in the ghetto, or even imprisoned.

Spaces and individuals are also ranked horizontally in order to define particular classes of individuals within the discipline. The use of this ranking is usually to permit the easy interchangeability of bodies among certain spaces. For instance, within a school, students are assigned grade rankings; theoretically, any student of a particular grade can be brought to any other school and be seamlessly inserted to the same grade. In this way, absences will not hinder disciplinary functioning because a body of the appropriate rank

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[12] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 146.

can be found to fill the space of an absent body by drawing a body from an identically classed space. One can see how this same principle is employed in military rankings, hospital wards (in the rankings critical, intensive care, etc.), and in businesses to maintain the ideal functioning of the disciplinary apparatus.

A vertical and horizontal ranking also creates a series of important tensions between the individuals within the disciplines. Those higher up in the hierarchy are tasked with watching those lower to maintain disciplinary efficiency. Those who are lower watch those who are higher to make sure that they are not lead astray by deviant leadership and to receive the rewards for reporting deviance. In addition, horizontally ranked individuals monitor each other for several reasons: out of a genuine sense that deviance is bad, in order to receive a promotion for revealing deviance, to remove a competitor, etc. In this way, every individual of every rank in the disciplines is monitoring every other individual, ensuring that everyone is acting according to the values defined by the normative moral code. No one in the disciplines can easily act outside of a norm; anyone who does so will likely be reported by another individual in the discipline. This surveillance of all by all prevents unwanted groups and alliances from forming by separating, compartmentalizing, and setting individuals against one another. Anyone who wishes to form a group or coalition must first act singularly to cross their partitioned space and attempt to create a coalition that they ultimately cannot be assured of in advance; they may be turned in by their potential co-conspirator, an observant equal, or seen by a supervisor. Individuals are rendered weak as they act alone amidst the coordinated whole of the discipline, neatly insuring that the large majority of individuals comply with disciplinary requirements.

The disciplines employ ascetic technologies of time, as well as space, in order to ensure that individuals become normal people who wish to carry out normal actions with minimal or no coercion. The technologies of time, like the technologies of space, are quite similar to those found in the Benedictine monastery. And just as was the case with the technologies of space, the technologies of time undergo a shift to greater precision in the usage of time and in the detail regarding exactly how the activities are to be carried out. Following the monastery, the staple of the disciplinary organization of time is the time table.

Disciplinary time tables are organized in a similar fashion as the monastery's were in order to provide a micro-resolution in regard to the specification of activity. However, what activities the monastery specified in terms of hours, the discipline specified in terms of minutes and seconds. After the discussion of the time table in the last chapter, I believe that the time table and the trend towards greater precision in its usage requires little explanation. However, the disciplinary employment of the time table does differ from the monastic usage in an important way that will require detailing.

What becomes common in disciplinary askesis that is not common in monastic askesis is the specification not only of *what* is to be done at what times but a specification of exactly *how* it is to be done:

> We have passed from a form of injunction that measured or punctuated gestures to a web that constrains them or sustains them throughout their entire succession. A sort of anatomo-chronological schema of behavior is defined. The act is broken down into its elements; the position of the body, limbs, articulations are defined…[13]

In the monastery, only a very few tasks were defined in great detail as to how they were to be carried out: certain rituals having to do with religious services, salutes between

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[13] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 152.

brothers, etc. In other words, the monastic time table specified what one was to do and when one was to do it but it did little to specify how one was to carry out those tasks. For instance, working in the garden, in the kitchen, or even in the stables would be specified by the time table but there was no official normative discourse as to how one was to garden, cook, or work with the animals. In the disciplines however, the general tendency is to specify how all actions should be carried out. Typing, writing, sports, work on the production line, filling out of forms, walking, etc., all are specified as to the exact way in which they to be carried out. These actions are detailed as to the order in which the individual is to carry out the steps to complete the action, the posture and exact movements with which one carries them out, the rhythm in which one does them, and where one does them.

The effect of the specification of the way in which activities are to be carried out in the disciplines is to further extend the scope, effectiveness, and normalizing impact of the time table. The disciplinary time tables ask for more than the completion of certain activity at a certain time; they ask that a certain activity be completed in a certain way. This allows the discipline to gain a total hold over the time of the individual, their entire being as it moves forward in time. With this total hold on the location and activity of the individual, the discipline is able to bring the individual to enact repetitive series of actions until they become natural and instinctive to the individual. And this distinction is crucial: the disciplines create individuals for whom it is natural to self-govern in the ways that the discipline requires. When the discipline works properly, which is seemingly often, it does not need to coerce individuals to follow its time tables; the individuals do it

because they have been brought to be the kind of people that know how to and would

desire to follow time tables.

In fact, teaching individuals what is required to comply with disciplinary

commands is only the most superficial level of training that an individual in a discipline

receives; fundamentally much more important is that the individual comes to be the *type*

of person that obeys disciplinary commands. The disciplines teach not only how to react

to commands but they also develop within the individual the habit of automatically and

unconditionally responding. Disciplinary space is able to coerce bodies into forming

themselves and governing themselves according to disciplinary norms through an

individualizing application of power that is sensitive to particular bodies, spaces, and

ranks. In other words, disciplinary space does not just *prevent* bodies from undertaking

certain actions, it *encourages* them to become an incredibly specific type of individual

that naturally performs the tasks that the disciplines demand. Disciplines thus insure

compliance through not just forwarding a series of commands to a wild mass of bodies

but by shaping individuals' malleable substances into forms that find it natural and

desirable to act as the disciplines ask them to. Discipline does not define a time and

space against another time and space of individuals. It is not as if discipline lays a web of

repression on top of the natural, repressed urges of bodies. Discipline trains and molds

individuals, as did the monastery, into new sorts of beings; the control over the exact

location and activity of individuals allows a precise creation of a new nature, with new

desires and urges. Discipline works not to repress the motion of bodies but, through a

second by second training of bodies, to give them new powers and movements—to instill

in bodies an 'instinct' or a 'nature' with a level of detail and control that exceeds that which was formerly possible.

This intensive training is quite similar to that of the monastery in that the monastery hoped to impose a form of life on individuals that would eventually shape them into new, less sinful forms. However, where the monasteries felt that they had to combat a natural disposition to sin in the brethren, the disciplines did not find a strong counter-disposition in the individual, primarily because the ethical substance was conceived of as being highly malleable and, insofar as the individual did possess a nature, the disciplines were generally thought to work with that disposition rather than against it.

In addition, the disciplines and monastery both seem to share the position that the individual is incapable of formulating and carrying out a legitimate practice of self-governance but for quite different reasons. The monastery felt that the individual was incapable of their own self-governance because of their Fallen ethical substance. For the disciplines, the issue is more complicated. On one hand, there are the problems of non-normative self-governance associated with the weakness of human nature; the problem with humanity's nature, that I will return to in the sixth chapter, is that it is so weak that people will not properly fulfill it unless they are placed in relations that progressively train them to be responsible to it. On the other hand, there is an entirely different set of problems associated with practices of self-governance that do not derive from norms; namely, that without disciplinary training the body would lack the specialized skills required by the disciplines and would not be as docile or efficient as it could be:

> These methods, which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility, might be called 'disciplines.'[14]

These disciplines imposed a form of training that not only gave the individuals the skills required of them, it also trained them to be docile and responsive to the demands of superiors. In order for a discipline to function at its most efficient and profitable levels, it requires that all individuals are properly skilled and supple to the hands of power. Therefore, it cannot leave to chance that individuals are the proper sorts of people with the proper skills—it insures it as part of its functioning. Leaving the forms of self-government to the individual and communities to decide would almost certainly result in a less than optimal (from the disciplinary perspective) distribution and rigor in ethical practice.

The *telos* of the disciplines is thus made clear in this discussion of self-government. Disciplinary *telos* is to create and maintain individuals in the proper forms defined by their normalizing codes. The reasons for this *telos* of normalization are bifurcated: the disciplines seek to normalize individuals in order to insure their own performance and the disciplines also seek to achieve a quasi-moralistic scientific aim—to insure adherence to human nature. The effect of the disciplinary *telos* on the individuals that inhabit the disciplines is that individuals have little space in which to exercise a stylization in their becoming; the direction, order, and style of their form of self-governance is largely determined by the disciplines. In short, the disciplines are dominating, where domination means that "the power relations, instead of being mobile, allowing various participants to adopt strategies modifying them, remain frozen,

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[14] Foucault, <u>Discipline and Punish,</u> 137.

blocked."[15] The disciplines fit the definition of domination neatly, working to insure as nearly as possible that the individual develops into a subject in the normative form outlined by the discipline itself.

Furthermore, a society that is characterized by such dominating institutions, as seems to be the case in the west today, would almost necessarily experience an impoverishment of social and political relations. Disciplinary training assures that even if people are given democratic possibilities to determine their own social configurations and impact the larger social institutions that influence their subjectivation, they will be only too likely to reinstate the norm (or something quite similar to it) according to which they were trained. What else could one reasonably expect from a group of people who had received strict training from infancy to think, act, move, and be according to the norm? It is not likely that suddenly, and for no reason, they would begin to act completely differently.

Moreover, who is considered qualified to have a voice in politics and social decisions
(voting, holding office, debating, community leaders, etc.) but those individuals who have spent years in disciplinary training and have received the most certificates attesting to their disciplinary accomplishments (diplomas, awards, citations, medals, etc.) Convicts, the insane, and often the homeless are not allowed to vote and certainly not recognized to possess an opinion of worth by many. The poor and/or abnormal (artists, people of color, homosexuals, etc.) are only too likely to receive poor, remote, or malfunctioning voting facilities, as in the 2000 and 2004 United States presidential

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[15] Foucault, The Ethics of the Concern for the Self, 434.

elections, and their voices are similarly marginalized. The result of this is that those most likely to forward and continue the norm are given positions that can exercise substantial influence.

The normalization of individuals on a broad level virtually assures that 'democratic choice' is a synonym for the 'repetition of the norm.' The disciplines work as an ethical machine to construct individuals with only one destination, the normal. If democracy is conceived of as a system of selecting between *different* possibilities then democracy and disciplinary society are at odds. Disciplinary relations work to make sure only one form of life is possible, the normal, while all other forms of life are classified as abnormal; democracy is typically taken to require legitimate and genuinely different options in order to operate robustly. A democracy in which difference is the sort one finds in sport, where one cheers for virtually identical teams with different names, is impoverished.

Can we say that difference dies as the disciplines are born? No, but we can at least say that their waxing and waning bear an inverse relationship to one another. As Man was born and began to rise on the tide of disciplinary power and knowledge to be deposited as a sand castle by the sea, difference was washed out with the tide to be replaced by the category of the abnormal.

Perhaps even more directly than the disciplines emptying societies of democratic values, the disciplines infinitely shrink the space of morality as self-government. The disciplines function as a loop of continual training that ends only in death and finds its purpose in the ever increasing normalization of the individual. This cycle does not end at any particular level of normality because greater levels of normality inspire the

possibility for yet more intensive and exacting normalization. For example, as soon as a mass of infantry soldiers, business clerks, or teachers attain a certain set of normative standards, the question is already in motion as to how to make them serve the purposes of the discipline better, to make them more efficient, effective, and obedient individuals. Has one ever known an army to decrease the precision of its training? A sports team to decide to try for less specificity in the exact motions it desires? Discipline seeks to train individuals to a higher degree of precision only to be able to train them to ever higher levels of detailed compliance.

For this reason, discipline results in a disturbing series of moral effects because it seeks to impart a form of self-government whose basic governmental directive is to infinitely increase the susceptibility of the individual to the commands of another; the self governs itself to the end of being endlessly more governable. The disciplines seek to decrease the space of self-government to an infinitely tiny point, to a point that only serves to relay the wishes of the discipline to the body by the fastest and most efficient means possible. The disciplines make a mockery of ethics as self-governance by instilling a form of self-governance that reduces one's ability to self govern, turning moral life into a loop that plays itself out towards an infinitely ever more spectacular and complete domination. While it is true in some respects that the disciplinary individual may be more intensely connected and responsive to politics and morality than was ever possible before, it is only connected to serve as a more prompt and diligent forwarding address for disciplinary directives.

Chapter 5: Pastoral Swarming

In the previous chapters, I have used Foucault's moral analyzer to extend the method and insights from his later work on Greco-Roman self care to his work on the monastery and the disciplines. In this chapter, I will be returning to pagan self care and looking to form lines of transformation between it and the pastoral. In the next chapter, I will move on to discuss this lineage in relation to bio-power. As a result, it may seem that this text thematically forks after the analysis of Greco-Roman morality: one fork is marked by the analysis of the monastery and disciplines and the second fork is dedicated to a study of the pastoral and bio-power. It may be that these two lines of study are divergent but it would be wrong to assume that they are unrelated because they will ultimately rejoin each other.

This rejoining will occur because the pastoral is tied not only to Greco-Roman self care and bio-power but also to the monastery. The pastoral is connected strongly to the monastery; an institution that it colonized and adopted as a part of the larger pastoral.[16] Foucault relates that the integration of many of the western monastic traditions was difficult for the pastoral but that ultimately, many of the western monastic traditions were colonized by the pastoral. The analysis of the pastoral is therefore not just an analysis of the pastoral in isolation but also an analysis of a deployment that provided much of the context and agenda for the monasteries. Thus, while it may seem that this text forks with the monastery and the pastoral, these threads are deeply related. So, although we are putting aside the monastic/disciplinary lineage to begin again with the

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[16] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 208-210.

pastoral we will continually turn back to this lineage over the next two chapters in order to form a complete account.

To perform an analysis of the pastoral, I have at my disposal resources I did not have in analyzing the monastery; namely, a sustained published analysis by Foucault of the pastoral (although not one available in English as of this writing). In the lecture course at the *Collège de France* called *Sécurité, Territoire, Population*, Foucault addressed the pastoral and its connection to bio- and disciplinary power for five weeks of the thirteen week lecture course. Foucault's analysis will be one of the primary texts of my analysis.

I shall also make extensive use of Gregory the Great's, *Pastoral Care*. Foucault often referred to Gregory's text—likely because it has been highly influential on the pastoral.[17] A sign of this is the fact that Charlemagne ordered all the bishops to study it. Even for hundreds of years after Charlemagne, *Pastoral Care* was given to most every bishop as a gift upon their rise to the bishopric.[18] A modern commentator on Gregory's text remarks on the influence of his text:

> Its influence during this period [the middle ages] can scarcely be overrated—indeed, it is even now felt in its results. The maxims of Gregory have molded the Church. They have sensibly shaped the conduct and the policy of the Church's ruler, and, as a modern writer well expressed it, have "made the bishops who made modern nations." The ideal which Gregory upheld was for centuries the ideal of the clergy of the West, and through them

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[17] Other modern secondary sources that are typically considered central in the study of the pastoral such as Tentler's *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation* and Evans' *A History of Pastoral Care* have not proven as helpful; they are texts that assume that the pastoral is God's rightful organ on Earth—the inscriptions and introductions reveal as much. These texts accept the holy role given to the pastoral by God and neither attempt to assess the pastoral as a whole in strong terms nor do they assess its relationship to modern forms of government; they seem to feel that the pastoral is unquestionably good and will be rightfully be with us until the second coming. I will use these texts but in a more limited way than Gregory's to flesh out Foucault's ideas.

[18] Gregory, Pastoral Care, trans. Henry Davis S.J. (Newman Press: New York 1978) 11.

the spirit of the great Pope governed the Church, long after his body had been laid to rest beneath the pavement of St. Peter's.[19]

Although I will be using Foucault extensively, my analysis of pastoral relations will also be different from his in *Sécurité, Territoire, Population* in at least two important ways. First, in light of Foucault's later work on Greco-Roman morality at the end of his career, I believe that some of Foucault's conclusions about the origin of the pastoral in 1978 need to be revised. Undoubtedly, as Foucault asserts, much of the pastoral tradition emerges from the eastern Mediterranean and especially with the Hebrews:

> But, in a general way, I believe that one could say that the idea of a government of men is an idea of which it is necessary to look for the origin in the East, in a pre-Christian East at first, and later in the Christian East. [20]

But, after *The Care of the Self* one can no longer hold that Foucault thought that the birth of the pastoral was so solely located in the East as he did in the seventies.[21] In the *Care of the Self,* he repeatedly connects his analysis of Greco Roman self care to the pastoral, reflecting on how Greco-Roman self care would be taken up and transformed by Christian thinkers. Two examples among many:

> To characterize this attitude, Epictetus employs metaphors that will have a long career in Christian spirituality, but they will take on quite different values in it.[22]

> To keep constant watch over one's representations, or to verify their marks the way one authenticates a currency, is not to inquire (as will be done later in Christianity) concerning the deep origin of the idea that presents itself…[23]

 I will add these dimensions of connection, transformation, and discontinuity between the pastoral and Greco-Roman self care that Foucault asserts but does not develop in *The Care of the Self.* However, recognize that I do not understand my work to make a

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[19] F.H. Dudden, <u>Gregory the Great: His Place in History and Thought,</u> (London: 1905) 225.

[20] Foucault, <u>Sécurité,</u> 127.

[21] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 39, 43, 63, 64, 126, 140, 141,143, 144, 165, 179, 183, 184, 218, 235-237.

[22] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 63.

[23] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 64.

historical claim about the validity of Foucault's thought; rather, I am using these historical sources to flesh out and offer one interpretation of Foucault's thought.

The second difference between the analysis of the pastoral as I will be conducting it and Foucault's work in his 1977-1978 lecture course is that the terms and end of my analysis will differ from Foucault's. His analysis of the pastoral in 1977-78 was leading him to the analysis of the Liberal state the following year in the lecture course called *Naissance de la Biopolitique*. The terms of his analysis in *Sécurité, Territoire, Population* are geared to maximize the appearance of the continuities and discontinuities of pastoral relations with the birth of the modern Liberal welfare state. Although I do not find fault with such a line of thought, my analysis is different and emerges from the concerns of his final works, *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self.* Instead of proceeding with Foucault's original terms and direction of analysis, I will follow the cues given in his later work to reshape his account of the pastoral using the grid of analysis I have so far employed.

Before beginning with this account of the pastoral, I note that my analysis of the pastoral is undertaken in order to elucidate a contemporary problem, in this case, to develop a line of thought through Foucault's later work that will both reveal the strong potential of that later work to figure contemporary domination and to lead to a transformation of it. It should be understood that Foucault's analysis and my reshaping of it do not aim at a complete survey or a comprehensive account but only to elucidate particular modern problems. In my case, I am examining those elements of the pastoral that will be helpful to the overall aims of my analysis and I see no reason to venture beyond those elements into the study of the pastoral more generally. As such, my

account will be partial, limited, and, if my work is sufficient, succinct and useful to my

thesis.

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I will begin this analysis with an examination of the pastoral ethical substance.

Much of this analysis will be familiar to the reader from the third chapter which focused

on the monastery. Both the pastoral and the monastery share a vision of the individual

marked by the Fall and the acknowledgment of humanity's strong tendency to evil:

> And, finally, I have only to add that consideration of our weakness should abase every
> work accomplished, lest proud conceit empty it of its worth in the eyes of the hidden
> Judge.[24]

In regards to the ethical substance, both the monastery and the pastoral can agree that

humanity is base or sinful in regards to everything that it does.

Given this similarity, an important difference separates the way that this

assessment of the ethical substance is employed in the monastery and the pastoral. In the

monastery, the fallen ethical substance provides the meaning and purpose for the

establishment of as much control as possible over the lives of the cenobites. Realizing

the terrible situation that humanity finds itself in, the monastery is a kind of total order

that seeks to neutralize the flaws of man by submitting them to the complete and austere

order of the enclosure and the time table. In the pastoral, the fallen ethical substance

provokes a quite different ascetic regime. In part, this different response can be seen as a

necessity in that it was not possible to offer a monastic form of training to the whole of

society. Instead, the pastoral had to recognize that the occurrence of certain evil acts

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[24] Gregory, Pastoral Care, 21.

were beyond its control and work instead to lower the incidence of these evil acts rather than attempt to provide a regime of total control that would eliminate them outright.

No single pastoral technology exercised the depth of control that monastery did over its brethren. Although the pastoral's forms of *askesis* are individually less intensive than the monastery's, the pastoral did comprise a large and effective network of ascetic practices, all of which were aimed at salvation—they just achieved their *askesis* through different means.

Pastoral ascetics were quite varied and composed of a tremendous number of different technologies and strategies. In order to give the reader an idea of the variety of forms of *askesis* the pastoral coordinated, I would like to list a number of them: the promotion and teaching of self-surveillance; extensive and varied programs dedicated to charity; the healing of the sick and the maintenance of hospitals; military defense, escorts, and patrols; organized beatings of heretics and non-believers; offers of financial inducement for conversion and proper belief; the organization of pilgrimages and the maintenance of facilities for pilgrims; the production of holy icons, relics and religious art; education, preaching, and conversion; exemologesis; penance; excommunication, baptism; communion; confession; confirmation; marriage; the priesthood; monasteries; last rites; public parades and processions; the maintenance of leper houses; the establishment of godparents to intensify the religious education of the youth; regular church services for the faithful; and private admonishment/counseling. Although the list is without a detailed explanation of these forms of askesis and the list is far from complete, it is still an impressively long one. Even as it stands now the list is too long for me to discuss all these forms of *askesis* individually in a text that is about anything other

than pastoral *askesis*—the description of these terms would themselves necessitate a second volume for this project.

   Fortunately, it will not be necessary to analyze every form of pastoral *askesis* in order to make the points necessary to proceed with my analysis. For the purpose of this analysis, it is of primary importance to notice the distribution of forces as well as the strategies that connect their deployment. It will not be necessary to study every ascetic technology to understand how the pastoral as a whole works, just as it is not necessary to understand every foot soldier's name to understand how an army works. As a result, I will analyze baptism as an example of the type of ascetic power that the pastoral exerts. Using baptism as an example will allow me to reshape Foucault's insights around a concrete ascetic issue; it will serve as a fitting model to reshape Foucault's otherwise directed insights around the concerns in his later work.

   Baptism is the sacrament through which the original sin that taints all of humanity with the echoes of the rebellion of the Fall is forgiven. In the Catholic baptismal ceremony, the priest runs water across the body of the individual (usually a child or infant) three times and the child is anointed with a series of salves in order to cleanse the individual of the sin of rebellion. While the washing and anointing proceed, the priest initiates a series of relations that have purposes beyond the immediate baptism. It is precisely this *swarm* of peripheral relationships that occur in baptism that will be important to focus on; for, it is in these peripheral and secondary relationships that the pastoral *askesis* becomes effective and reveals its form. In particular, I would like to analyze four of these relations that are initiated in baptism that exceed the purpose of cleansing original sin because they are exemplary of pastoral ascetic tactics.

The first relation I would like to analyze is the central relation established by the baptismal sacrament, the relationship between the individual being baptized and God. The priest brings the individual being baptized into a relationship with God by cleansing the individual of their original sin, relieving them of the rebellion of that sin, and opening up a new communion with God. The priest serves as God's representative and cleans the individual of the sins that keep the individual in rebellion and opens the individual to the totality of their relationship with God. Resultantly, baptism is not just a moment of *askesis*, a moment of cleansing, but the beginning of an redemptive relationship between an individual and God. Baptism is important not just as a sacrament but as a beginning to a form of conduct that is lifelong; the cleansing of sin was just the first step in a long journey towards retaining and deepening obedience to the Lord.

The second ascetic relationship developed in baptism is a relationship between the individual being baptized and the church. Baptism was not only the beginning of a relationship between an individual and God, but also a welcoming of the individual into the Christian community, the pastorate. We can see this welcoming to the community by the presence of representatives of the community in the ceremony. The individual being baptized needed to be sponsored by members of the pastoral and this sponsoring indicates both the individual's acceptance by the community and the community's pledge of support for the individual's future growth in the Truth.

Thirdly, baptism came to serve a role in redefining and deepening the relationship between of the parents of the child baptized and both the church and God. In one sense, this third relationship spawned in baptism only has peripherally to do with the individual being baptized; the effect is visited mainly on those surrounding the child. In the

baptism, the priest adds density and complexity to the relationships between the parents, God, and the church by introducing a new responsibility to the parents to raise the child properly in God's and the church's eyes. The recognition of the parents increased responsibility, now not only to themselves, their church, and to God, but also to maintain a child in the Truth presses the parents from several different angles: it reminds them of their duty to the child to be good Christians and provide a good example; it reminds them of their duty to themselves to follow God's will; and it reinforces their need to remain in good standing in the Christian community so that they and their child may have the resources they need to transform themselves and be saved. One example of this third set of relations used to be more explicitly a part of the Catholic baptismal rite in the middle ages but now, its explicit form, 'purification,' is rare.

As part of the ritual of purification, the mother would come to the church sometime after the baptism to thank the priest and God for the gift they had given her child. The mother would pray at the doors of the church and afterwards the priest would sprinkle her with holy water and lead her back into the church by the right hand.[25] The waiting of the mother at the doors of the church while she prays reinforces the humility and piety required to be admitted to the church. That the admittance should not be taken for granted is demonstrated by the priest who waits until he feels satisfied by the woman's prostrations and leads her into the church when he feels ready to. In this way the priest reminds the mother of her duties and their seriousness—she would not want to be locked out of heaven or the Church both for her own sake or the child's.

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[25] Ralph Houlbrooke, "*The Family and Pastoral Care,*" from A History of Pastoral Care, ed. G.R. Evans (Cassell: London ,2000) 266.

Finally, 'godparents' or 'sponsors' were eventually added to the baptismal in a further broadening of the ends that baptism served.[26] The most immediate ascetic role that the godparents were to play involved the education of child. The godparents were added to the baptismal ceremony so that the child would have two more sets of adult Christian eyes looking after the health of her soul. The original duties the godparents were charged with included safeguarding the child from water and fire until the age of seven and teaching the child the *Pater Noster, Ave Maria,* and *Apostle's Creed.*[27] The godparents reinforced the role the parents and church already played in bringing the child to obedience in God, adding a layer of redundancy to the checks already in place to make sure that the child received training in the proper forms of Christian *askesis*.

When the baptismal sacrament brought in the godparents, it did much more than just effect another set of advocates for the child's spiritual health. However, the involvement of godparents in the child's life required not only the development and strengthening of relationship between the godparents and the child but also between the godparents, parents, church, and God. The godparents would need to make sure that their own life was rooted in obedience to God so that they were teaching the child the proper church doctrine and guiding them out of true love and obedience to the Lord. They would also need to develop explicitly religious relations with the parents in order to schedule time with the child for the purposes of education. The addition of the godparents to the sacrament links them not only to the child but also to those spiritual and human contacts associated with the child, creating relationships that do not directly

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[26] Houlbrooke, The Family and Pastoral Care, 266.
[27] Houlbrooke, The Family and Pastoral Care, 266.

involve the child (e.g. godparent-priest, godparent-parent, and godparent-God, godparent-Church, etc.)

The ceremony of baptism reveals the quite different ascetic strategy employed in the pastoral than in the monastery. Where the monastery asserted the need for total compliance with its time table, the pastoral lacks the capacity to insure the total compliance and effectiveness of any one of its ascetic technologies. In baptism, we can see how the pastoral is acting to achieve successful *askesis* by deploying a swarm of many lower-percentage relationships around individuals. For example, in regards to the child, the parents, godparents, church, or priest may fail the child in its education but it is unlikely that *all* will fail the child. In reality, the child only needs an intensive relationship with any one of those individuals that pledge their support during the baptism.

It is interesting and important to note that to insure the ascetic success of the individual being baptized, the pastoral adds a series of ascetic relations and practices to the rite beyond just the ascetic act of cleansing original sin. To reinforce and develop the cleansing of original sin, the pastoral layered quite different relationships upon the first relationship of the individual and God. Where one relationship might not succeed or only partially succeed to bring the baptized individual into proper obedience, the baptism aims for success by creating and overlapping many different relationships towards the same end (child-parent, child-priest, child-church, child-godparent, child-God, etc.) In addition, baptism is a polyvalent deployment of ascetic power and knowledge; it serves not only to transform the soul of the individual and cleanse them of original sin, it also works to establish a variety of ascetic relationships around the child that insure a

continued practice of transformation. Moreover, baptism even works to bind diverse members of the Christian community closer together, working to assure that not only does the child carry out her own *askesis* properly but also those around her are pressured to do so as well.

This description of baptism reflects several typical elements of the pastoral deployment of *askesis*: 1) pastoral ascetics are multivalent and through time develop new and unintended points of coercion to further proper *askesis*, even to the extent that forms of *askesis* are added to practices where the new ascetics would seem only tangential or peripheral to the original aim; 2) as a result, pastoral ascetics are complex and dense deployments, each action tends to initiate and/or deepen a wide variety of relationships; 3) pastoral ascetics employ a swarm of redundant relationships to insure success, shying away from the absolutist measures adopted in the monasteries, instead reinforcing itself through multiple points of influence.

If one were to use a metaphor from the armed forces, one can say that the pastoral acts to win battles not through a single overwhelming frontal assault but by opening up multiple fronts under multiple commanders and attacking from all sides. In the pastoral, no effort needs to win the battle on its own; rather, most of the forces just need to have *some* successes. Even though the image of the pope as an absolute ruler is one we are familiar with today, it appears that the abbot fits this role much better than the pope or his priests. The abbot commands a centralized hierarchy that is more able and likely to press moral issues with a single overwhelming measure, i.e. stringent penances, isolation, the prescribing of entirely new schedules, or even locales, etc. Like baptism, the pastoral typically does not aim to insure the obedience and salvation of any individual

through any single relationship or measure but through the development of multiple relationships, any of which might succeed on its own or, perhaps, all might succeed to a small degree adding up to a victory in the end.

The pastoral is a patchwork of loosely coordinated, mutually reinforcing forms of askesis that are relatively ineffective in their singularity but highly effective taken as a whole. Much like a rope, the pastoral grows stronger from its composition of more and smaller fibers as opposed to thicker and greater fibers. Precisely its weakness is its strength; the pastoral is effective because it does not require the success of any particular person or practice, but it counts on overlapping practices and multiple redundancies. If any one dies, is removed, or fails, the pastoral assemblage moves forward in its rhizomal monstrosity that is not slowed by the loss of a few individuals or the failure of a few points of influence.

This description of the pastoral emerges from Foucault analysis. I would like to briefly cover some of Foucault's account in order to indicate how I drew my argument from him and also to deepen the account that I have already given through its connection with his. I will begin by considering Foucault's account of the pastoral and then relating it to my own refocused portrayal.

Foucault's description of the pastoral and bio-power argues that these forms of power aimed at the management of relations among the flock/population so as to lead them towards particular, positively defined ends:

> Put otherwise, it is about organizing the circulation [of people, materials, practices, ideas, etc.], of eliminating what was dangerous, of separating good and bad circulation, [of]

> maximizing good circulation and diminishing the bad. It is also therefore equally about managing access to the interior…[28]

These forms of power regulated the circulation of elements within their area of governance in order to bring things to their 'proper ends.' To make sure things functioned or circulated as they should, the pastoral invested and managed everyday relationships in order to nudge them into coordination with each other and the pastoral *telos.* As in the circulatory system, where all the blood flows unidirectionally and in a coordinated fashion so as to maximize the functioning and might of the whole, so too with the pastoral: it seeks to line up its thousands of tiny 'cells' and bring them to unity around pastoral purposes.

This strategy does not work by creating an "empty or emptied" space like a disciplinary or monastic space in order to "attain a point of perfection."[29] The disciplines and the monastery work by creating a perfect space closed off from the disruptive forces that circulate outside their walls. But it is precisely this outside, in all of its various circulations that the pastoral sought to influence. Rather than create an "empty" space, the pastoral invests the 'full,' already inhabited space and seeks to influence, transform, and effect what is already circulating there, not to banish or to start over 'clean' in an "emptied" space:

> It is not about reconstructing in the manner where one would wait for a point of perfection as in a disciplinary city. It is simply about maximizing the positive elements, that one circulates the best as possible…[30]

The swarm of pastoral infiltrations into ascetic relationships is the result of this concern to "maximize the positive elements." From the individual's point of view, the

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[28] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 20.

[29] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 21.

[30] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 21.

effect of the pastoral management of relations is that a wide multiplicity of relations begin to line up, like iron filings lined up by a magnet, toward pastoral ends. Not all relationalities may be investigated or invested by the pastoral simultaneously but given time and the aim of positive management of the connections this swarming was the result: a massive, multifaceted push to drive the flock forward.

At this point we can also draw additional conclusions about pastoral ascetics. First, the individual's cooperation in its own *askesis* is not something that the pastoral would likely need to force if it was functioning well. Cooperation of the flock is the expected result of the multisided circulatory push by the pastoral to herd individuals into the proper direction. This form of power is geared to produce individuals who wish to follow it's 'flow' (the directionality with which it seeks to circulate individuals) and, for this reason, it tends to avoid deep conflicts and the use of force.

Second, although the individuals in a well functioning pastoral deployment are not likely to need to be forced to comply in order to insure their cooperation, we still might want to investigate the effects of a refusal. This question concerning the effects of a refusal is an important one in that it will further reveal the individual's mode of subjection to the pastoral. If, in the unlikely event that an individual were to choose to leave the pastoral, what would the effect be on the pastoral?

As we saw in the discussion of pastoral ascetics, the pastoral does not require any specific individual to comply with it in order for it to remain successful. If an individual leaves the fold, the other individuals that relied on her would likely still have multiple other resources to draw on to constitute their own proper *askesis.* For instance, if the child being baptized lost its godparents to some heathen faith or even death the child

would still have relationships with its parents, priest, church, God, etc. to rely on. The loss of the godparents would not likely turn the child from God when so many other supports still existed for it.

Moreover, it is possible, perhaps even likely, that even if the individual did not just turn away from the church, but actively sought to turn others from it, the individual would be highly unsuccessful. The pastoral's connections to every individual are multiple and not overly centralized, the fact that a friend or family member would turn away from the Lord would be felt but typically be buoyed by the many other connections that an individual would have with the pastoral. This is an advantage of the decentralized swarm of pastoral ascetic relations that the monastery does not share. If the cenobites are isolated from the monastery, they lose their way of life. However, the pastoral typically does not focus on a particular ascetic relation so that the loss of any single relation only has limited impact. A dissident looking to remove someone who had become fully enmeshed in the pastoral would have a difficult time ahead; outnumbering or overpowering the many other threads that bind the members of the pastorate together would require a serious and coordinated effort.

In fact, the pastoral was aware of its 'weaknesses' and part of the move to baptize infants (at one time baptism had been reserved only for adults who could voice consent) was justified by the need to weave the infant into the pastoral cloth at the earliest possible age.[31] As a result of this practice and other early and intensive forms pastoral binding, dislodging individuals form the pastoral would quite difficult because cutting any single

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[31] Houlbrooke, The Family and Pastoral Care, 266.

thread with the pastoral was likely not to remove the lifetime of connections that the individual and the pastoral had mutually developed.

To obtain a refusal on the part of any individual that was already bound to the pastoral would likely require two things. First, it would require the severing of multiple points of contact with the pastoral and, second, the creation of new ascetic relations. The severing of points of contact between the individual and the pastoral is made difficult by the fact that there is not a single figure, institution, or individual that one could attack. Even the attacks on the Pope in the reformation did not end the pastoral but only further decentralized it and reformed it outside of the Catholic Church. Any attack on the pastoral would have to have multiple targets and wage a war on multiple fronts—even then one could not be sure of success because new points of "circulation" could be established while the old ones are under fire; as the idea of circulation conjures, this is a form of power always in movement, repairing, channeling, shaping, etc. The establishment of new non-pastoral ascetic relations would therefore be essential in order to form an individual whose primary values would not lead her to reestablish her pastoral bonds.

In fact, it seems that the ideal instrument for countering the pastoral and establishing a new individuality is the monastery. The monastery fits all the requirements for the transformation of an individual's relation to the pastoral: it is enclosed and time is mapped so that all exterior relations are severed (ending the multiple points of contact that reach from the individual to the pastoral) and new ascetic relationalities are sets up. Needless to say a challenge awaits the one who would attempt to turn an enmeshed member of the pastoral aside; to an individual enmeshed in the pastoral, the last thing that

would appear sensible to them to do would be to join a monastery of the antichrist, moving from the pastoral into a set of intensive relations designed to counter it.

By the same token, what would serve well to re-form an individual would also serve well to reinforce the pastoral; namely, the monastery. By placing individuals inside of monasteries in order to work on them in an almost completely controlled environment, the pastoral could effect its training in precisely controlled ways. This would allow the pastoral to circulate in a more orderly and well directed fashion through the deployment of precisely formed agents into the flow. In fact, as we are to see, bio-power proceeds along much the same lines such as this in that it organizes circulation in a society in which most individuals spend extensive time in the disciplines.

In conclusion, although the pastoral requires the cooperation of its flock, its very structure ensures that compliance. Although an individual may be required to assist in their own ascetics and without their own cooperation, self-sacrifice, and hard work the ascetics may fail, it is precisely this cooperation that the pastoral so effectively engenders from birth. The pastoral wages its campaign from many directions and in overlapping and coordinated movements on individuals from a young age; such tactics have doubtlessly been successful in ensuring willing followers in the long history of the Christian pastoral. Even if an individual did decide to remove themselves from the pastoral, it would be unlikely (although not impossible) that they would be able to establish an effective set of counter measures to bring others out of the pastoral because of the natural resistance of the pastorate to attack. Contrary to how the pastoral confronts one at first glance, it is *more dominating* because it requires the individual's aid in their own ascetics. It is more dominating for this reason because it perpetuates the idea that

the turn to the pastoral is the individual's own free decision, made in the clear light of

reason, when in fact it is the result of a coercive form of power and knowledge that is

steadily constructed from birth to secure a pre-determined comportment.

With this understanding of pastoral ascetics and the mode of subjection arranged

by pastoral power, it will now be necessary to detail the form of the moral code in the

pastoral in order to understand the precise way that the code influenced subjectivation

and ascetics.

Foucault relates that the pastoral does not extensively deploy a moral code

centered around the law:

> Here is what I want to say: all the world knows…that Christianity is not a religion of the law; it's a religion of the will of God, a religion of the will of God in regards to each individual.[32]

> …the pastor is in no way a man of the law, or in any case what characterizes him, what is specific to him as a pastor, is not at all that he speaks the law.[33]

Foucault argues here that what is specific to the pastoral and the pastor is not that they

know the law and educate others on what is forbidden; it is that they proceed in

obedience to God's will, seeking to help others cease their rebellion against God and

become healthy, saved, and obedient. Such a notion is a positive (i.e. follow the specific

dictates of God's Will) and it works to develop a much more specific form of

comportment than could be specified merely by means of negative juridical institutions

alone.

The pastoral's moral code is a normative one insofar as it detailed specific forms

of acceptable conduct for the flock. The individual's attainment of their respective norm

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[32] Foucault, Sécurité, 177.

[33] Foucault, Sécurité, 176.

(there are different norms for youth and adults, women and men, etc.) is not spoken of in

pastoral literature as 'the attainment of a norm.' Instead, the attainment of norms is

commonly conceptualized and measured as degrees of health. The measure of one's

health indicates the progress one has made towards perfect health, i.e. total obedience, as

we can see in this usage of health by Gregory:

> Now, seeing that often when a sermon is delivered with due propriety and with a fruitful message, the mind of the speaker is exalted by joy all his own over his performance, he must needs take care to torment himself with painful misgivings: in restoring others to health by healing their wounds, he must not disregard his own health and develop tumors of pride.[34]

Foucault did not find Gregory's usage of health in this way to be unusual. In fact, he

finds that the measure of health is a central one in the pastoral:

The pastoral has a relationship to health, since it is given as an essential, fundamental objective to bring or permit, in any case, so that the individuals advances and progresses on the path to health.[35]

This concept of health reveals just how far the pastoral is from a merely employing its

technologies negatively—health implies a positive conception of how a body *should*

function not just how it should *not* function. For instance, an ideal physical concept of

health would specify an ideal weight, food intake, daily sleeping regimen, activity level,

etc. The pastoral code is a positive code, often defined in terms of a health that reflects

the individual's attainment to proper obedience, humility, and the Truth.

As we know from pagan self-care, the metaphor of health and of the

philosopher/expert of self care as a doctor is a quite old one with a rich tradition. The

notion of health deployed in pagan self care, although normalizing to a certain extent,

tended to undo its own normalizing effects, turning back on itself. Health in pagan self

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[34] Gregory, <u>Pastoral Care</u>, 234.
[35] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 170.

care cancelled out much of its own normalizing force by tying health to the ability to make aesthetic decisions about one's own becoming. In effect, what was healthy was the ability to stylize and define the terms of one's own health within certain social constraints. Put otherwise, normal was a condition from which one could make oneself unique through stylization. In the pastoral, the normative elements of its deployment did not lead to a stylization but a domination reflected an ideal subjectivity that emptied out onto an intensive form of obedience.

Although the pastoral employed a positive from of law, that is not to say that the pastoral did not possess or use negative laws. On the contrary, the pastoral used many negative laws, often quite famously, for instance, the Ten Commandments. This usage of negative law does not contradict the statement by Foucault that the pastoral is not a set of relations based in negative laws.[36] Instead, one can see how usages of negative law could further the positive and normalizing thrusts of the pastoral. The negative laws could be deployed as one more tool in the war to form healthy and normal individuals. For example, forbidding an individual to return to a place of great temptation may be a powerful way to rid that individual of a sinful distraction that is keeping them from attending to their health properly. Rather than seeing Foucault's position as one that believes that the law did not exist in the pastoral, we should see his position as stating that the law was colonized by normative forms of obedience, often measured in terms of health.

In sum, the pastoral moral code was characterized by a normalizing form that aimed towards obedience and often found its measure in terms of health. This positive

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[36] Foucault, Sécurité, 178.

moral law was not unfamiliar with negative uses of law, forbidding particular actions, associations, or thoughts. If Foucault is right in his emphasis on the pastor not being a man of the law, but of urging obedience and a conversion to the Truth, then these negative uses of the law were subordinated in the end to the more positive aim of the development of an obedient and the True mode of subjection.

From the vantage point of having discussed the pastoral ethical substance, ascetics, the mode of subjection, and moral law, the reader must feel that the *telos* of the pastoral has already been implied and is clear in its broad outlines. Namely, it has been repeatedly mentioned that the pastoral aims at the salvation of its flock. However, in order to locate the pastoral *telos* of salvation with sufficient precision, it will be necessary to detail pastoral salvation in its specificity. In practical terms, this will mean examining salvation first in relation to obedience and then in relation to care.

Like salvation, the role of obedience has already been discussed tangentially throughout this chapter. I have emphasized the role of obedience in the pastoral from the point of view of the Fall. More precisely, the necessity of obedience has been the result of the Fall and the individuals' inability to care for themselves. I would now like to answer this question: what are the connections between obedience and salvation?

In relationship to salvation, obedience is an integral requirement in that it is obedience that allows one to comport oneself as one should in order to achieve the reward of salvation. Individuals are to renounce themselves and to work for obedience from another so that their care is properly directed:

> And this is where Christianity, by presenting salvation as occurring beyond life, in a way upsets or at least disturbs the balance of the care of the self. Although, let me say it

again, to seek one's salvation definitely means to take care of oneself. But the condition required for attaining salvation is precisely renunciation.[37]

This obedience is found in individuals renouncing their own flawed will in favor of God's perfect Will. This necessary obedience was regulated in part by the pastor making known God's and the Church's wishes to the flock:

> Therefore, the pastor should well have made the law known, to make known the will of God that pertains to all men: he will have made known the decisions of the Church or of the community that applies to all members of the community.[38]

But obedience is also importantly cultivated in one-on-one relationships between those more familiar with God's Truth and those less familiar. These relationships are teaching relationships, or as Foucault calls them, relationships of direction:

> Integral dependence… is a relationship of submission, not to a law, not to a principle of order, not to a reasonable injunction either…It is a relationship of submission of one individual to another individual. It is a relationship strictly individual, set in the correlation of an individual who directs to an individual who is directed…[39]

These relationships are relationships of obedience, one individual to another, but derive from a relationship with God. The individual who directs only directs because they know more fully what God has commanded than another or, in the case of the pastor, because the pastor is standing in as a representative of God and directing in His name and as an agent of His Will.

The obedience required of the individual is not just an obedience required in life, but reflects the pastoral dream of salvation as an order entirely dictated by God in His perfect goodness; an order in which domination is effortless and pleasurable. The myths of the final judgment and Jesus' second coming to set up a kingdom of Heaven on Earth

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[37] Foucault, Ethics of the Concern for Self, 439.

[38] Foucault, Sécurité, 178.

[39] Foucault, Sécurité, 178.

reveal the hope of total domination and the emphasis on obedience expressed by the

pastoral. The pastoral dreams that one day Jesus will return to create a heaven on Earth,

establishing an order in which God's will does not have to be fought for and deciphered

in the soul. Instead, a holy order will prevail that allows the soul to effortlessly follow

the edicts of God's Kingdom.   In this second coming, its perfection is marked by the

perfect lack of the will to rebellion and the total and effortless obedience of the flock.

Obedience is not something that just characterizes the means by which salvation is

achieved, although it is that too, it is also what salvation consists of; an order that God

dominates without resistance.

The second and final variable that I would like to use to define pastoral salvation

in Foucault's thought is care. Care was a serious theme for the Greeks and Romans; they

centered their ethics around a pursuit of self mastery through self care. Care was also

central to the pastoral as we can see in Gregory's emphasis on the essential role diligent

self care plays in salvation:

> For if that which evidently must be done is not advanced with assiduous application, even
> what has been done well deteriorates. For in this world the human soul is like a ship
> going upstream: it is not allowed to stay still in one place, because it will drop away to
> the lower reaches unless it strives to gain the upper. If, then, the strong hand of the
> worker does not carry to completion the good works begun, the very fact of this slackness
> in working contends against what is already accomplished.[40]

Gregory emphasizes, like Socrates and the Stoics, the continuous hard work that is

required in order to properly care for the self. Gregory, however, figures the reasoning

for the hard work involved in self care differently than the Stoics or Socrates in that for

Gregory, the constant hard work is required because of the constant erosion and decay to

evil that all human things experience.

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[40] Gregory, Pastoral Care, 220.

In Foucault's account of the Stoics, the constant hard work was required for the two reasons that we saw in chapter two: first, because self-care was a pleasurable way of life and second, constant hard work is required because humanity has such rich and varied possibilities that a lifetime is not enough to explore them fully. Notice that the hard work required in Stoicism stems not from humanity's Falleness for but from human possibility and the benefits of self care as a way of life.

Pastoral salvation was a self care that attempted to take a Fallen ethical substance through an austere and extensive ascetics in order to attain salvation. These ascetics worked to maintain the proper mode of subjection in humility and obedience because it is this mode of subjection that is ultimately required to be saved. An individual had to be willing and able to remain in permanent deference to God's Will, reflecting His design and order for the cosmos. So, although Foucault is adamant that "to seek one's salvation definitely means to take care of oneself" we must keep in mind that this is a form of self care that seeks to navigate Fallen life in order to attain a saved and perfectly dominated death. Salvation is thus figured as the final goal in a process of hard fought and tedious self care to remain obedient to a series of norms that one is naturally resistant too.

With this, I will end the discussion of the pastoral and move to bio-power where these lineages will be taken up in the context of modern domination.

Chapter 6: The Morality of Life

The story of the relation of modern domination to pagan self care does not end

with disciplinary power. For Foucault, disciplinary power is only half of the orthotic-

regulatory axis of modern society:

> The normalizing society is therefore not, under these conditions, a sort of generalized
> disciplinary society whose disciplinary institutions have swarmed and finally taken over
> everything—that, I think, is no more than a first and inadequate interpretation of a
> normalizing society. The normalizing society is a society in which the norm of discipline
> and the norm of regulation intersect along an orthogonal articulation.[41]

This other pole of normalizing society, its "regulating" pole, is bio-power. Bio-power is

regulatory in that it articulates itself around and through disciplinary society, organizing

inter-disciplinary relations, operations, and relations. This series of colonizing relations

is reminiscent of the pastoral and the monastery by more than just accident: bio-power is

genealogically related to the pastoral as the monastery is to the disciplines. The

contemporary colonization of the disciplines by bio-power doubtlessly owes something to

the colonization of the monastery by the pastoral.

Another likeness beyond between these modern forms of power and their

ancestors exists at the level that each of the relationships of power and knowledge

functioned at. The pastoral functioned on the flock as a whole, while the monastery took

up its exercise of power at the level of the individual. Bio-power works on the

population, while discipline works on individual bodies, "Discipline is exercised on the

bodies of individuals, and security [bio-power] is exercised on the whole of the

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[41] Foucault, <u>Society Must Be Defended,</u> 253.

population."[42] To fix the target of bio-power therefore, we will have to uncover what is meant by life and population—the elements that bio-power was exercised on. Foucault has specific understandings for these words that differ from their common usage and it will be necessary to understand these words in their peculiar employment by Foucault.

Unfortunately, coming to terms with the meaning of these terms is made difficult by the fact that most of his research on bio-power was never developed into published manuscripts. What we have instead are three lecture series at the *Collège de France* from 1976-1979, his comments in *History of Sexuality I*, and assorted shorter articles and lectures. These writings neither all draw on the same sources, nor are they carried out to achieve the same ends, nor even do these texts share a consensus on the name of the form of power and knowledge that they address (bio-power, security, and bio-politics). Even given these differences, the texts do share many features and tracing lines of thought through them can be a useful and productive endeavor if we keep in mind that these texts do not all tell the same story and it is not possible synthesize them without sacrificing or reshaping one or another of his insights.

As is the case with most all of Foucault's work, this gives any theorist or interpreter who wants to work with his thought a series of difficult choices. The theorist who wants to employ Foucault's thought will have to privilege certain lines of analysis and explanation above others in order to produce a unified line of thought that spans multiple works. I would like to explain the series of choices that I have made by way of a kind of introduction and orientation to this chapter.

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[42] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 13.

One familiar with these texts might expect that I would choose to work through Foucault's 1978-1979 lecture course, *Naissance de la Biopolitique* because it is in this lecture course that he most famously deploys his notion of governmentality. Put simply, Foucault defines governmentality as a study of domination through the intersection of politics (the governance of others) and morality (self-government). This text shares enough affinities with this notion of governmentality that *Naissance de la Biopolitique* may seem a natural starting point. However, this lecture course, although it deploys its own surprising and interesting concepts and insights (for instance, the Chicago School of economics, known for its *laisser-faire* capitalism, is really a kind of pastoral care and is similar to the welfare state in its guiding principles) would not contribute much to this analysis except as an extension of Foucault's studies of bio-power. That is, in relation to this project, *Naissance de la Biopolitique* would be most useful insofar as it shows how certain schools of Liberal thought and economics, apparently in contradiction to the forms of governmental philosophy that arose out of the pastoral, are but yet another permutation of it—further reinforcing the thesis that I am developing. Insofar as this lecture course serves best as an extension of an analysis that is more central to this text, I will put this lecture course to the side for the sake of brevity and focus instead of Foucault's earlier work on bio-power.

The other three primary sites of the elaboration of bio-power are *History of Sexuality Volume I, Society Must Be Defended,* and *Sécurité, Territoire, Population*—all of which I will make extensive use of in this chapter. In addition, two important and often overlooked sources for the exegesis of Foucault's ideas on bio-power are *The Order of Things* and *The Birth of the Clinic*. In these two books, written before Foucault

conceived of bio-power, Foucault establishes the archaeology of the biological and

clinical understanding of life. This archaeology is critical to read alongside the texts on

bio-power because it is in these texts that Foucault explains in specific detail what notion

of *bios* (life) is that is in play in bio-power. I would like to begin with a discussion of the

ethical substance (life) rooted in these archaeologies and build from this understanding to

the analysis of the population and bio-power.

<center>***</center>

The Substance of Life

 Bio-power takes (human) life as the object of its exercise of power and

knowledge; to understand bio-power will therefore require a more detailed exposition of

what is understood by 'life.'   Although Foucault does not detail what, exactly, is meant

by life in *Society Must Be Defended, History of Sexuality I, and Sécurité, Territoire,*

Population (except by implication), he does perform archaeologies of life in *The Order*

of Things and in *The Birth of the Clinic* through his studies of biology and medicine.

In these studies, Foucault finds that in the modern era 'life' is defined by a

particular form of relationality among the organs. He finds for biology, and hence to

some degree medicine, that four relations among the organs define life: they are the

relations of "*co-existence*, of *internal hierarchy*, and of *dependence* with regard to the

level of *organic structure*."[43] It is these four relations among organs that constitutes a set

of organs as living. In order to understand what is meant by life will require an

exploration of these four relations.

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[43] Michel Foucault, <u>The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences,</u> (Vintage Books: New York, 1994) 265.

The first relation, 'co-existence,' functions like this: the organs must co-exist together in the sense that they work together according to a shared principle to form life. Working together permits the organs to achieve some purpose which they could not all achieve on their own. This purpose can differ from organism to organism; by the coordination of organs fish can breathe underwater, bacteria and algae can live in vents on the ocean floor, and humans can build nuclear reactors but in the end its cause (a particular form of co-existence among the organs) and the effect (life) is the same. To achieve this purpose through a co-ordination of organs requires that the organism has a plan which is carried out in its growth and development: "This pre-eminence of one function over the others implies that the organism, in its visible arrangements, obeys a *plan*."[44] Although the following phrasing will become more common in the later Foucault, we can say that biology and medicine both deploy an understanding of the interrelation of organs that assumes that the organs' interrelations are governed by a normative principle specific to each species. In other words, all life, by definition, has a positive norm, a 'plan,' that its organs are striving elaborate through their cooperation in order to achieve some purpose. This notion will prove quite powerful when applied to human beings because it implies that humanity has a natural normative disposition that it is genetically structured to carry out. This conception of a normative plan at the heart of life is in many ways the basis of the second principle—the internal hierarchy of the organs.

Internal hierarchy is created in an organism when the 'plan' requires the subordination of certain organs' functions to the functioning of other organs. For

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[44] Foucault, The Order of Things, 266.

instance, the organs form a hierarchy which may prioritize the digestive or reproductive organs over the functions of pleasure or longevity. In other words, the body is ordered in such a way so as to maximize particular functions:

> The analysis of organisms, and the possibility of resemblances and distinctions between them, presupposes, therefore, a table, composed not of the elements, which may vary from species to species, but of the functions, which, in living beings in general, govern, complement, and order one another: not a polygon of possible modifications, but a hierarchical pyramid of importance.[45]

These hierarchical relations of subordination can be determined by physical examination, 'opening up a few bodies' and seeing how the organism is structured. One could look for well developed jaws, productive sexual organs, brain size, etc., to tell one what a particular organism prioritizes in its structure. Although the ends of an animal are many, for instance, what kind of food it eats, how it mates, etc., with careful examination these functions and their value to the organism can be hierarchically determined. For instance, one can look to the make-up of the organism to see if the organism places a higher value on its own existence or that of its young—some organisms are unable to live through the birthing or mating process and therefore prioritize the lives of their young over themselves. This second principle provides a framework through which an organism's plan can be determined by a specific emphasis on which behaviors each animal is obligated by nature to prioritize

Dependence and organic structure, the third and fourth principles, are implied in the previous two. A certain dependence of the organs is evident in their hierarchy in that some organs require other organs for their functions. Relations of dependence can be useful to examine in order to determine the specific hierarchical relationality of the

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[45] Foucault, The Order of Things, 266.

organs. The fourth term, organic structure, is that which one determines when one lays out the forms of co-existence, internal hierarchy, and dependence of the organs. Or, put otherwise, the organic structure of an organism is described though the normative relationship of its organs as revealed in its pyramidal prioritization of functions.

Through this definition of life, the process of defining the norms that should guide human life is given a scientific basis, in contrast to the philosophical and religious processes that had earlier defined it. This scientific methodology purports to be an objective one; it finds supposedly incontrovertible physical evidence which is used to justify its understanding of human norms as fact. In this respect, the biological understanding of the ethical substance is similar to the revelations of the pastoral in that both claimed access to knowledge that was indisputably and universally true for all people.

In addition, the 'plan' and the process of discovering the plan also bear certain resemblances to the pastoral processes of confession and self-examination. In the pastoral, the fallen substance of the individual was carefully self-monitored in order to make sure that its desires were not leading it astray. This process of self-examination was an obligation of the individual in order to insure its good conduct. Bernauer and Mahon write, "The self is constituted [in the pastoral] as a hermeneutical reality, as an obscure text requiring permanent decipherment."[46] The self sought through a variety of hermeneutic techniques to reveal and ferret out its most secret desires, it deepest and most important motivations. These motivations, which were undoubtedly fruitful in

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[46] James W. Bernauer and Michael Mahon, "The Ethics of Michel Foucault," from The Cambridge Companion to Foucault, ed. Gary Gutting (University of Cambridge: Cambridge, 1994) 146.

revealing sinful desires, required confession to cleanse their burden from the soul.

Through admitting one's actions to a priest, one would bring them before God and end

the rebellion that the sin had begun. Sinning took one away from God's Will but by

admitting to God that one had rebelled from His plan one made oneself deferent and

again returned to the fold of the saved.

In a like way, the scientists who opened up corpses sought to ferret out the hidden

plan and deepest motivations of human action. By undertaking the examination properly,

i.e. objectively and rationally, the body would confess the secrets it had been hiding to

the properly trained senses of the scientist:

> An absolutely new use of scientific discourse was then defined: a use involving fidelity
> and unconditional subservience to the coloured content of experience—to say what one
> sees; but also a use involving the foundation and constitution of experience—showing by
> saying what one sees. It was necessary, then, to place medical language at this apparently
> superficial but in fact very deeply embedded level at which the descriptive formula is also
> a revealing gesture. And this revelation in turn involved as its field of origin and of
> manifestation of truth the discursive space of the corpse: the interior revealed. […] The
> sense-perceptible, which cannot be exhausted by description, and which so many
> centuries have wished to dissipate, finds at last in death the law of its discourse; it is
> death that fixes the stone that we can touch, the return of time, the fine, innocent earth
> beneath the grass of words. In a space articulated by language, it reveals the profusion of
> bodies and their simple order.[47]

The idea of a hermeneutics revealing the truth of an individual through an examination of

the individual's hidden inner recesses is something that both the pastoral and the clinical

sciences possessed. Both of these hermeneutic economies of truth and confession

demanded obedience to their True dictates, although for different reasons. The pastoral

appealed to God for its source of moral authority while the sciences looked towards the

laws that defined the physical universe to provide its authority.

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[47] Michel Foucault, The Birth of the Clinic, trans. Sheridan Smith (Vintage Books: New York, 1994) 196-197.

The Greeks and Romans operated differently than this hermeneutic and confessional deployment does in that, for the ancients, behavioral norms were not something that could be objectively and universally given to all people. For instance, Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* writes that the mean (a kind of norm) that governs each person is different and can only be determined in the particular. His famous example is that of Milo the wrestler who needs to eat much more food than another less athletic person might eat, making the normal and proper intake of food quite different among individuals.[48] The point in Aristotle is not that some people's nature determines them to be a wrestler and therefore they must eat more, resulting in a kind of science that must work in the particular to state objectively what each person must do. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle writes that individuals must choose, based on aesthetic criteria (*to kalon*) which path they will follow; this path will in turn determine which norms the individual must follow. Therefore, like Greco-Roman self care generally, there is nothing in Milo's or anyone's organic structure from which one can objectively determine the particular form of a life and the mean suitable to it.

The medical and biological conception of life is important to understanding bio-power because it is the scientific framework of life that serves as the background to Foucault's notion of bio-power. However, the analysis of life in these sciences is only part of the analysis that needs to be done in order to understand the figuration of the ethical substance of individuals in bio-networks. The ethical substance of the individual is deeply tied not only to the understanding of life as it is deployed in medicine, biology,

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[48] Aristotle, <u>Nicomachean Ethics,</u> trans. Joe Sachs (Focus: Newburyport, 2002) 1106b.

and the social sciences, but also to how it is taken up by the state and other bio-agencies

as the life of the population:

> It seems to me that one of the basic phenomena of the nineteenth century was what might
> be called power's hold over life. What I mean is the acquisition of power over man
> insofar as man is a living being, that the biological came under State control, that there
> was at least a certain tendency that leads to what might be termed State control of the
> biological.[49]

In the quote, we can see that Foucault links the control of life and the biological to the

state. Clearly then, coming to terms with the state will be important to understanding the

ethical substance of the individual as it is the state that initiates the "hold over life" that

defines the ethical substance within the context of the life of the population. In order to

arrive at the particularity of the engagement of the state, population, and life, it will be

necessary to recount Foucault's genealogy of the state.

In *Sécurité, Territoire, Population,* Foucault begins his genealogy with the

sovereign state of law. For the sovereign state, the exercise of law defined its primary

deployment of power. Foucault designates rule by law to be a negative form of rule

because decrees, laws, etc., inform subjects of what they ought not to do, but not

necessarily what they should do. Juridical power, the power of law and its apparatuses, is

not positive because although it may effect what people do not do, it has little ability to

suggest what people should do instead. No method or institutions existed on the scale of

the prisons, psychological institutions, and educational facilities of today to allow the

sovereigns of the past to regulate and produce positive behaviors with any real efficacy

until the birth of the disciplines:

> In the juridico-legal system, from that which operated, which dominated from the 18th

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[49] Foucault. <u>Society Must Be Defended,</u> 239-240.

century, it was absolutely evident that the disciplinary aspect was far from absent because, after all, when one imposed on an act, above all if it was an appearance of little importance and little consequence, when one imposed a punishment said to be exemplary, it was precisely that one wanted an corrective effect…[50]

The sovereigns were more or less relegated to rule in the negative, by forbidding actions and taking away life or money for the breaking of law.

Foucault makes one of his most interesting comments in the entire lecture course when he reports that it is one of the great mysteries why, with the positive deployment of power modeled everywhere by the pastoral, sovereignty remained so long an exercise of power characterized by its negativity:

Second remark: the reason of this distinction [in the exercise of sovereign and pastoral powers] is one of the great problems of history and, for me at least, an enigma.[51]

However, in the 16th and 17th century this wall that existed between the state and positive deployments of power began to collapse and the state began to draw on the example of the pastoral for positive deployments of power:

It [the pastoral] is an art of governing men and it is, I believe, from this that it is necessary to look for the origin, the point of formation, of crystallization, the embryonic point of this governmentality that entered politics at the end of the 16th century through the 18th century, the threshold of the modern State.[52]

Fittingly, in the 16th century a stoic revival was taking place that re-engaged the rich stoic work on questions of government and practices of individual formation that the early Christians grappled with. But even beyond this revival of Stoicism and its attendant questions of government, the 16th century, typified by the reformation movement, was explosive with questions about government. This series of governmental interrogations broached new questions about possibilities for state rule outside of the negative sovereign

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[50] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 8.
[51] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 158.
[52] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 169.

state of law. Influenced by the Christian pastoral, new ways of thinking about the relationship of the state to its resources and subjects were emerging and developing more positive and normative strategies of rule.

At the time, Machiavelli was at the center of these debates about government and the state because he was seen as attempting to offer a response, based in a reason immanent to governance (and not in claims of Roman inheritance, divine lineage, and Christian cosmology), to these new questions about government.   Machiavelli found that purpose of government was to reinforce the ability of the prince to govern. The art of government in Machiavelli was a self-reinforcing circle in that government should exist to secure the future of its ability to govern, in order to further secure its existence, and so on *ad infinitum*:

> What Machiavelli sought to protect is not the State, it is the relationship of the Prince to that on which he exercises his domination, that is to say that which he is trying to save is the principality as a relationship of the power of the Price to his territory and his population.[53]

Machiavelli was criticized for this, especially by La Periere, as it was traditionally not seen as acceptable that the prince ruled only for his own good; like the long pastoral tradition of ruling in God's name for the benefit of humanity, the prince was generally thought to be obligated to act in the best interests of society as a whole.[54] As Machiavelli was found dissatisfying, his critics began to reformulate the ends of his politics but retained a focus on the formulation of government from the perspective of a rationality immanent to governance.

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[53] Foucault, Sécurité, 248.

[54] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," trans. Robert Hurley and others, from Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, ed. James D. Faubion (The New Press: New York, 1994) 206-207.

A new voice emerged for the reformation of Machiavelli in La Mothe Le Vayer. La Mothe Le Vayer stressed a continuity between the forms of government of the self, the family, and the state. Contra Machiavelli, La Mothe Le Vayer wanted to introduce continuity between these different spheres of government because he wanted to emphasize that governing the state required a care that was like the care that one took of one's own family and oneself.

This idea of care, developed in the Stoic renaissance, found its unique expression in an administration that strove towards "the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to a convenient end."[55] The prince in and after La Mothe La Vayer's discourse became a kind of administrator who brings things to their proper ends. This administrator reflects a pastoral disposition to care for the flock *omnes et singulatum* and mirrors pastoral efforts to arrange all things so that they lead to their proper end.

Remaining faithful to Machiavelli's turn to justify his politics in a reason immanent to the state, these new governmentalities developed a form of justification out of a transformation of the discourse of the physical sciences. Like the physical scientists, these political scientists found that the citizens of the State could be found to obey laws. Instead of analyzing motion, leverage, or gravity, these 'political scientists' created and applied laws drawn from a scientific conception of *life* to the citizenry; the result of the application of scientific laws to the citizenry was the birth of the 'population' as a scientific object. These laws inherent to the population came to define and determine the proper levels of population growth, trade, crime, disease, etc. This nascent science of the

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[55] Foucault, <u>Governmentality,</u> 208.

state administration of the life of the population was called statistics and derived its name from being the science of the state, i.e. 'state-istics.'

The science of statistics resulted in the ability to manage information that was central to this more positive, administrative, and facilitative government. Statistical information was central to positive rule because making sure things arrived at their proper ends requires knowing what people, materials, products, etc. needed to be moved, to be put in communication with other elements in order to achieve the proper and desired results. Statistics is the science of calculating accurately on large scales the probabilities of situations arising that are of important to governance; for example, material and population shortages or excesses.

It is in part through the emergence of statistics and other administrative techniques that government finally loses the family as its model for governance. Statistics reveals that the population obeys laws and forces that are different from those of the family. The population has its own tendencies, fluctuations, and averages which are not those of the family, but rather those of a new scientific domain. As a result, population remains an element of care, not as an extension of the family but as a scientifically knowable and predictable entity unto itself.

Bio-power arises through the combination of a concern to regulate the population according to the plan inherent in the human species, its "convenient ends." Life enters bio-power as an important element because knowledge of the plan of life, the physically discernable norm that guides the structuration of the organism, provides substance and specificity to the *ends* that society must be arranged to conveniently fill. The analysis of

human life by biologists, doctors, and social scientists provide positive normative

descriptions of what ends humans *should* achieve:

> Basically, evolutionism, understood in the broad sense—or, in other words, not so much Darwin's theory as a set, a bundle of notions (such as: the hierarchy of species that grow from a common evolutionary tree, the struggle for existence among species, the selection that eliminates the less fit)—naturally became within a few years during the nineteenth century not simply a way of transcribing a political discourse into biological terms, and not simply a way of dressing up a political discourse in scientific clothing, but a real way of thinking about the relations between colonization, the necessity for wars, criminality, the phenomena of madness and mental illness, the history of societies with their different classes, and so on.[56]

Through the examination of organs, scientists provide the administrative apparatus of

states and agencies with objective positive targets for them to aim towards in their

normalization of the population. The science of politics is thus able to retain objectivity

in the assignment of its convenient ends through an objective analysis of the *bios* of the

population which reveals those ends. Through this normative administration of the

population according to its *bios,* bio-power is born.

      Although Foucault was mainly concerned to see how bio-power operated through

the state and what effects it produced, I think we can see that the state is not the only

providence where bio-power operates. Bio-power leaves its cradle in the state and finds

homes in many other points from which concerns about population have import: for

instance, in business organizations (ex. World Economic Forum, World Trade

Organization), social agencies (World Health Organization, American Civil Liberties

Union), religious groups (Focus On the Family, Christian Coalition), private interests

(National Rifle Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association), etc. In fact, one of

the most important transformations that the birth of an art of government based in bio-

power has had, other than to birth the modern state, was to break apart the unity of the

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[56] [56] Foucault. Society Must Be Defended, 256-257.

state. From a state centered around the seat of the sovereign, we have come to a state whose functions, inputs, and outputs rely to a large extent on what I would call bio-agencies—non-governmental organizations that operate semi-independently on the population to normalize it according to the plan embedded in human life. The introduction of this multiplicity of bio-agencies does result in some disagreements between the agencies and some factionalization of the populace. For instance, the Cattlemen's National Beef Association reports on its website for 'tweens (young teens and older children) that 'ZIP,' (zinc, iron, and protein) are best gotten from beef and are what is required for 'tweens to feel good and get fit bodies. The pages of 'ZIP' are decorated with pictures of gigantic cheeseburgers. However, health professionals from a non-beef subsidized bio-agency disagree that the human organism is suited to such a diet:

> Every day, nearly one-third of U.S. children aged 4 to 19 eat fast food, which likely packs on about six extra pounds per child per year and increases the risk of obesity, a study of 6,212 youngsters found.[57]

However these bio-agencies disagree on what the plan of life is that is to be found in the population, they all apparently agree on the soundness of bio-power as a governmental strategy.

Instead of viewing bio-power as being only expressed by the state, we should see that bio-power is actually exercised from a great multiplicity of points. These exercises of bio-power occur with greater and lesser degrees of independence from the state. Even within the state, one can see that its departments do not work with total cohesion as was graphically displayed in the disastrous response to hurricane Katrina. The various

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[57] "Fast Food Linked To Child Obesity," CBS News.com, 14 September 2005, <www.cbsnews.com>.

departments, agencies, and offices of government at the local, county, state, national, and international levels work with highly variable amounts of coordination and integration.

Now of course it is the case that large scale campaigns have been taken up, against polio in the early 20th century for instance, that have unified many bio-agencies in response to a special threat to life. But it does not seem that this unification under a singular discourse on population is ever complete or permanent. What this means for the state, is that it is another node, not necessarily even an originary node, in the circulation of bio-power. The state does not control or solely define the exercise of bio-power but it is continually constituted and reconstituted in the shifting ground of normality and regulation formed by circulation of bio-power. No one agency, state, or individual defines bio-power, the agencies and the population mutually define and constitute themselves in a continually shifting set of relations.

In this way, the deployment of bio-power resembles the pastoral in that both are patchworks of loosely connected and (usually) mutually reinforcing forms of power and knowledge. Like the pastoral, bio-agencies seem to rarely attempt to cover all aspects of the management of the population/flock but in the swarming profusion of the vast multiplicity of agencies, most areas of the administration of life are covered and coordinated with the operations of other agencies.

At this point, we are now able to put forward an understanding of the ethical substance. The ethical substance of the individual established in bio-relations is defined by its connection to a species that gives it and the other members of the population a normative plan to follow. This plan works like the *telos* of almost any morality in that it defines what the proper ends of a human being are. The *telos* embedded in the bodies of

the population differs from the teleologies developed in moral philosophy in that the bio-*telos* develops its force from an empirical demonstration. Importantly, the ethical substance of the individual is genetic and common to all 'normal' members of the species (those without serious genetic failures and physical or mental illnesses). This allows the ethical substance to be generalized so that truth claims and ascetic practices can be ascribed to humanity as a whole.

The curious thing about the truth of the ethical substance is that it is not necessarily or even ordinarily a truth that an individual in the population can verify or even recognize. This truth is a hidden one that yields its secrets only to the proper scientific tools and forms of analysis. This truth requires training, expensive equipment, a clinical setting and a specialized vocabulary to voice; it is not a truth that the vast majority are qualified, equipped, or possessed of a proper vocabulary to voice. This hidden, incomprehensible, and unspeakable truth, even given the individual's lack of comprehension of it, will be used to keep track of the merits and demerits of the individuals that compose the population. Individuals can be subject to quarantine, imprisonment, or a mental institution for their deviance from *their* "plan" that they may not even understand. This state of affairs is thought to be just because this truth is thought to be known by all individuals on an instinctive level. Individuals are held accountable for acting in accordance with their normative plan because such normal actions are thought to happen instinctively and therefore do not require scientific explanation.

The specific genius of this form of power is that it makes the individual responsible for knowing and becoming whatever the popular 'nature' is at the moment.

The individuals whose ethical substances are defined by bio-power find themselves in a peculiar position. The norms of bio-society may change and the individuals are then subjected to the new demands of bio-power as if this mode of subjugation was how they already were by nature. Through this scheme individuals are subjected to a plan that they typically have little role in formulating. Instead, the individual finds their ethical substance, *telos*, and mode of subjection pre-crafted for them *en masse* as a species through the collaboration of the life sciences and bio-agencies. The individual is defined by this truth that finds them on the dissection table and in the psychologists office, regardless of their own feelings to the contrary. In sum, the bio-regulative definition of the ethical substance subjects the individual to a continuous and flexible domination that is their own responsibility to willingly maintain.

Although the mode of subjection was discussed tangentially in the discussion of the ethical substance, some important points of clarification remain to be made. Namely, the previous discussion did not address the desire to be normalized by individuals. It may be the case that my previous discussion of the ethical substance has made it sound that normalization is something that is only ever unwillingly imposed on individuals by bio-relations. While it is true that bio-relations are resisted, it is also true that many individuals work willingly contribute to their own normalization.

The individuals have many reasons to be motivated to normalize: there are the threats to mental, physical, and genetic health presented by bio-agencies that "stirred up people's fears" in regard to deviance; there are also the rewards of conformity: access to better jobs, housing, and a freedom from punishments and 'rehabilitation' that would seek to compel normalization. Moreover, success by many definitions is predicated on

normalizing; after all, few professions, land lords, police officers, teachers, psychologists, parents, and friends tolerate deviance very well. Normalization is required to access a lifestyle that many would consider successful and as a result many people actively and willingly assist their own normalization.

In sum, the mode of subjection proceeds according to a plan that exists within every life. Individuals may or may not willingly follow the current definition of this 'objective' plan but they are subject to its norms nonetheless.

Bio-relations and disciplinary relations are deeply connected in terms of their moral code and ascetics so that any consideration of these elements of bio-power will necessarily involve the discussion of disciplinary power as well. In other words, these forms of power and knowledge mutually articulate themselves one upon the other and cannot be viewed separately without losing sight of important elements of each. The laws and ascetics that these forms of power operate with are often formed in mutual dialog and they frequently work in a mutually reinforcing manner. To think through this mutual interconnection in terms of the moral code and ascetics will require two central thrusts: first, a discussion of the effects produced by bio- and disciplinary power from sharing facets of their moral code; second, an analysis of the effects and the form of deployment of their coordinated ascetic technologies.

To begin, we need to look at the precise form of interaction that occurs between the disciplines and bio-agencies. This interaction and connection between the disciplines and bio-agencies is complex in that many different points of contact are established. However, we can begin to characterize this profusion of connections quite simply by noticing that these points of contact do not result in the replacement of one form of power

by another. Instead, these forms of power have intertwined and modified each other in order to form interwoven and mutually beneficial deployments:

> Therefore, we do not at all have a series in which each of the elements [juridico-legal, disciplinary, and bio-power] are going to succeed each other; for instance, those that would appear would make the preceding elements disappear. This is not the age of the law, the age of discipline, or the age of security. You do not have mechanisms of security that take the place of disciplinary mechanisms, those that would then take the place of the juridico-legal mechanisms. In fact, you have a series of complex edifices in which what is going to change is…the system of correlation between the juridico-legal mechanisms, the disciplinary mechanisms, and the mechanisms of security.[58]

Foucault is adamant that the interchange between these of power is not a simple form of substitution. These forms of power develop forms of interchange that "complicate themselves" over time, meaning that their relationships deepen and develop a multiplicity of points of contacts over time.[59] These contacts do not have the character of replacement, but rather of mutual interpenetration.

An especially deep area of interconnection between disciplinary and bio-relations is their normative form of the moral code:

> In more general terms still, we can say that there is one element that will circulate between the disciplinary and the regulatory, which will also be applied to body and population alike, which will make it possible to control both the disciplinary order of the body and the aleatory events that occur in biological multiplicity. The element that circulates between the two is the norm. The norm is something that can be applied to both a body one wishes to discipline and a population that one wishes to regularize.[60]

I would now like to explore the connection of these two forms of power through their version of moral code, the norm. To carry out this analysis, I will divide it into two parts. First, I will begin with a consideration of how bio-power utilizes and transforms disciplinary moral code; second, I will reverse the directionality of the analysis in order

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[58] Foucault, Sécurité, 10.

[59] Foucault, Sécurité, 9.

[60] Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 253.

to purse the way that the disciplines are able to use and influence the moral code of bio-relations.

Let begin to pursue the question of how bio-power is able to actuate and make effective disciplinary norms for its own purposes by identifying specific ways that disciplinary norms are woven into and utilized by bio-relations. One way bio-power uses the disciplines in its own formulation of a moral code is through the collection of the knowledge that the disciplines gather about individuals (case studies, work records, and other disciplinary 'files.') This information is collected in order to compose accurate pictures of the population from the collation many disciplines. Foucault speaks about the usefulness of the disciplines in making the population manageable through their tracking and formation of individuals:

> The scholarly discipline, the military discipline, the penal discipline, the discipline in the workshops, the disciplines of working people, all that, it is a certain manner of managing the multiplicity, of organizing it, of fixing the points of establishment, the coordinations, the lateral or horizontal trajectories, the vertical, pyramidal, or hierarchical trajectories, etc. And the individual is already a certain form of yoking the multiplicity, for a discipline, it [the individual] is the first material that leaves it and that it builds. Discipline is a mode of individualization of multiplicities and not something that begins with individuals who already have the title individual and afterwards constructs a sort of edifice of multiple elements from them. [61]

The disciplines break down the multiplicity of the population through technologies of space and time that rely on precise record keeping for assignment of schedules, punishments, rewards, etc. These disciplinary records are an incredibly rich and accurate resource for bio-power because the disciplines gather highly detailed information about individuals that can be compiled with other disciplines' records to be generalized into an analysis of population trends. This information is valuable because of its accuracy and its extent; the disciplines have penetrated in into western society so deeply that most every

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[61] Foucault, Sécurité, 14

individual works or otherwise participates in a discipline and produces a series of records.

For instance, information can reliably be collected at a national level from almost all of

the schools to reveal average drop-out rates, reading levels, and school violence statistics.

In essence, the case studies that the disciplines themselves compile to track individual

compliance with the discipline's own norms are often re-deployed by bio-agencies to

reveal the compliance of the population with its regulative plan.

The information collected by bio-agencies is not just limited to what the

disciplines happen to know as a result of the disciplines' own needs. Bio-agencies also

have the ability to influence disciplinary information gathering and arrange for the

disciplines to monitor for several variables of bio-power's own choosing that might not

have otherwise been monitored; these additional variables are sometimes the result of

new laws or economic threats. For example, businesses ask for federal tax payer

identification numbers and photo identification before they hire, but this information is of

little direct use to the discipline except as the federal or state governments require it by

law. This is important for the bio-agencies insofar as their interests do not directly

coincide with those interests; the bio-agencies can arrange for the disciplines to collect

information that has no direct import for the disciplines but may be important on the scale

of the population: pregnancies, sick leave, environmental records, injury rates,

retirements, minority hires, etc.

We can say in summary that bio-agencies have two strategies of extracting

information about the population from the disciplines: they harvest the information that

the disciplines take themselves and they also get the disciplines to collect information

that they would like. This information on the state of the population is both used to

formulate the moral code (in the form of the norm) and to measure the current

population's distance from the norm (its abnormality).

A second line of communication of moral code also exists between the disciplines

and bio-agencies that is different than the traffic just described. More specifically, this

line of communication is a return of information from the bio-agencies back to the

disciplines about what the normative 'plan' of mankind is and how the disciplines should

array themselves to best aid in the regulation of the population according to that plan.

Foucault offers two examples of this in *Society Must Be Defended*, one of sexuality and

the second of a working-class community. The working class community is an

interesting example because the community is a community based on a disciplinary

model (a grid so that disciplinary functions are easy to perform, such as surveillance,

policing, etc.) but this community has been colonized by bio-power in order to regulate

the population as well. For instance, the disciplinary hold over individuals was used in

such a way so as to create the proper distribution, hygiene, education, birth rate, etc. of

the population.[62] In general, the coordination of moral norms from the disciplines to the

bio-agencies and back again allows for the coordination and harmonization of these

forms of power through the norm.

Although it appeared in *Discipline and Punish* that the disciplines create their

own norms without the influence of bio-power, it is clear that this understanding is only a

"first and inadequate" understanding. One major problem of this first interpretation

given in *Discipline and Punish* is that it does not have the ability to explain how, in the

current situation today, the norms that the disciplines use are largely standardized. For

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[62] Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 251.

instance, how are medical treatments standardized across the nation, even internationally? Foucault's conception of discipline in *Discipline and Punish* has no mechanism to explain the normalization of norms that has occurred. However, this traffic of norms from the disciplines through the clearinghouses of bio-agencies and back again can and does explain this normalization of norms.

One should not think that these species-wide norms have had to be imposed on the disciplines by bio-agencies entirely through law, force, or threat. The disciplines themselves have many incentives to normalize their operations. The disciplines often push towards their own normalization in order to increase their efficiency and importance as a node of power and knowledge. Through bio-power linking together the operations of securing the population and the disciplines, the disciplines make themselves important centers of transfer and increase their presence and authority:

> …a technology of security, for example, is going to put in place, take over and make function in the interior of its own tactics juridical elements, disciplinary elements, and at the same time multiply them.[63]

By standardizing their disciplinary practices the disciplines can more efficiently form mutually beneficial relationships—from common paperwork, to the standardization of truck deck heights. These standardized relationships aid in the disciplines establishing a common 'language' that permits them to interact quickly and without confusion. The disciplines that are unable to relate along these standards will not form those relationships with other disciplines and bio-agencies that make them important relational centers. For instance, a business would typically want to produce products that worked with other products on the market in a normalized fashion so that their products would have the

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[63] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 10.

broadest possible market. To this end an international, pan-disciplinary, bio-agency might be established to create global norms, as often happens in many fields today. Another example can be found in the standardization of voltages and plug sizes in the beginning of the 20th century.

In addition, the disciplines are stabilized and strengthened by their coordination through bio-power and the operation of a 'circulating' norm. When the disciplines operate according to the same norms it makes it seem as if the normative 'plan' that they are deploying is really a natural genetic inheritance. If all the disciplines used different norms, the norm would not seem normal at all; instead, it would probably look like an arbitrary norm established according the specific requirements of local powers and knowledges. When all the disciplines use similar and coordinated norms, it becomes much harder to see that the norms they are deploying are not a natural plan but serve particular aims and can be changed.

The result of this regulation of norms in the disciplines is that the moral code that the disciplines operate on has largely been normalized itself. In other words, the disciplinary moral code is often not unique to a particular discipline but is common to many or most all disciplines. Evidence of this normalization of norms is all around us in the standardization of architecture, business practices, food products, medical care, etc. For example, a third grader who lives Kansas is ideally interchangeable with any other third grader in the U.S. public school system. The third graders are interchangeable because they are being trained according to the same norms, along the same schedule at the level of the population. Relatively independent state, county, and city wide disciplines have no capacity to orchestrate a normalization of norms across the third

grade population of a nation without the bio-agencies intersession; to this end federal funding and law are used to secure these national standards. Other examples can be found in the length of the work week, the genders and races employed at particular positions, the treatment of gays and lesbians, safety standards, vacation allowances, insurance requirements and policies, etc.; they are all disciplinary norms that have largely been normalized across the population.

For bodies who find themselves populating the orthotic-regulatory axis of modern bio/disciplinary society, this means that not only do their ethical and political possibilities tend to be normative possibilities, but those normative possibilities have themselves been normalized. Workplace organization has been normalized, school curriculums have been normalized, sports have been normalized, driving regulations have been normalized, notions of race and sexuality have been normalized, acceptable religious beliefs, etc. Typically, it is the case that individuals in western society are not only developed according to a normative vision that they have little or no part in constituting, but they do not even have the ability to choose from different pre-constituted normative paths. Ever more, the schools, jobs, towns, strip malls, fast food joints, and people are becoming or already are repetitions of a norm on the scale of a territory, a population.

The norms that operate in the disciplines and bio-agencies almost all possess moral effects in that most all of them carry implications for how individuals govern themselves. Individual and population norms effect who individuals and populations become, how and why they subject themselves to the code, the types of exercises that they undertake, and for what purpose they undertake them. In other words, it is difficult to imagine a norm in these systems that does not carry with it a change in the code and

ethical elements of morality. This especially true of the norms that are given through the disciplines; they detail not only what individuals are to become and how they are to comport themselves but also how they are to carry out their subjectivation and actions. For instance, I once worked at a winery. During bottling I was given a lecture on how I was to monitor the bottles for quality and impurities. Not only was I to be at my station monitoring bottles all day, the instructions also contained directions on how I was to look at the bottles: I was to position myself directly in front of the bottles with backlight on the opposite sides of the bottles from me. I was then to elevate myself above the centerlines of the bottles by ten to twenty degrees. Every twenty minutes I was to get someone else to come over so I could 'refresh' my eyes. In addition, the instructions were not limited to how I should comport myself, they also instructed me on how I was to exist as a subject. They instructed me that I should be vigilant, well rested, quick, attentive, and reliable.

In sum, the moral code tends to be established in the networks of bio- and disciplinary relations as a series of normalized norms. The result is two-fold: first, the code according to which the individual is formed and is to enact that subjectivity are norms that have themselves been normalized; second, these norms can often appear incontestable due to the way their homogeneity reinforces the claim that they are a result of the species plan.

We saw, in regards to the moral code, that disciplinary and bio-power are both arranged as part of an "orthogonal articulation" whose effect is not to "replace" or contest each other but to "complicate" and colonize each others' workings. This relationship of colonization and interpenetration extends beyond the moral code to the ascetics of these

relationships of power and knowledge. In order to describe this combinatorially deployed ascetic field, the discussion will have three parts: 1) an analysis of the technologies of bio-*askesis* that are independent of disciplinary *askesis*, 2) a discussion of how bio-power works through disciplinary *askesis*, and 3) a discussion of how disciplinary power uses bio-*askesis*.

First, let us turn to the forms of *askesis* that bio-power can activate without the aid of the disciplines. Bio-power has direct means of altering the population's ascetic practices through a myriad of means. Some such means include public service announcements on the television and radio, billboards, direct mailings, email, and phone calls. Foucault also writes about "charitable institutions…insurance, individual and collective savings, safety measures…forecasts, statistical estimates, and overall measures."[64] One can expand upon this list with a whole series of influential measures on the parts of NGOs (non-governmental organizations): health subsidies, government insurance coverage, famine relief, vaccinations, regulation of the water tables, farm subsidies, control over information, grants that guide the directionality of research in medicine and sociology, etc.

What unites all of these ascetic measures is that they maintain or bring the population within a specific level of statistical tolerance of the norm:

> And most important of all, regulatory mechanisms must be established to establish an equilibrium, maintain an average, establish a sort of homeostasis, and compensate for variations within this general population and its aleatory field. In a word, security mechanisms have to be installed around the random element inherent in a population of living beings so as to optimize a state of life.[65]

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[64] Foucault, <u>Society Must Be Defended,</u> 244-246.
[65] Foucault, <u>Society Must Be Defended,</u> 246.

Through these direct means bio-power is able to alter the practices of the population and influence it to alter its habits and perform actions that make the population other than it was, i.e. to engage an ascetic process that moves the population to conform with normative requirements.

These bio-measures that alter the population do not usually alter them with the same fine control and effectiveness that the disciplines do. For instance, a change in disciplinary ascetics could affect nearly all of the individuals in the discipline to change themselves in a precisely defined way; the measures bio-agencies employ do not work with such totality or precision. This is not as problematic or as disadvantageous as it may seem because disciplinary precision and effectiveness are not always necessary or even desirable.

The population does not always need to be moved in some measure approaching its totality to be maintained at a normative homeostasis. To raise population growth 2% one does not need to effect every individual to reproduce at a greater rate, one only needs to effect 2% of the population to have another child. To this end, anti-birth control posters or campaigns, tax subsides for children, or increased time off from work for childbirth would be sufficient. A very small shift in ascetics is sometimes all that is needed for the population to remain within the norms set out by bio-planners and bio-agencies; to this end an apparently gap ridden and relatively ineffective measure may actually be the appropriate response.

However, in some cases a more specific and total control is required. For instance, in the case where one needs to teach the entire population to read one will need more than posters and marginal shifts in the population. One will need specific and long

term training that individualizes the population and holds them each accountable for

reading skills.

In these situations where disciplinary effectiveness and precision in ascetics is

required on the level of the population, bio-power coordinates disciplinary ascetics to

transform the population, individual by individual, in order to train bodies with an

incredibly fine detail and precision:

> …discipline, by definition, regulates all. Discipline does not let anything escape. Not
> only does it not let this happen, but its principle is that even the smallest things should not
> be left on their own. The smallest disciplinary infraction should be brought to light with
> all the more care because it is small. The *dispositif*[66] of security, on the contrary, you
> have seen, lets things go. It does not let it all go, but there is a level at which letting go is
> indispensable.[67]

Bio-power's ascetics "let things go" but the disciplines are colonized, Foucault even says

"dominated" by, bio-agencies and are used in the training of bodies in a more complete

fashion.[68]   Bio-power makes use of disciplinary ascetic strengths by activating the

disciplines and putting them to work:

> The disciplinary body is itself also very largely activated and made fruitful by the
> installation of these mechanisms of security. Because, after all, in order to assure
> security, one is obliged to appeal, for example, and this is not the only example, to a
> whole series of techniques of surveillance, of surveillance of individuals, to diagnose
> where they are, to classify their mental structure, their own pathology, etc. a whole
> disciplinary ensemble that abounded under the mechanisms of security and in order to
> make them work.[69]

In this quote Foucault not only asserts that certain transformative practices could not be

carried out by bio-power, he also suggests that bio-power colonizes these disciplinary

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[66] Convention in translating Foucault is to leave *dispositif* untranslated and I have followed suit, finding
that 'device' does not translate the full set of meanings that Foucault is calling on in the French. *Dispositif*
indicates a heterogeneous mix of discourses and practices deployed according to particular sets of tactics.
It is not a commonly used term in Foucault and its importance in Foucault's work mainly derives from
Deleuze's interpretation of Foucault in which the term *dispositif* is discussed.

[67] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 47.

[68] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 13.

[69] Foucault, <u>Sécurité</u>, 9-10.

mechanisms to secure the population and assure the stability of its normative

homogeneity. Examples of population norms that bio-agencies rely on the disciplines to

instill range from the quite banal, for instance, the proper way to brush teeth and insure

oral hygiene, to the more ethically and political important, for instance, the sense of race,

gender, and nation that are developed in schools' history, social studies, and physical

education classes.

The usage of disciplinary ascetics by bio-agencies is only half of the ascetic

relationship that connects the two forms of power. More specifically, the disciplines also

shape and benefit from bio-ascetics in that bio-ascetics allow the spread of disciplines

beyond their limits as a series of uncoordinated enclosures and "multiply them." Due to

the national and international connections of the bio-agencies they are able to coordinate

global deployments. Largely global norms exist that can reproduce a certain standardized

environment world-wide. The standardization of measurements and weights, the

normalization of outlets and power, universal standards for clothing sizes, standards for

marriage requirements, establishment of currency exchange rates, the normalization of

populations' skills, health, and habits, etc. have all helped the disciplines operate

effectively on a global scale by assuring them that normalized individuals will arrive at

the disciplines to work and purchase the standard products. NGOs and states often work

to aid the disciplines in international growth and exchange. The World Health

Organization (WHO), the World Bank, and national embassies are all bio-agencies that

many people are familiar with that facilitate disciplinary growth. For instance, the United

States has run a highly successful program to aid the spread of U.S. franchise businesses

abroad:

The U.S. State Department now publishes detailed studies of overseas franchise opportunities and runs a Gold Key Program at many of its embassies to help American franchisors find overseas partners.[70]

The disciplines often lack the coordination, contacts, and understanding to push their development beyond the boundaries of a regional or national territory; however, with the help of bio-agencies that create normal populations and develop statistical information on populations world-wide, the disciplines are able to spread and flourish internationally.

From this account of the ascetic deployment of bio-power and the disciplines, we can see that there is a strong interest on the part of the disciplines and bio-agencies to share a moral code and to contribute to each other's ascetic practices. The bio-agencies provide the moral codes, knowledges, and certain ascetic practices that permit the disciplines to function more efficiently and grow, while the disciplines provide for a more precise and powerful form of individual *askesis* that normalizes the ethical substance of whole populations and surveys them to ensure their regularity and to provide up to date and accurate information.[71]

The proliferation of the disciplines under their "domination" by bio-power is perhaps the largest single difference between bio-relations and the pastoral. The pastoral did not operate in a society that was swarmed with monasteries like bio-power operates in a society swarmed by the disciplines. Certainly, most of the people of the middle ages did not live within a monastery as most people now work, study, go to the doctor, and

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[70] Eric Schlosser., Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal (Perennial: New York 2002) 229-230.

[71] In recent years however, the relationship between the disciplines and the bio-agencies have begun to change. Individual disciplines such as General Electric, Intel, McDonald's, etc. are now larger than many small countries and bio-agencies. The growth of the disciplines and their absorption into many of the roles that bio-agencies carried out promises to change the world. These changes, often referred to in part under the blanket term of globalization, lie outside of this project but they remain a fruitful path for future inquiry and extension of Foucault's thought.

practice sports in a discipline. As a result, the pastoral could not rely on the monasteries

as agents for the implementation of a plan for the flock. The pastoral, minus an ally on a

par with the disciplines, was not at all as effective in its normalization as was bio-power

and this difference makes all the difference at the level of the individual.

Today, the individual tends to be left with a paucity of moral options available to

them. The becoming of the individual can proceed down different avenues (baseball

player, engineer, philosopher, etc.) but all of these fields share many normative features.

To offer an analogy: the moral options open to the individual have tended to be reduced

in the same way that the eating options are reduced when one goes to an ice cream store:

there is still a multiplicity of options but only among fundamentally similar possibilities

(chocolate *ice cream*, vanilla *ice cream*, strawberry *ice cream*, etc.) The western

individual today similarly confronts a variety of possibilities but it is a variety that, when

seen through a Foucaultian analysis, reveals itself to be largely homogeneous. The result

is that although it seems a variety possibilities are open to an individual in a bio-regulated

society to undertake differing ascetic paths, these ascetic possibilities are in many ways

just *a* possibility. Moreover, the ascetic possibilities tend to be formed by scientific

experts with little input from most of the individuals who will become what it is that the

experts declare them paradoxically already to be. This state of affairs protects itself from

the effects of being viewed critically by its own success; the insertion of a biological

justification at the heart of this discourse leaves it with the air of objectivity, universality,

and eternity that is only reinforced with its success and proliferation. Moreover, the

normalization of the ethical substance carried out by bio-disciplinary relations means that

normalized individuals will feel themselves to 'naturally' be as they are described in scientific discourse.

The effect of the deployment of bio-disciplinary relations on morality is to further remove the site of its practice from the realm of the individual to the bio-agencies and disciplines. We can gather this from Foucault's own comments on the relationship of ethics and freedom:

> Q: You say that freedom must be practiced ethically…
>
> MF: Yes, for what is ethics if not the practice of freedom, the conscious practice of freedom?
>
> Q: In other words, you understand freedom as a reality that is already ethical in itself.
>
> MF: Freedom is the ontological condition of ethics. But ethics is the form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection.[72]

If bio-disciplinary power results in domination, when "the power relations, instead of being mobile, allowing the various participants to adopt strategies modifying them, remain blocked, frozen," then the space of ethics and morality as a whole has decreased with the spread of bio-disciplinary power.[73] Freedom, it seems for Foucault, is precisely this ability to adopt strategies and tactics that will allow for the alteration of those forms of power and knowledge that make the present what it is. Morality, as mode of consciously and critically engaging an ability to make things otherwise, is removed from the realm of individual and carried out in the interaction of the bio-agencies and disciplines. The disciplines and bio-agencies dwell in a far more robust freedom than do those populations and individuals that they dominate. Moreover, they consciously apply this freedom to continually shape and alter the present, defining who the individual is and

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[72] Foucault, Ethics of the Concern for Self, 435.
[73] Foucault, Ethics of the Concern for Self, 434.

what they desire. Individuals, insofar as the bio-disciplinary deployments have infiltrated their lives, have little or no moral practices (think of the ice cream store), only a form of reflection that has been precisely crafted in order perpetuate relationships whose form had already been set in advance. Today, morality is characterized by a secularized and transformed version of the pastoral dream: an intensive domination whose form is not determined at the level of the flock but by the experts who know the Truth.

Chapter 7: A Foucaultian Afterlife

In relation to the overall aims of this text, this chapter will bring to a close the second and final arc of the analysis. I argued in this text that Foucault's later work puts forward a new way of thinking that promises to be fruitful in two ways. First, I have shown that if his methods and genealogies are carried forward the insights Foucault deployed in his later work can provide important and new insights about contemporary power and knowledge relations. The focus of his analyzer on ethics reorients the terms of his analysis through the introduced emphasis on subjectivation and truth.[74] This emphasis on the becoming of the subject reveals the specific forms of individuals' necessary complicity in their becoming (which was a dimension of analysis that was almost entirely absent from his earlier work) and the forms of truth that make that particular configuration of complicity possible.

Second, a common criticism of Foucault and especially his later work is that his thought is critical of modern society but offers no basis for attacks and the transformation of that society. This last chapter is offered as one possible extension of Foucault's work with the goal of offering a critically transformative practice. Before I consider develop that practice, I want to first develop the positioning of this last chapter in relation to Foucault's corpus in order to contextualize it.

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[74] Several of Foucault's interviewers ask him about his new emphasis on truth and subjectivity. I believe this characterization is slightly misleading. I find Foucault's analysis was not on the subject as a finished work (i.e. as a subject) but on the processes whereby an individual becomes a subject—subjectivation.

I believe that the proper and careful positioning of the ideas I am developing in this chapter is important because there is a large danger for their misunderstanding. My concern is that in laying out a possible form of counterattack and transformation through Foucault's thought, I run the risk of my discourse being read as a new norm and thus supporting precisely what it aimed to attack. I am reminded of how, when the Soviet Union fell, the insignias, medals, posters, etc. of the Soviet state were bought by western capitalists and resold at a handy profit. In this way, the very propaganda designed to fight western capitalism was reappropriated to support it.

I am sure that my own concern over this text being used as a support for normalization was a concern Foucault also had about his texts. Foucault spoke in an interview on this very topic saying, "The role of an intellectual is not to tell others what they must do."[75] Certainly, given his own thoughts on power and knowledge he was aware of the possibility that his own voice would be heard as that of the expert proclaiming norms, especially since Foucault was arguably the most prominent philosopher of his generation and a member of the elite *Collège de France.* Foucault, for very practical reasons, was forced to be conservative in his recommendations for fear that his words would be understood as proclaiming the True norms. It is clear though that he did feel some obligation to contribute to the formation of the future, he states that he felt that he should "participate in the formation of a political will (where he has his role as a citizen to play)."[76] This only further makes it clear that he did wish to contribute to a

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[75] Foucault, <u>Concern for Truth,</u> 462.
[76] Foucault, <u>Concern for Truth,</u> 463.

future "political will" but his ability to contribute as an intellectual, i.e. as an expert, was counterproductive for the reasons given above.

Although Foucault had concrete and good reasons to be extremely wary of presenting his ideas on certain possibilities for resistance and new forms of life too clearly or too concretely, those reasons are far less persuasive in my case. First, I have not yet turned thirty and I lack the age and experience that would probably be necessary for me to speak as the expert and proclaimer of norms. Secondly, I do not have the certifications and papers proclaiming my authority the way that Foucault did, this is my dissertation which means I do not yet have my PhD, and as Foucault's analysis of disciplinary relations made clear, the producer of norms is recognizable by their medals, awards, named chairs, and endowments, i.e. their vertical status in the hierarchy of the academic disciplines. Finally, due to my lack of widespread appeal, I will not be read outside of a small circle of highly motivated and critical readers. Not only will these readers be extremely unlikely to take my work as a norm (given that are turning an explicitly critical eye to this text), they will also likely be motivated *not* to understand my ideas as norms.

Although I recognize the danger in being more explicit about possible forms of transformation and attack because I may be understood as presenting a compulsory normative ethics, I write this chapter because I believe that the benefits of this dialogue outweigh the dangers (which are minimized in my case anyway).

What are the benefits? First, this dialogue has the benefit of providing me with critical feedback from readers. Such critical feedback is valuable because one must be suspicious of all ideas produced by disciplined bodies, including my own. The ability of

disciplinary and bio-power to effectively give bodies new natures means that the self can not trust itself to 'naturally' produce a transformative morality. One cannot merely write uncritically (i.e. normally) and expect the result to be a transformative discourse because western individuals, myself included, are all too likely to act out our disciplined instincts and natures.

Second, domination is not an individual problem but is a social-relational problem. Disciplinary and bio-power are as effective as they are because of the lines of power and knowledge they establish between subjects, pinning them to a comportment that few of them may desire but nevertheless are compelled to follow. As a result, shared ideas and coordinated operations will probably be necessary to break the hold of these forms of domination. A dialogue will have to take place in order to build the forms of community and relationality necessary to shake loose the grip of modern domination and the set of ideas I will put forward is a contribution to such a community.

Third and finally, this critical application of the moral analyzer will answer the question of whether Foucault's work opens the possibility for transformative discourses and practices. This value is decidedly academic but is still of some importance. This chapter has the potential to rectify some of the difficulties many thinkers have had in conceiving of a non-normative basis for critical philosophy. The difficulty many thinkers have with linking together non-normative philosophy and critique is probably not helped by the fact that philosophical thinking has, along with the rest of society, embraced the importance and centrality of norms to the proper functioning of life. As a result of many thinkers' investment in norms, they have not been able to understand how Foucault's work could offer a basis for change largely because they cannot conceive of how

Foucault offers the basis for *normative* change, the only form of change that they

recognize. If I were to respond to this too bluntly and too schematically, I might begin by

saying that normative forms of power and knowledge are the *problem* and not the

solution to the domination his work confronts us with.

Foucault has formulated a critique of contemporary society that finds it to be so

strongly normative that it constitutes a form of domination. A reply that seeks to

transform this picture of domination is probably not going to consist in a new set of

norms because the problem is not necessarily *which norms* to follow but to *what extent*

norms at all? In fact, the 'ground' for action that is seemingly most likely *not* to serve as

a basis for critical transformation is a normative one.[77]

As a result, I offer one critical possibility for transformation that is contingent,

open to change, and recognizes its own inability to speak objectively or for all. It will not

be the Truth, a norm, or even a path I vow to adhere to. This is only an attempt and it is

only an attempt because it *must* only be an attempt; it must leave itself open to the

iterations and alterations that others and myself add as it develops—this discourse has not

yet reached its destination and will almost certainly change on its journey. It does not

seek to bind the future to Truth, a norm, or a destiny. Nonetheless, it is an attempt and

not less; for, without an attempt there cannot be success but only without certain success

can success be had.

This chapter is formed in five parts, one part for each of the parts Foucault

thought to generally compose a morality: the moral code, ethical substance, mode of

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[77] I have left out of this discussion, for the sake of clarity, that class of transformations that seeks to alter or offer new norms in order to improve life for those found to be abnormal because this kind of transformation is much more achievable in the short run than the de-normalization of society in general.

subjection, ontology, ascetics, and teleology. Why structure a counterattack around this

moral model? By analyzing the lineages of modern domination in a moral tradition

beginning in Greek self care, I have focused on those ethical practices wherein the

individual transforms themselves into a being commensurate with their morality. This

has meant that the individuals' complicity in their own becoming has been highlighted. It

is precisely this complicity of the individual in their own domination that Foucault's

moral analyzer has made it possible to see. In light of the perception of how one might

be a willing accomplice in one's own domination, a question may arise as to how one

could undertake those actions differently. By offering this discourse of critical

transformation in the form of a morality, it is targeted to present one alternative to those

forms of complicity and offer an alternative to those disturbed by the pursuit of their own

domination.

1. *The ethical substance of bodies and species*

> It is the agency of sex that we must break away from, if we aim—through a tactical
> reversal of the various mechanisms of sexuality—to counter the grips of power with the
> claims of bodies, pleasures, and knowledges, in their multiplicity and their possibility of
> resistance. The rallying point for counterattack against the deployment of sexuality ought
> not to be sex-desire, but bodies and pleasures.[78]

The reader of these lines in *History of Sexuality I* might conclude that Foucault had

defined his own preferred method of counterattack in this text. And while it does seem to

be the case that he is stating his ideas on a fruitful method of counterattack, I do not think

one could say he defines his ideas here. Defines is probably too strong a word since he

only hints at his ideas and does not offer anything like a definition. As I discussed in the

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[78] Foucault, History of Sexuality I, 157.

opening section, I believe he was vague on his ideas of counterattack in order to keep

himself from becoming a prophet of the norm and reinforcing that which he sought to

critique.   Although his text does not detail his ideas, I would like to use this quote as a

beginning point to develop a transformative notion of morality, beginning with the ethical

substance. In order to develop the ideas implicit in this quote, I would like to turn to the

rest of Foucault's work to flesh out these ideas. In order to do this in relation to the

ethical substance, I will begin by detailing the concept of sex-desire and then moving to

apply it to the notion of bodies and species developed earlier in this text.

In *History of Sexuality I,* Foucault defends his notion that for contemporary

western subjects sex, in its physicality, lies in contrast to sexuality which is seen as a set

of behaviors. The proper relationship between sex and sexuality is such that a body's

sex, as its physical plan, normally determines its sexuality:

> Further, by presenting itself in a unitary fashion, as anatomy and lack, as function and
> latency, as instinct and meaning, it was able to mark the line of contact between a
> knowledge of human sexuality and the biological sciences of reproduction; thus, without
> really borrowing anything from these sciences, excepting a few doubtful analogies, the
> knowledge of sexuality gained through proximity a guarantee of quasi-scientificity; but
> by virtue of this same proximity, some of the contents of biology and physiology [in the
> form of a notion of sex] were able to serve as a principle of normality for human
> sexuality.[79]

As a result the intersection of biology, physiology, and sexuality, Foucault is able to

conclude that the sexuality is normatively the set of behaviors that one performs as a

result of one's sex; for, the logic runs, if sex is physical then there are only as many

legitimate types of sexuality and sexual desires as there are physical sexes. As a result,

we can say that sex-desire operates as a normative pole of modern society by presenting

itself as an ontological physical process wherein sex causes the desires that compose

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[79] Foucault, <u>History of Sexuality I,</u> 154-155.

sexuality. Sex-desire thus fits in as part of the more general relationship that was described in the last chapter between the species' plan and normative behavior: namely, that bio-power is characterized by the invention of a physical plan that justifies a particular normative behavior as the legitimate, necessary, and natural result of the species' physicality.

Bodies and pleasures, Foucault suggested, is where we might turn to counter this deployment of sex-desire. It should be immediately surprising to readers of Foucault that he is turning to the body, a product of the disciplinary system, for resistance to bio-disciplinary relations. However, upon closer inspection, one can see how Foucault imagined that the body can function in a counterattack of bodies and pleasures. In particular, I believe he is suggesting that we turn to the body as source of counterattack because of its malleability.

In many sections of *Discipline and Punish,* Foucault comments on the malleability of disciplinary bodies:

> It is easy enough to find signs of the attention then paid to the body—to the body that is manipulated, shaped, trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skilful and increases its forces…These methods, which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility, might be called the 'disciplines'.[80]

Foucault describes the disciplines as looking at individuals as flexible, impressionable substances that are able to receive the subjectivating imprints that the disciplines serve to impart. Although the disciplines have typically used the malleability of bodies to produce homogenized, normalized forms, this view of the body as extremely flexible can also be mobilized to form bodies into something other than normal. In other words,

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[80] Foucault, History of Sexuality I, 136- 137.

disciplinary relations produce an understanding of the body that is tactically polyvalent in that is it both supports and undermines normalization in its malleability. While the view of bodies as extremely malleable that the disciplines put forward gives them a view of the body that enables them to mold bodies into whatever is presented as the current normal form, it also works against that normalization by presenting a view of the body that is not naturally normal but can take on any number of forms. This polyvalence is problematic for bio-disciplinary relations because this presents a contradiction: in order to safeguard bodies' natural normality, an extremely arduous and artificial process of training must occur to instill that norm. This invites the question that if bodies are naturally normal in the ways they have been thought to be, what is the need for the extensive processes to instill that which is supposedly innate? That question can also be formulated in another way: if bodies are so flexible as to have little or no inkling towards the norm without training, what basis do we have for thinking that they have a 'plan' in the first place? It seems the more precise and effective those techniques for the formation and reshaping of individuals are, the more it raises the suspicion that norms are anything but natural and require incredible effort to produce them. From a critical reconception of bodies, individuals can claim that the disciplines do not aid nature but they produce people according to socially defined norms.

In sum, Foucault's focus on bodies to counterattack sex-desire can be made sense of by focusing on the malleability of the body. Not only does this focus on malleability open the possibility for becoming other than normalized, it also disrupts the camouflage that allows social norms to be perceived as natural and reveals the operations of power, knowledge, truth, and subjectivity that constitute these norms as local and contingent.

So, when Foucault suggests we turn to ourselves as bodies, I am interpreting him to mean that we turn to a particular aspect of ourselves as bodies—to ourselves as flexible, malleable bodies-without-nature. In addition, this turn to the flexibility and malleability of our bodies can serve as a resource for an attack on sex-desire and other norms based in disciplinary and bio-relations. By focusing on this aspect of our bodies, disciplined bodies can find the possibility for undertaking an ethics to transform themselves into something other than they are today.

Although Foucault only suggests a counterattack of bodies, I am not sure that we have to stop at bodies. Given the reciprocal relationship of the domination of the species and the body, we should probably look also to a counterattack of species as well as bodies. At this point, I would like to elaborate a notion of the species to work alongside the notion of the body that Foucault suggested.

In a way that is extremely analogous to the body, the species may turn upon itself and recognize itself as a group of bodies whose unity and complexion comes from a long history to make it regulable and useful to the disposition of a wide variety of interests (business, the armed forces, doctors, moralists, the state, etc.) The designation '*homo sapiens'* is not an objective or innocent one; the definition of our species carries with it a whole host of normative necessities that have, according to Foucault, quite often more to do with popular moral prejudice than science.[81] Recognizing these motivations for the constitution of the species as a normative grouping presents the species and the individuals that compose it with new possibilities for the becoming of the species. The malleability of the species could be used to remake it or even to fracture it; once we cease

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[81] Foucault, History of Sexuality I, 54.

to pursue normalization as our primary political goal, what moral or political sense will it make to continue to regard ourselves as part of species defined by our universally common plan? This is not to say that the notion of a species may or may not have continued usage in the sciences, but it is to put into question the grouping 'species' as a moral and political category and to begin to think of community on another basis.

And just as disciplinary and bio-power work together in combination to enhance each other's effects, so can the work on the figuration of the species combine with that of bodies to create a more effective counterattack. When the unity of the species around its plan is interrupted, it not only attacks the functioning of bio-apparatuses, it also effects the many disciplinary apparatuses that are dependent on the organizing function of bio-power. It applies this pressure by removing the disciplines' invisibility that was afforded by their status as agents of species' norms. No longer would the disciplines find such easy cover in the idea that they are doing what is required by the plan inherent in an individual. A series of questions that have the potential to be transformative could be opened up by this making visible of the species' contingent status. Some examples of these questions: Why should a body submit to disciplinary training? What forms of power and knowledge relations are served by disciplinary norms? What relations are weakened or destroyed? Does this destruction and enhancement suit my own values and priorities? Do I need to change my values and priorities?

Likewise, when bodies interrupt the priority of the disciplines it puts pressure on the armatures of bio-power by destabilizing one of its primary sources of knowledge about the population—disciplinary case studies and records. Moreover, without the disciplines, bio-relations are largely immobilized; not only do they lose disciplinary case

studies as a source of population data, they lose the ability to train the population in the detailed and specific way made possible by the disciplines. The disciplines take the undifferentiated mass that is the population and turn it into ordered sets of individuals who are accountable for achieving a set of norms and are thereby made able to be combined into a normalized species.

In sum, when Foucault suggests that we turn ourselves as bodies and, by extension as a part of a species, I understand him to be emphasizing the polyvalent quality of bodies' and species' malleability. For, not only can malleability work to the ends of bio-disciplinary relations to allow for the production of bodies and species according to hegemonic norms, it can also be drawn upon as a source of attack on those same relations by activating a series of alternative possibilities for becoming. Additionally, by an individual taking up their ethical substance both as a body and as a species they can produce combinatorial interruptions and destabilizations that are productive of a space in which further ascetics outside the central priority of bio- and disciplinary norms becomes possible.

Given this flexibility of the body and the species, the question becomes which "practices of freedom" should be pursued?[82] Practices of freedom are those practices that enable bodies and species to free themselves from the constraints placed upon them by different forms and levels of domination through developing non-dominating forms of power and knowledge. The answering of this question of where to turn for guidance in the creation of bodies and species outside of domination is a dangerous one. It is dangerous because it risks establishing the one who answers as an expert, encouraging

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[82] Foucault live practice of freedom is where?

reliance on a set of experts to provide new norms to attack old norms—a counter-productive endeavor when one is aiming to attack normative relations themselves. However, as I stated earlier, normalized bodies and species cannot just act non-critically because their nature is now to act normatively. So, although guidelines are dangerous, some sort of critical thought will have to be pursued to redefine the 'nature' of bodies and species so that they do not replicate the dominant normative relations. I believe that Foucault's suggestion of pleasure offers a place to start developing these critical and crucial guidelines. This discussion of pleasure will take us beyond ethical substance into the next section on the moral code. [83]

2. Moral Code: Beyond Deviant Pleasures and Abnormal Lives

To better understand how pleasure might serve to define provisional, non-obligatory, and experimental rules for the creation of non-normalized bodies, it is key that we turn back shortly to the discussion of the monastery. Returning to the monastery will allow us to briefly contextualize the lineage of the notion of pleasure that we will be working with and allow us to add a definite meaning to pleasure in a "counterattack of bodies and pleasures."

As we saw, the monastery was (among other things) an engine for producing self-renunciation in favor of a divinely inspired direction by the monastery and the Abbot.

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[83] It could be argued that my appropriation of bodies and species as 'essentially' malleable is contradiction of my decision not to appropriate an ascetics based on innate capacities. However, bodies' and species' malleability is neither innate on my account nor is that malleability necessarily permanent. Their malleability permits the reformation of bodies and species into shapes that may themselves no longer be malleable; it is a malleability that could possibility give way bodies and species that are not malleable. We may well see valuable, important, and justifiable talk of essences again. Furthermore, it is all too likely that the terms bodies and species will cease to designate anything useful, meaning that the terms themselves do not refer to anything innate about subjects.

Christian subjects in the monastery were subject to an ordering technology that

encouraged, coerced, and even forced the monks to disregard the misleading promptings

of human desires and pleasures in favor of the imposed order of the time table and the

enclosure. The monks could not trust in the goodness of the pleasures that their fallen

souls' desired as it was quite possible that those pleasures derived from a pleasure in evil.

After the fall, human pleasure was disassociated from its connection to the good such that

people could not rely on their pleasures and the desires to reliably point to the good.

In the contemporary era, subjects who are formed by the disciplinary descendants

of the monastery are still part of this process of the renunciation of pleasure.

Contemporary institutions prescribe, like God does for the monastery and the pastoral,

the proper forms of desire and action, regardless of pleasure of the individual. Bio- and

disciplinary norms are applied to individuals regardless of their desire to be shaped in the

ways the norm defines. This presumption that the disciplines and bio-agencies 'know

what is best' for individuals requires a similar kind of self-renunciation and deference to

the knowledge and practices of contemporary normalization. This dismissal of the

individual's ability to adequately make judgments about the good and the resultant self-

renunciation demanded of the individual is consequently continued from pastoral practice

into the present.

This gap between what is or could be pleasurable and what one feels about what

is demanded of one is an important space. Bourdieu addresses this space in *The Logic of*

Practice when he describes the way that the *habitus* (a durable set of dispositions) carries

forward many forms of comportment from the past that are not appropriate to the present.

Freud also famously addressed the disconnects between individual desires and societal

demands. But even given these and other studies, this space between what is normatively required by the species body and what abnormalities individuals sacrifice in silence is relatively unknown. Polls on what individuals want are rarely ever open ended, meaning that the answers are preselected and tend to offer just a list of what species experts, i.e. 'human scientists', expect that people want, nicely eliding all possibility of the radically abnormal from registering. Moreover, even if the poll is open-ended, one should be suspicious that the individual being polled would know what kind of answer would be expected on a poll and would fill in a standard response regardless.

This gap between what is expected of one and what one has to renounce in order to achieve that norm is part of what I believe Foucault is aiming to draw on when he calls on pleasure in a "counterattack of bodies and pleasures." In many ways, these renounced pleasures just float in the modern era, lost in their bracketing as abnormality on a sea of regimented and normalized behavior: as long as individuals comports themselves normally, their pleasure in that comportment is not of great concern. One is expected to carry out bio-disciplinary training and normalized existence whether one enjoys it or not—one's plan demands it. For instance, whether or not people can enjoy school, they are still expected to attend and excel; people can enjoy their business or not, but they are still expected to work hard and earn money; people can enjoy heterosexual monogamy or not, they are still expected to carry it out; people can enjoy their gender roles or not, they are still expected to inhabit them; people can not want to consume products that destroy the environment and indirectly enslave the third world, they are still expected to consume those products, etc.

When pleasure becomes a source of the moral code, in distinction to normative discourse, it opens the possibility of drawing on individuals' non-normalized pleasures as a source for the creation of new forms of life:

> I am advancing this term [pleasure], because it seems to me that it escapes the medical and naturalistic connotations inherent in the notion of desire. That notion has been used as a tool, as a grid of intelligibility, a calibration in terms of normativity: "Tell me what your desire is and I will tell you who you are, whether you are normal or not, and then I can validate or invalidate your desire." One keeps running into this tactic which goes from the notion of Christian concupiscence all the way through the Freudian notion of desire, passing through the notion of sexual instinct in the 1840s. Desire is not an event but a permanent feature of the subject: it provides a basis onto which all that psychologico-medical armature can attach itself. The term "pleasure" on the other hand is virgin territory, unused, almost devoid of meaning. There is no "pathology" of pleasure, no "abnormal" pleasure. It is an event "outside the subject," or at the limit of the subject, taking place in that something which is neither of the body nor of the soul, which is neither inside nor outside—in short, a notion neither assigned nor assignable.[84]

By focusing on pleasures as a *relatively less* normalized field from which to draw out the guidelines that will guide the creation of new forms of life, Foucault seeks to tap not only the discontent with the disposition of norms today but also a source for the positive formulation of a new moral code. Pleasure provides this possibility by offering an experience that is "outside the subject," i.e. an experience that is not deeply encoded and tied to the functions of a normalizing society today. The discourse of pleasure is one that remains "virgin," open to be written in a manner that interrupts the priority of bio-disciplinary tactics.

I believe that there is also another likely reason that Foucault turned to pleasure as a key element in a counterattack and, to some extent, it builds off of the previous interpretation. If we understand that pleasure is a field in which far fewer explicit guidelines exists about what pleasures one is to experience than exist about what

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[84] Michel Foucault, "Le Gai Savoir," from <u>Saint = Foucault</u> by David M. Halperin (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1995) 93-94.

normative behavior that one should exhibit, a focus on pleasure turns the bodies and/or

the species back upon themselves to create their own guidelines. As a result, I

understand the turn to pleasure to be a profoundly democratic gesture; it seeks to move

the manufacturing of ethical judgments out of the hands of a specialized elite and, by dint

of refocusing them on an area that the individual has a privileged relationship with (i.e.

their own pleasures), moves the judgments into the hands of bodies and species:

> I think it is politically important that sexuality be able to function the way it functions in the saunas, where, without the condition of being imprisoned in one's own identity, in one's own past, in one's own face, one can meet people who are to you what one is to them: nothing else but bodies with which combinations, fabrications of pleasure will be possible. These places afford an exceptional possibility of desubjectivization, of desubjection, perhaps no the most radical but in any case sufficiently intense to be worth taking note of. [Anonymity is important] because of the intensity of the pleasure that follows from it. It's not the affirmation of identity that's important, it's the affirmation of non-identity…It's an important experience in which one invents, for as long as one wants, pleasures which one fabricates together.[85]

Foucault argues in this quote for the importance of bathhouses on the same grounds;

namely, that they provide a place in which a multiplicity of individuals can congregate

and cease to be the bio-disciplinary subjects that they are demanded to be and instead

invent new forms of living around the creation and experience of pleasures.

Overall, we can see that the guidelines given to this form of critical

transformation by a turn to pleasure are less a set of laws or norms on how one should

act, and much more the mapping of potentially fruitful area for bodies and species to

cultivate their own moral practices outside of the domination of modern powers and

knowledges. This turn to pleasure as one source for the development of a moral code is

not a norm or law but an indicator of a productive avenue leading out from the field of

domination. This interpretation of bodies and pleasures, if left at this, may trouble many.

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[85] Foucault, Le Gai Savoir, 94.

In particular, it seems to direct bodies to do whatever pleases them and raises doomsday fears of a chaotic and short-sighted hedonism. Not surprisingly, this would trouble me as well. In the next section on *askesis,* I hope to show that this turn to pleasure does not entail hedonism and, in fact, requires a relationship with pleasure quite different than hedonism.

3. Ascetics: An Aesthetic Care of Bodies' and Species' Pleasures

Within the movement of this chapter as a whole, one can find an interesting resonance with the work of Foucault that might not be immediately obvious. After Foucault wrote *History of Sexuality Volume I* and made his pronouncement on what individuals "ought" to do to form a counterattack he turned to a study of ancient ascetics. Likewise, this chapter is moving to a study of ascetics after discussing a counterattack of bodies and pleasures in order to add necessary dimensions to this counterattack. Although it is ultimately unclear if Foucault's reasons for moving to a study of ascetics were motivated by the same reasons as I was motivated by, i.e. to flesh out practices that will allow one to practice an attack of bodies, species, and pleasures, there are some indications that this was at least partly the case. For instance, in his interview *Friendship as a Way of Life,* he suggests that homosexuals take themselves up as bodies and pursue forms of *askesis* that will allow them to invent the different possibilities for pleasure that gay life offers:

> Q. You were saying a little while ago: "Rather than crying about faded pleasures, I'm interested in what we ourselves can do." Could you explain that more precisely?

> M.F. Asceticism as the renunciation of pleasure has had bad connotations. But askesis is something else: it's the work that one performs on oneself in order to transform oneself or make the self appear which, happily, one never attains. Can that be our problem

> today? We've rid ourselves of asceticism. Yet it's up to us to advance into a homosexual askesis that would make us work on ourselves and invent—I do not say discover—a manner of being that is still improbable.[86]

In this quote Foucault connects the pursuit of the creation of a plurality of homosexual bodies and pleasures with the need to develop an ascetics. He also indicates that he believes that modern ascetics is sorely lacking; today, most of bodies' and species' formation is carried out by normalizing apparatuses, leaving little purpose and room for ascetic practices. Following this indication from Foucault, let us begin to develop ascetic resources for the practice of pleasure by looking to bodies and species.

This project to develop an ascetics quickly becomes a question: where is one to look for resources in order to develop ascetic practices? One answer can be found in Foucault's own work in the turn he makes to the morality of antiquity at the end of his career. His work in antiquity is especially valuable in regards to *askesis* because ancient morality had a strong ethical component with many well developed ascetic practices. It does not seem possible to me that the strong connection of ancient morality to ascetics could have been lost on Foucault given his explicit interest in developing contemporary ascetics.   Although he was not often forthright on the relation of his turn to the study of antiquity and his desire to create contemporary ascetic practices, there is evidence that his turn to antiquity was aimed, in part, at researching ascetic practices that could contribute to a contemporary ascetics.

We find the first evidence of this connection in an interview:

> And if I have taken an interest in Antiquity, it is because, for a whole series of reasons, the idea of a morality as obedience to a code of rules is now disappearing, has already

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[86] Michel Foucault, "Friendship as a Way of Life," trans. John Johnston, <u>Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984</u>, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (Semiotext(e): New York, 1996) ethics, page 309-310.

disappeared. To this absence of a morality, one responds, or must respond, with an investigation which is that of an aesthetics of existence.[87]

In this quote, Foucault proposes answering contemporary moral issues with an investigation into the aesthetics of existence, the name that he uses to describe Greek morality in *The Use of Pleasure.* Clearly, Foucault thought that the modern moral situation had to be met with an investigation into ancient morality and moreover, he thought the modern moral situation was in dire need of the development of ascetic practices. While it is certain that his desire to study ancient morality and his desire to develop ascetic practices were strongly related to the social situation of the present, it does not necessarily follow that his interest in ancient ethics was an interest developing inspiration for modern ascetic practices. However, it is certainly likely, especially once one considers that the ethically and ascetically heavy moral analyzer that I have been employing in this text is the same one that he uses in his own study of Greek and Roman morality, indicating an intense focus on ethics and ascetics by Foucault. Moreover, the reader should just notice the title of the first text of his study of ancient morality—it is phrased as an answer to questions left open by the counterattack previous volume of the history of sexuality—'*The Use of Pleasure'*!

It would probably be fair to assume that these texts aimed to contribute in some way to the development of modern ascetics. However, the texts do not give the answer as to how pleasure should be used today (to do so would only contribute the normalization problem anyway) but it does provide material that can be drawn upon to develop contemporary ascetics provided that one understands that ancient practices will not

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[87] Foucault, <u>Aesthetics of Existence,</u> 451.

function as they did in antiquity in the present. The ascetics Foucault discusses in

antiquity can only serve as inspiration or as a point for recreation but can not be

substituted verbatim into the present. However, we can see certain linkages between the

form of ancient ascetics and the needs of this counterattack, making the possibility of

fruitful inspiration likely. For instance, Foucault's description of Greek morality sounds

similar in many ways to an attack of bodies and pleasures:

> Now, while this relation to truth, constitutive of the moderate subject, did not lead to a
> hermeneutics of desire, it did on the other hand open onto an aesthetics of existence. And
> what I mean by this is a way of life whose moral value did not depend either on one's
> being in conformity with a code of behavior, or on an effort of purification, but on certain
> formal principles in the use of pleasures, in the way one distributed them, in the limits
> one observed, in the hierarchy one respected.[88]

I am going to turn to the later two histories of sexuality to develop Foucault's thinking on

the uses of pleasure and ascetics but I would first like to make note of two things. First,

Foucault's work in these two histories of sexuality is polyvalent and attempts to answer a

variety of modern questions. The first six chapters of my own text are evidence of that in

that they connect Foucault's work on the morality of antiquity to his work on modern

domination. In other words, only elements of Foucault's texts are going to be relevant to

this question of the creation of a modern ascetics, so my review of these texts is going to

be partial. In particular, I will be focusing on the chapter from *The Care of the Self*

entitled *The Cultivation of the Self*.

Second, in order to make use of the insights that Foucault has developed in his

investigation into the aesthetics of existence for the creation of modern ascetics, I will

need to give a critical evaluation of them. As I have pointed out, Foucault's work

demonstrates not only how ancient morality can function to inspire contemporary

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[88] Foucault, <u>Use of Pleasure,</u> 89.

counterattacks but also how those same moralities are also deeply genealogically

implicated in many kinds of contemporary domination. Blind engagement with ancient

morality is therefore at least as likely to work at counter purposes to practices of critical

transformation as to aid it. My discussion of Foucault's work on the ancient ascetics of

pleasure will therefore not only have to present his results but critically interpret them in

light of their potential contributions, both positive and negative, to the project at hand.

Foucault's chapter *The Cultivation of the Self* has five subsections detailing

different elements of ancient ascetics. The rest of this section on ascetics will be divided

up into five parts to deal with Foucault's conclusions individually.

1. In the first section of *The Cultivation of the Self,* Foucault shows that the Stoics'

ascetic practices provided a matrix for the intensification of the relationship of the self to

itself. The particular form of relation to the self that he finds the Stoics aimed to intensify

was a relationship of self-mastery. He illustrates this point in his discussion of Epictetus:

> Man, on the other hand, must attend to himself: not, however, as a consequence of some
> defect that would put him a situation of need and make him in this respect inferior to the
> animals, but because the god [Zeus] deemed it right that he be able to make free use of
> himself; and it was for this purpose that he endowed him with reason.[89]

Epictetus calls for readers to care for themselves because their own reasonable nature

demands its proper use in ruling the soul and making the proper use of its parts. This task

of self-mastery is not a choice but a duty demanded of humanity by the form of their

soul:

> By crowning with this reasoning faculty all that is already given to us by nature, Zeus
> gave us the possibility and the duty to take care of ourselves. It is insofar as he is free

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[89] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 47.

and reasonable that man is the natural being that has been committed to the care of himself.[90]

In sum, this first section of the chapter on ancient ascetics reveals an ascetics of self-mastery that was an obligation imposed by the form of the soul and pursued through an intensification of self-relations.

In terms of critically evaluating these practices for contemporary transformation we find that there is actually little of strategic use. First, an ascetic obligation whose necessity is derived from man's essential being is too similar to the demand that one accept normative training based on one's biological plan. Current discourse is already dominated by experts who claim to know what one's essence is and what forms of self care are required by it. It is all too likely that any attempt to formulate an ascetics demanded by humanity's essential nature will be reinscripted by the agents of the disciplines and bio-agencies due to its inadequate difference from those discourses. The momentum of contemporary power relations would draw up these Stoic forms of power and knowledge and quickly modify them to continue the domination of bio- and disciplinary relations.

Second, an additional problem emerges around the quest for self-mastery. Self-mastery is immediately questionable because it maintains deep ties to the discourses detailing humanity's essential nature. Insofar as self-mastery in its Stoic guise draws upon humanity's obligation to its essential rational nature, it carries with it all the criticisms given previously; namely, that it is too like modern domination in drawing upon a human plan to stand in effective opposition to it. In addition to these criticisms of

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[90] Foucault, Care of the Self, 47.

self-mastery derived from its relationship to an essential nature, it is also objectionable on grounds unique to it.

Self-mastery has deep and problematic ties to the forms of self-renunciation demanded by the pastoral and bio-disciplinary relations. The mastery of the self demanded by Stoicism and other forms of Greco-Roman self care required the individual to set over and above itself a part, typically the reasonable soul, that legitimately dominated the other parts. As I discussed in earlier chapters, with the pastoral and the Fall the reasonable mastering part of the soul was no longer adequate to its task; however, the need for self-mastery remained. This function of mastery was taken up by the pastoral and it sought to administer, for the salvation of the flock, the forms of domination that the individuals were inadequate to impose upon themselves. In bio-disciplinary relations, the bio-agencies and disciplines similarly took over the administration of the 'plan' and assumed the role of the mastering agency, knowing what an individual should become and the proper methods of bringing them to the fulfillment of their plan. A return today to a morality of self-mastery is likely to find the agency of that self mastery, however intended, usurped by the incredibly powerful normalizing relations of domination at play mastering individuals in contemporary life.

Moreover, a discourse of mastery is inappropriate to an ethical substance based in the malleability of bodies and species. What is there to master when there is no final state to be achieved? There are certainly *degrees* of skill, achievement, failure, beauty, etc. given some contingent end, but something like a mastery of human nature does not make sense in this sort of morality; how can one master something of limitless potential and possibility?

Although a self-mastery that derives from the requirements of humanity's

essential being is not going to prove helpful to the form of critical transformation I am

seeking to elaborate through Foucault, there are ideas in present in the first section of *The*

Cultivation of the Self that prove to be more useful. One ascetic element that is present in

this first section and is also elaborated throughout the text as whole is the aesthetic

component of ancient ascetics. In order to focus this discussion on the aesthetic elements

of ancient ascetics (as opposed to the operation of the aesthetics in other parts of the

morality) I am going to concentrate on how Foucault conceives this aesthetic ascetic

element to mediate between the ethical substance and the moral code.

A stylistics of life was brought to bear in ancient morality in how an individual

interpreted, practiced, and embodied the moral code in reference to a unique life:

> Putting it schematically, we could say that classical antiquity's moral reflection
> concerning the pleasures was not directed toward a codification of acts, nor toward a
> hermeneutics of the subject, but toward a stylization of attitudes and an aesthetics of
> existence. A stylization, because the rarefaction of sexual activity presented itself as a
> sort of open-ended requirement. The textual record is clear in this regard: neither the
> doctors who made recommendations about the regimen one should follow, nor the
> moralists who demanded that the husbands respect their wives, nor those who gave
> advice concerning the right conduct to manifest in the love of boys, ever say exactly what
> ought or ought not to be done in the way of sexual acts or practices.[91]

How one brought one's ethical substance into line with the moral code involved a series

of aesthetic judgments on how one would fulfill the moral code in reference to one's soul,

one's place in the community, and one's own desires. The particular way that one

instantiated one's life as a reflection of the moral law was almost necessarily unique

because one's social situation and the way that one sought to use it were, to a greater or

lesser degree, specific to oneself. As a result, the ascetics that one would be required to

undergo would require stylization to produce the unique qualities of the individual. For

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[91] Foucault, Use of Pleasure, 92-93.

instance, when a painter desires to make a painting, the tools and processes whereby she makes that work of art vary depending on which way she decides to fulfill the obligations of her painting. For instance, Pollock had a radical method of painting that was customized to fit his instantiation of painting. In a like way, ancient ascetics often had to undergo a stylization in order to fit the particular embodiment of moral practice that was being pursued.

This example of a stylized ancient ascetics can be quite inspiring to bodies and species in combating domination on several fronts. First, bodies and species are in a position today where they only possess relatively weak ascetic traditions. The aesthetic approach to ascetics is helpful, not because it prescribes a definite set of ascetic exercises, but because such an approach is geared to be productive of ascetics, which is precisely what the transformative practices today require. Disciplinary regimens do not need to be replaced with another set of normal exercises producing normal bodies. In order to subvert normalization, new forms of *askesis* are required that will allow difference to emerge in the forms of the training. Disciplinary training is just as much the problem as is the results of discipline, or, perhaps more accurately, disciplinary training and its results are deeply intertwined problematics that need to be attacked as a whole. An aesthetic approach to ascetics has the advantage of engaging a creativity that will allow for the invention or modification of ascetics practices.

Second, the production of an ascetics that takes its cues from the individual's aesthetic judgment has the advantage of beginning from a concept that, even in the present era, is resistant to the power relations of normalization. At present, aesthetic choices are expected to be a matter of personal taste and, in a few cases, are even

considered invalid when they merely repeat expert discourses. While it is surely not the case that aesthetic decisions escape normative formation and Bourdieu's *Distinction* demonstrates this well, an aesthetic orientation towards choosing which pleasures to cultivate is an important step towards an empowerment of difference. An aesthetic orientation to an *askesis* of pleasure encourages bodies and species to remain critical of a singular normal or correct form of negotiating their ethical substance, as a painter would be to the idea that there is only one possible painting and one way of painting it. This aesthetic disposition opens individuals onto a reality in which there are multiple valid possibilities for becoming. Moreover, in encouraging an aesthetic engagement, bodies and species would already have relationships to look at as models for how they might begin to relate to ascetics. Painters, sculptors, dancers, etc., all engage in a creative and productive relationship with their media that people seeking to create ascetics might begin to work from—to look at the techniques whereby these artists form themselves and others and while still retaining a vital space for artistic experimentation and creation. Such an attitude can make possible the development of new arts of creating bodies and pleasures without any particular body or pleasure being given as the only valid forms.

2. In this second section, Foucault focuses on the types of work implied by 'care' in the notion of self care. Foucault offers that care (*epimeleia)* "does not require simply a general attitude, an unfocused attention…*epimeleia* implies a labor."[92] On the ancient perspective, care is a constant process of hard work that those who are seeking to master themselves must try to maintain. This labor of care reflects a work in all aspects of life:

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[92] Foucault, Care of the Self, 50.

the home, religion, relationships, health, etc.   This is an important thought to bear with us today as disciplinary and bio-power have become dominant or influential in almost every area of life; consequently, if one wants to be rid of this domination it will require an intensive labor in almost every aspect of one's life. The work does not stop at the aesthetic creation of these ascetics, these forms of *askesis* will still need to be worked at in almost every area of life. This is a tremendous labor and it may well be that many or even most people are not sufficiently motivated to carry out these ascetics.

In this section, Foucault also emphasizes that the self-care of antiquity was not just an intense, pervasive, and difficult labor, it was also a social labor: "…it constituted, not an exercise in solitude, but a true social practice."[93] Although the specific relationships formed between people in antiquity are probably not of much use in response to quite different contemporary bio- and disciplinary relations, developing the social aspects of a contemporary ascetics is important. It is clear that without doing away with disciplinary and bio-institutional and social relations, the attempts to develop less dominating forms of power will always be stuck at the level of counterattack. The present normalizing apparatuses and agencies will continue to normalize bodies and species and those seeking different relations will have to begin with a domination which is already natural to them.   These institutions will have to be removed or transformed if bodies and species are not first to become dominated and secondarily to become free of that domination. It is unlikely that the normalizing apparatuses will disappear or that their domination will be broken unless other relations and institutions are developed to offer alternate forms of social engagement.

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[93] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 51.

The Greeks and Romans had many institutions in which they exchanged advice and aid in self-care: the gymnasium, the school of philosophy, the baths, consultation with a councilor, etc. For bodies, species, and pleasures to create sets of power and knowledge relations that support their becoming outside of domination, new social relations will almost certainly be necessary. Even such talented painters as Matisse and Picasso had need of each other to achieve their high level of aesthetic and artistic work. These two criticized, comforted, inspired, and shared with each other to a marvelous degree; especially considering their radically different aesthetics. Good exchange partners and institutions can work like Matisse and Picasso did, educating, warning, supporting and encouraging each other without requiring homogenization.

3. The third element of ancient ascetics that Foucault outlines is useful to a contemporary morality primarily as a cautionary tale. In this third section, Foucault focuses on the close relationship between medical and philosophical ascetics. For many practicing self care in antiquity, these two areas of care overlapped in many respects: the medical and philosophical analyses were often thought to be treating different the same illness, the illnesses of soul and body were given analogous forms, and many philosophical and medical illnesses were given the same underpinning problems:

> In keeping with a tradition that goes back a very long way in Greek culture, the care of the self is in close correlation with medical thought and practice. This ancient correlation became increasingly strong, so much so that Plutarch is able to say, at the beginning of *Advice About Keeping Well*, that philosophy and medicine are concerned with "a single field" (*mia chōra*).[94]

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[94] Foucault, <u>Care of the Self,</u> 54.

The result of this medical care was that, as I related in chapter two, there was a gradual inducement to see the self as being in a constant state of medical and philosophical illness and self care became a kind of reasoned hypochondria.

In a direct way, these medico-philosophical endeavors of the Romans are not terribly useful to my present purposes. After all, part of the problem presented by normalization is the way that medical and scientific discourses have combined to present the body to be in a state of permanent fragility that requires the expert ministrations of disciplinary and bio-apparatuses to stabilize its normality. In addition, the pastoral and monastery also employed a medical discourse in their normalizing ministrations. Contemporary discourse is similar enough to the ancient medico-philosophical discourse that I believe we should be cautious of any attempt to integrate it into this critical morality.

4. In section four, Foucault states the reasons why the Romans, especially the Stoics, adopted a variety of testing procedures as part of their regular ascetics. These tests were typically measures to judge the degree to which the self had attained self-mastery. As I have discussed earlier in the text, the descendents of Greek and Roman self-examination came to play a key role in disciplinary and bio-power as forms of surveillance and confession. However, even these lineages of testing are morally and politically troubling, some method of gathering information about oneself would seem to be necessary, even today. After all, this form of counterattack does have some broad goals (to achieve a space of becoming outside of the priority of a dominating normalization) and the individuals that undertake this counterattack would undoubtedly add their own more

positive goals to it, making the need for some sort of test to determine whether one is achieving one's goals or not a useful feature, if not a practical necessity.

I find that unlike many other areas of ascetic practices, this area of testing procedures is one that is actually relatively well developed in the present. The work of modern feminists, queer theorists, race theorists, post-colonial thinkers, and others can provide useful descriptions of how actions are normatively played out and, armed with this specific information, bodies can seek to measure their distance and the quality of their difference from these descriptions. Significant and complex efforts have been made in many fields to detect racist, sexist, homophobic, classist, etc. norms. This work can provide a groundwork for testing to what degree one remains normalized or not.

Insofar as an ascetics of critical transformation just has the negative aim of becoming other than normal, it is possible to give some general forms of testing procedures that are focused on this common goal; individuals will all have similar states to test for in that they all share the common past of a particular kind of domination—one could test to see whether one was dominated or not. However, to the degree that a transformative practice has further positive aims for the production of a particular self, the development of testing procedures is not something that can be elaborated on in general. Unlike a disciplinary or even a Stoic ethics, a stylized ethics of bodies and pleasures is headed towards ends for which relatively few common positive guidelines exist. As a result, this critical moral practice does not have common positive guidelines that testing procedures can be designed for. The forms of self-examination and self-testing will need to be developed individually, though it is likely that communities will form with shared ideals and shared testing procedures.

5. This final section of Foucault's consideration of Roman and Greek *askesis* is devoted

to two related subjects. The first subject is the elaboration of an important commonality

underlying the ascetics that he had described in the previous four sections. This

commonality is to be found in the way that they all these ascetic practices seek to

intensify one's relationship with oneself, to convert one to oneself:

> The common goal of these practices of the self, allowing for the differences they present, can be characterized by the entirely general principle of conversion to self—of *epistrophē eis heauton.*[95]

Although many of these practices Foucault elaborates are not compatible with

reformation for modern employment, those that are capable of some degree of re-creation

or of inspiring modern ascetics also share this feature—they require an intensification of

the relationship of the self to itself.

This creation, intensification, and complication of a self's relationship to itself is

part of what I argued that Foucault was aiming at in his turn to pleasure; namely, that he

believed that individuals needed to turn to themselves as sources of valuation if they were

to free themselves from the machinations of bio-disciplinary relations. Pleasure served

this end well in that it is a standard of evaluation that the individual has privileged access

to. The intensification of self-relations in regards to pleasure would seem to be a benefit

in that it works counter to the renunciation encouraged by bio-disciplinary relations and

places the source of valuation outside of normative relations and within the aesthetic

horizon of an individual. The creation of new pleasures would require the development

of new relationships, new sensitivities, and new webs of power and knowledge, not a turn

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[95] Foucault, Care of the Self, 64.

inward to decipher the soul, but a turn onto and into the world to create parts of the self

through the formation of stylizing relationships. In terms of an attack on bio-disciplinary

relations, intensifying the relationship with the self is synonymous with intensification of

relationships with others wherein new pleasures are created, crafted, and refined; where

old pleasures are abandoned for strategically and tactically relevant dispositions.

The second major point Foucault draws in relation to ancient ascetics in section

five is that a common goal to the work exerted in all of the ascetic processes detailed in

the first four sections was pleasure. The pleasure that the Romans hoped to gain through

self care derived from the enjoyment of oneself insofar as one was a complete or nearly

complete aesthetic work:

> The individual who has finally succeeded in gaining access to himself is, for himself, an
> object of pleasure. No only is one satisfied with what one is and accepting of one's
> limits, but one "pleases oneself."[96]

The completion of this work is defined, in part, by one's gaining access to oneself; one

gained full access to oneself through reason gaining a stylistic control over the full extent

of the self. When one had fully stylized oneself and imposed the form reason demanded

over the totality of one's substance, one gained a profound access to a self that does not

resist control but yields to one's own reasonable self-mastery. Pleasure developed from

this complete access in that the self experienced of a kind beauty that would clearly be

beyond merely seeing a painting or sculpture that was beautiful, in the case of being

beautiful, even one's sensing and contemplation of beauty would itself be beautiful as

these parts, as parts of the self, would too be stylized, mastered and made beautiful.

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[96] Foucault, Care of the Self, 66.

In the ancient relationship of aesthetics and pleasure, we saw that pleasure derived from the successful mastery of the self, which was shown by its total stylization. Today, I believe that the development of relationship between pleasure and an aesthetics of existence has the potential to contribute greatly to a critical response to domination. For the ancients, we can observe that the pleasure that could be won from the stylization of the self is not a universal or a normal pleasure. The varieties, qualities, and intensities of pleasures were open to the specific form of self-mastery that the individual Roman developed, so that the questions surrounding the pleasures are not just centered on whether one experiences pleasure or not, but whether one's pleasures result from what one wants it to result from, whether it is of the strength, complexity, or pitch that one desires, and whether it fits, aesthetically, into a pleasing relationship with one's other pleasures and the way that one relates to others.

Looking to this ancient account, the contemporary turn to pleasure as a part of an aesthetics of existence not a simple one insofar as the creation of the forms or evaluations of pleasure are concerned. Foucault opens the self up to the sculpting hands of a difficult and intensive form of an ethically weighted self care and thereby opens pleasure up to a malleability that has the potential to deform pleasure beyond our recognition or even destroy its possibility altogether. Alongside an ethical substance whose malleability is highlighted and an ascetics that intensifies the relationship of the self to itself in order to stylize itself, pleasure serves as a moral code that is every bit as open to the brush strokes of an aesthetics of existence as the ethical substance and ascetics proved to be.

To summarize this section on *askesis,* we can say that ancient self care suggests several promising and problematic inspirations to contemporary ascetics. In particular,

ancient ascetics open up the possibility of critically transformative practice of bodies and pleasures through an aesthetic self-care. Several promising directions are suggested for this self-care: first, as a self-care aimed at a stylization of the self; second, as a form of care that is pervasive and extensive, focused on specific labors, and involving other members of the species in order to create new bodies, species, pleasures, and relationalities; third, through the creation and usage of testing procedures, both as measure of the flight from domination and the progress towards the bodies' and species' own goals; and finally, through a broadening of the role of ascetics to include the transformation and creation not only of behaviors but also the aesthetic judgments and pleasures that give them their provisional and strategic values.

4. Teleology: The Temporarily Endless and Flexible Ends of Ethics

I would like to begin this section on the *telos* with a consideration of the problems that an account of a *telos* faces in the context of this attack. The problems with the development of a *telos* in this context relates to the problems presented by bio-disciplinary power. The problem presented by disciplinary and bio-power is two-fold. First, these forms of power seek to impose a set of incredibly precise normative forms onto populations and bodies.[97] These norms are often offensive enough in themselves to merit strong reservations, especially from women, people of color, homosexuals, the poor, etc. who do not share proportionately in the rewards of a normalizing system. Second, these power relations constitute a state of domination in the present, "a state in

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[97] Although disciplinary and bio-power seek to apply themselves universally, they do differentiate their training according sex, race, income, etc.

which power relations are fixed in such a way that they are perpetually asymmetrical and allow an extremely limited margin of freedom."[98] This domination is problematic in that it fixes individuals to patterns of conduct they may not wish and pins them into place, locked in these obscene performances.

This critical attack has sought to address both problems (normalization and domination) in several ways: its ethical substance emphasizes the malleability and the potential for difference of bodies and species; its moral code emphasizes pleasure as a source for the development of rules of conduct that develop from within the self's own intensive relationship with itself and others; and its ascetics looks to develop an engagement with ethical work that takes bodies, species, their pleasures, and even the ascetics itself up in the manner of an artist taking up its artistic work, that is, as matter for a creative aesthetic stylization. Although the end of these transformative projects in resisting disciplinary and bio-power has been implicit until now, it will be necessary now to make it explicit.

The teleology that I aim to produce is a teleology that is general enough that its principles may find application in other lives but specific enough that it still retains a clear sense that it only applies to the few (if any) who find it useful. Thus, this end is put forward not as a norm but as one possibility in the hope that it can serve a variety of purposes: as a sounding board for critique, a source of inspiration or borrowing, as an example to further concretize this discussion of critical self transformation, and/or as an instructive failure.

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[98] Foucault, Ethics of the Concern for Self, 441.

The *telos* of this critically transformative morality looks away from disciplinary and bio-power as the sources for morally acceptable subjectification and works to intensify the ethical relations with the self. The teleology of this counterattack is not directed towards happiness, satisfaction, or even pleasure as a static object but is directed towards a stylization of the self that draws its cues from the potentialities and experiences of pleasure. The end of this morality is to produce a critical transformation by means of a self care that achieves a bodily and species wide stylization through an aesthetics of bodies, species, and pleasure. This aesthetics of pleasure knows no final, normal, or universal *telos*; instead, it seeks an elaboration of beautiful pleasures that strategically draw their aesthetic standards and strategic ends from its tactical situation.   All that is possible to say generally about this *telos* is that it aims to develop bodies and pleasures outside of the central priority of the domination of normalization. What is developed beyond this immediate critical attack is not only not my place to say but is probably impossible to predict.

These other and more positive ends are impossible to predict because the end of this morality encourages a stylization that will, if successful, lead to irrelevance of this *telos*. A successfully critical practice of transformation will place bodies and species outside of the domination of normalization and thereby erase the strategic relevance of the ends of this counterattack. This *telos*, if effective, will even efface its own limited strategic relevance once it enables individuals to move away from current forms of normalization and domination. Once that aim is complete, the relevance and future of this form of self-government as a whole is legitimately in question.

I am sure that many critics will have noticed that this morality has little providence for ensuring the regularity of subjects and their social cohesion. Such ends are not at all my concern as I am seeking to interrupt the oppressive forms of regularity and social cohesion that dominate today. To offer ideas on future forms of achieving regularity (if working toward regularity again becomes important) is surely beyond me. What bodies and species (if they will still consider themselves bodies and species) decide to impose upon themselves in terms of processes of subjectivization and governmentality is, hopefully, unpredictable from our present perspective and will follow no set norms that will allow us to predict them. The future beyond this attack, if it is successful, is as unpredictable for us as modern biology was to the natural philosophers of the renaissance. A possible break looms wide and its far side is not pierceable by the gaze of normal eyes.

The counterattack requires a level of work, dedication, hope, creativity, and sacrifice that is astounding and intimidating. This counterattack is not the sort of thing that can be accomplished by reading the pages in between two covers—that is only the barest beginning. Most of the work is to be done in refiguring and creating new relations in one's life with no guarantee of success. Success here reflects a success that is not primarily measured by analytic or conceptual understanding but in a transformation of one's self-relation and relation to others. It is risky, it lacks the cleanliness and surety of many traditional philosophical pursuits, and it radically disempowers the philosopher as an expert.

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Education

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- Dissertation advised by Charles Scott titled, *Strategic Self Care: Foucault's Final Work and the Pursuit of Practices of Freedom*. The dissertation centers focuses on the final works of Foucault in order to answer questions surrounding his work and debates in normativity, agency, and subjectivity generally (see attached abstract).
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